

## **Fostering Sustainable Tourism: Framing the Design of Social Impact Creative Tourism Experiences**

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**Keywords** | Creative tourism, Creative experiences, Social impact experiences, Sustainability

**Objectives** | Tourist behaviour has undergone considerable changes, reflecting a growing concern for sustainability. Creative tourism consists of a more sustainable mode of tourism based on learning, active participation, co-creation, creative self-expression, and local community engagement (Carvalho et al., 2019, 2023a, 2023b; Duxbury & Richards, 2019). Airbnb's social impact experiences (SIEs) can foster the interest of a local community to promote a social or environmental cause within the tourism business. SIEs hosts, linked to NGOs or non-profits, enjoy a waived 20% service fee from Airbnb. This means the full amount raised goes directly to the social cause. Arguably, Airbnb's SIEs (Dolnicar, 2021) embody the essence of creative tourism 4.0 (Richards, 2019), aligning sustainability with the sharing economy ethos, thus representing more sustainable forms for tourist engagement contributing positively to local communities (Caldicott et al., 2020). These examples can potentiate favourable social impacts within the creative tourism ecosystem (Salvado et al., 2020), inter alia advancing the objectives of sustainable development goals (SDGs) for tourism (Buhalis et al., 2023). This ongoing research has the goal to develop a comprehensive framework for the design of Social Impact Creative Tourism Experiences.

**Methodology** | Despite recent contributions having successfully provided tools for the design of creative tourism experiences (Almeida, 2023; Richards et al., 2019) while integrating the triple bottom line dimensions (Stoddard et al., 2012), a social impact layer can be added more effectively, arguably enhancing the potential for positive SIEs focusing on the SGDs. Building on previous work of Almeida, (2023) and Richards et al., (2019) and SIEs principles presented on the Airbnb platform, a literature review was followed to develop a framework for the effective design of social impact creative tourism experiences addressing directly social causes in achieving the SDGs for creative tourism (Duarte et al., 2022). Following Almeida, (2023) and Richards et al., (2019) research, a proposed framework for the design of such experiences will be based on a five-step design process encompassing: a) Inventory of tangible and intangible cultural tourism resources (e.g., cultural mapping); b) Local community engagement (e.g., monitoring and

participative processes); c) Identification of Social Impact Cause (e.g., Aim, goals and output); d) Emotional storytelling (e.g., engaging with the five senses) and e) Allowing creativity and co-creation (e.g., Creative capital development and co-creation).

**Main results and contributions** | The research will present an innovative and integrative framework for the successful design of social impact creative tourism experiences aligned with the SDGs for tourism contributing to the active involvement of creative tourists in local activities based on the idiosyncrasies of a given destination while engaging with creatives and local communities. This framework will facilitate the design and implementation of such experiences, helping tourism professionals and practitioners to better develop more integrating and engaging experiences and therefore local communities' members and associations involved in social causes. Also research, directly connected to SIEs, is still scarce as few studies share these approaches and Airbnb has mainly been studied concerning lodging (Dolnicar, 2021).

**Limitations** | As an ongoing research, this contribution focuses mainly on creative tourism experiences not engaging for instance with creative events or creative networks as they are very important in the creative tourism ecosystem.

**Conclusions** | With the tourism system paying more attention to changes in tourism consumption, alternative and responsible forms of tourism are becoming mandatory. Within this context, Airbnb's social impact experiences encapsulate the core tenets of creative tourism 4.0. By harmonizing the principles of creative tourism with the potential of SIEs, this contribution aspires to create a blueprint for sustainable tourism practices that truly benefit both travellers and host communities alike.

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