

Social Innovation in Tourism (Part I): Empowering Communities, Transforming Territories

Seminar Series of the Young Researchers Project

**Geoheritage and Geotourism:
Insights from a Geopark
Context Description**

Lecturers:

Prof. Manuela Guerreiro and **Prof. Patricia Pinto**
University of Algarve, Portugal

**Friday 9 May 2025
10:00-12:30**

**Campus San Giobbe
Aula Saraceno - Fondamenta
S. Giobbe, 707 - Venezia**

Zoom Link:
bit.ly/4iDip0K



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Spoke Leader



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Affiliates



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Abstract:

This two-part seminar series, scheduled for **9th** and **12th May**, examines the transformative role of social innovation in tourism across diverse territorial contexts, featuring guest scholars from Portugal and the United Kingdom. Through **case studies** and **critical discussion**, the seminars will address how tourism-related initiatives can contribute to **social change**, foster **community well-being**, and generate **social value**, especially in areas facing depopulation, unemployment, or gentrification.

Key themes include the valorization of **local cultural heritage**, the importance of **bottom-up initiatives**, and the active role of **local actors and public administrations** in enabling and sustaining innovation. The seminars will also reflect on how local challenges—including tensions and conflicts—shape the design and implementation of **socially innovative projects**. Special attention will be paid to initiatives that help preserve the **material and immaterial memory of places** while responding to contemporary needs, in **touristic destinations** and in destinations where tourism is rapidly expanding.

The seminar is part of the series of seminars organized within the **Young Researchers project 'Sustainable Business Models for Tourism with a Culture-based Approach'**, funded by PNRR resources within Spoke 6 'Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries' of the iNEST innovation ecosystem (Ecosistema dell'innovazione ECS_00000043, "Interconnected Nord-Est Innovation Ecosystem (iNEST)" - CUP H43C22000540006). The project aims to explore local communities, traditions, and place-based identities to propose sustainable tourism models, highlighting local cultural heritage through bottom-up and community-based approaches. For more information, please visit:
web:<https://pric.unive.it/progetti/spoke-6-inest/young-researchers>

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Geoheritage and Geotourism: Insights from a Geopark Context Description

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University of Algarve, Portugal

Moderator:

Olga Tzatzadaki
Research Fellow for the iNEST
Project – Spoke 6 "Tourism,
Culture and Creative Industries".

Geological heritage encompasses components of Earth's geodiversity that are considered significant for conservation. It includes a range of minerals, rocks, fossils, landforms, and geomorphological features that provide insights into Earth's evolution and the development of Earth sciences. The design of a Geotourism strategy for Geoheritage fosters a compromise to preserve and promote the territory's identity by integrating its geology, environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and residents' well-being. Guided by the design thinking process, this study aims to advance with strategic insights to guide a Geotourism development path in the Geopark Algarvensis, located in the central Algarve, south of Portugal. The Geopark Algarvensis offers an opportunity to diversify tourism beyond the traditional mass "Sun and Sea" model, which has contributed to environmental degradation, overcrowding, and economic seasonality. By promoting geological, natural, and cultural heritage, the initiative seeks to establish a sustainable and inclusive tourism model through Geotourism as a comprehensive and transformative approach to managing territories with geological significance. Resulting from a collaborative work between the Geopark Algarvensis, the Research Centre for Tourism, Sustainability and Well-being (CinTurs), and the University of Algarve, a set of strategic insights to guide the creation of a Geotourism development path in the Geopark Algarvensis was put forward. Led by literature and by adopting participatory methodologies, strategic collaboration, community participation, and storytelling informed the advancement of critical drivers for innovation in a Geotourism stage.

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