

Creative tourism and regenerative design: the case of Recife creative tourism plan co-creation process

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Objectives | Regenerative tourism is an approach that discusses sustainability beyond mitigating the negative aspects of tourist activity. It presents tourism as a tool capable of stimulating local well-being, revitalisation, and holistic and integrated sustainability. The dynamics of regenerative tourism harness the unique potential of each territory to develop human beings' capacity to act collaboratively in networks and contribute to the design of healthy living systems (Bellato & Pollock, 2023; Bellato et al., 2023; Dredge, 2022; Duxbury et al., 2021).

Creative tourism, as initially defined by Richards & Raymond (2000), is "Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken" (p. 18). This activity harnesses all the endogenous potential of the community in learning experiences that stimulate a dialogical relationship between visitor and host. It also encourages the development of bottom-up activities, with the active participation of the community and on a small scale. Given these characteristics, creative tourism seems to be a practice aligned with the principles of regenerative tourism (Duxbury et al., 2021; Almeida, 2020; Remoaldo et al., 2020; Duxbury & Richards, 2019; Richards, 2011; Richards & Raymond, 2000).

This work aims to analyse the co-creative process of drawing up the creative tourism plan for Recife 2019 – 2021 to investigate the congruences and divergences between creative and regenerative tourism.

Methodology | This paper is a case study of the co-creation process that produced Recife's creative tourism plan for 2019 - 2021. The methodology used was a content analysis of the documents (report and plan) generated at the end of the process (Secretaria de Turismo, Esporte e Lazer, 2018). The analysis categories used were the dimensions of regenerative tourism design described in Bellato et al.'s study "Regenerative tourism: a conceptual framework leveraging theory and practice" (2023).

Main Results and Contributions | The analyses suggest that creative tourism, as an activity, has a dynamic that drives the establishment of regenerative cultures, as it can help transform the worldview of the people involved. The significant differentiator of creative tourism as a transformative practice is that it stimulates an integrative worldview based on learning relationships and uses art/creativity as a platform for this action.

The creative tourism principles of co-creation, use of the territory's endogenous resources, learning experiences, a shared vision with a collective legacy purpose, and the role of local agents in carrying out activities that promote regeneration are aligned with the dimensions of regenerative design and when applied to the public policy development process can contribute to the regenerative development of the destination.

Applying the principles of creative tourism to drawing up the creative tourism plan has contributed to establishing an integrative public policy. The results feed back into the system and drive it towards new actions that extend beyond the spaces directly related to creative tourism.

Limitations | This research is a particular case study of the Recife ecosystem; the findings may not be generalisable to other places or tourism dynamics. It would be very beneficial for the field of creative tourism studies if it could be replicated in other creative tourism ecosystems in order to understand how the characteristics of creative tourism behave.

Conclusions | The dynamics of the creative tourism development model in Recife show characteristics of regenerative design. They are a starting point for designing the city's regenerative tourism development model. Issues such as looking at the place through the lens of abundance and presenting it from the point of view of endogenous potential can influence the way travellers look at the destination and revise the power relations between the centre and the periphery, as well as the way the locals look at themselves, their knowledge and their territory, which has an impact on their belief in themselves and their confidence that other realities are possible.

It may strengthen popular co-participation and governance and legitimise the processes and resolutions arising from this dynamic. Integrated governance makes it possible to reach and influence spaces not directly related to creative tourism's daily reality, thus influencing processes and opening up space for other ways of operating. The study shows that creative tourism has the potential to impact the tourism model practised in Recife.

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