



كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية مراكش
Fakulté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines - Marrakech

KAUNO
KOLEGIJA



كلية العلوم
والتقنيات - مراكش
FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES
ET TECHNIQUES - MARRAKECH

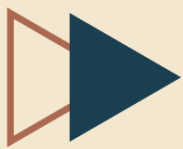
7th
MICTR

MARRAKECH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON TOURISM RESEARCH



THE AI TURN IN TOURISM:

NARRATIVE SHIFT OR
REAL TRANSFORMATION?



10-13
NOVEMBER

▶ ACADEMIC PARTNERS



宁波大学
NINGBO UNIVERSITY



VYTAUTAS
MAGNUS
UNIVERSITY
MCMXXII



SMK



الشريف



▶ INDUSTRY PARTNERS



Overall Conference Theme of the 7th Edition

Tourism has never seen the development of artificial intelligence (AI) as fast as we see today. This includes the automation of tourist interaction, use of predictive analytics for their data, and increasing use of personalized systems with the emergence of generative AI (GenAI) that can produce all sorts of content from texts, images, travel itineraries, and even support tourist decision-making processes. An “AI turn” in tourism is now becoming increasingly common with many observers referring to a moment similar to previous digital or platform turn. However, there is one question remaining: Does this shift toward AI truly represent a structural transformation of the industry, or is it simply a change in rhetoric that redefines the way we approach innovation?

There has been a growing body of academic research examining how artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly integrated into tourists’ practices and experiences. However, there remains a limited understanding of the depth and extent of the transformation that AI may bring to the tourism sector. While AI clearly illustrates evolving changes in service delivery and customer interactions—particularly through tools such as large language models like ChatGPT—its applications extend further. AI is now being used for trip planning, customer communication, and the creation of marketing content, among other functions, thereby enhancing and, in some cases, automating service delivery.

According to Sigala (2024), the use of generative AI (GenAI) will continue to shape how customers interact with tourism and hospitality products, by transforming value co-creation processes and redefining customer engagement with businesses. Additionally, Bulchand-Gidumal et al. (2024) suggest that AI could significantly alter tourism marketing practices, particularly through hyper-personalization, predictive targeting, and automation. Nevertheless, these emerging applications also pose important challenges for companies, especially in balancing the appropriate level of human involvement with machine-driven interactions in service encounters.

On the other hand, many reviews of late have cautioned against associating technological adoption with structural change. In an integrated review of generative AI in tourism management, Li (2025) observes that a great deal of empirical research between 2022 and 2024 has focused on applications and functionalities of generative AI instead of actual organization-wide change. Therefore, the literature remains conceptually fragmented, and robust theoretical frameworks explaining how AI produces sustained managerial change are still emerging. Fouad, Salem, and Fathy (2024) similarly observe that while GenAI is growing fast within tourism and hospitality research, there are also persistent concerns relating to algorithmic bias, governance, transparency, and accountability which will comprise claims of fully realized transformations.

The debate becomes even more complex within smart tourism ecosystems. Koo et al. (2025), proposed an "AI-powered smart tourism 2.0" model with the aim of redefining how destinations are governed and resources can be allocated and decisions made in real time by destination management organizations. These changes however appear to have an unevenness and reliance upon several factors including digital maturity, institutional capability and strategic alignment. For these reasons, Buhalis et al. (2024) argue that the adoption of technology in tourism is often incremental, rather than an abrupt change in management. Therefore, it is possible that the AI turn will merely be another form of reinforcing existing structures rather than challenging them.

Beyond the efficiency of the operation of AI, it is important to analyze the socio-organizational implications of this technological transition. The reviews on the conversational AI show that there are benefits in terms of increased efficiency and customer satisfaction, yet they also highlight the need for trust, acceptance, and the ethical protections necessary for the use of this technology. In addition, at a policy level, the OECD (2024) has highlighted concerns with respect to the reorganization of work, the need for the reconfiguration of skills, privacy issues, and the need to adapt regulations. Depending on the actions taken by governments, these factors can either accelerate or limit the extent of the transformation associated with the adoption of AI.

Overall, this body of research clearly demonstrates that AI has changed both service design and operational practices for tourism. Whereas, it is an empirical and theoretical matter as to whether the "AI turn" will result in the transformation of governance structures, organizational architectures, the professional roles of people working in the industry, and the strategic decisions made by them. As such, the conference theme invites submissions from researchers that provide critical assessments of what is being done with AI in tourism today and whether there is a new form of substantive change in the way the industry is operated, or simply a new form of a powerful narrative about technology.

MICTR: Broad Scope of Tourism, Destinations, Heritage, and Hospitality Research

While the above topics provide general guidance, MICTR 2026 welcomes all contributions related to tourism, destinations, and hospitality, even if they are not explicitly listed. Multidisciplinary perspectives—including management, economics, sociology, geography, anthropology, law, and information systems—are strongly encouraged.

Submissions (in French, English, or Arabic) may take various forms—such as literature reviews, case studies, or empirical research—and may adopt diverse epistemological and methodological approaches, provided that they contribute robust and well-established knowledge.

Dates and Submission Guidelines

The conference is open to a wide range of topics related to tourism, heritage, and hospitality, and welcomes diverse research perspectives.

Abstract Submission

Submissions should consist of an abstract of at least 300 words. The abstract must clearly present the theoretical framework, research problem, methodology, and expected results. A concise list of key references should also be included.

Full Paper Submission

Authors are required to submit their full papers in Microsoft Word (.docx) format. The preferred font is Times New Roman, with the main text set in 12-point size and fully justified for readability. Each paper should be between 6,000 and 8,000 words, including references, tables, and figures.

In addition, an abstract of 150–200 words must be provided, along with 4–6 relevant keywords to enhance indexing and visibility. All citations and references should follow the APA (7th edition) style.

Submissions of abstracts and full papers should be sent to:

mictr.conference@gmail.com

- Deadline for abstract and full paper submission: June 30, 2026
- Notification of acceptance: July 15, 2026
- Conference Paper Presentations: November 11–12, 2026
- Submission of the final version of the paper: November 30, 2026
- Publication: January 2027



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OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DIMITRIOS BUHALIS

Bournemouth University, UK



AHMET ATALAY

Ardahan University, Turkey



SYLVIE MICHEL

University of Bordeaux, France



MARC BIDAN

Nantes University, France



ABDELAZIZ BENAMI

CEO VIP AFRICA, Morocco

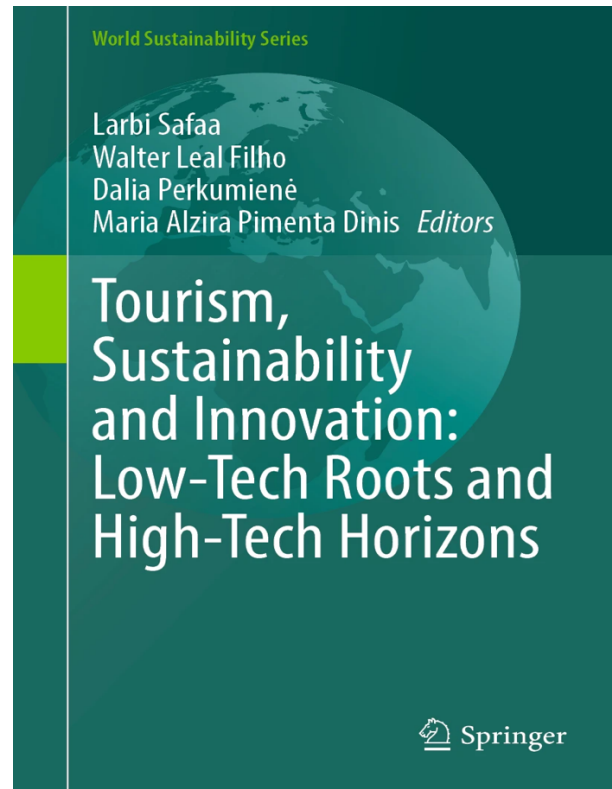


YOUSSEF EL ARCHI

Mohammed V University in Rabat

Publication perspective of the papers

- Research Paper as part of the "World Sustainability Series" by Springer "Indexed in Scopus"



- Special issue for the journal Études Caribéennes



- **Conference Program**

- **Tuesday, November 10**

- Visit of the Medina of Marrakech
- Conference registration

- **Wednesday, November 11 - Thursday, November 12**

- Opening Ceremony of MICTR
- Opening Keynote
- Panel session
- Parallel Sessions
- Closing

- **Friday, November 13**

- Visit of the Atlas Mountains

- **Conference Chairs**

- Larbi SAFAA - Centre of Excellence Tourism and Hospitality Management, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Shiwei SHEN - Joint Institute of Ningbo and Angers Universities / Sino-European Institute of Tourism and Culture, Ningbo University (China)
- Mindaugas SAMUOLAITIS - Kauno Kolegija Higher Education Institution (Lithuania)

- **Coordination Committee**

- Khalid EL HOUSNI - Higher School of Technology of Essaouira, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Hicham SADDOU - Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Sciences - Kelâa des Sraghna, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Youssef EL ARCHI - Mohammed V, University of Rabat, Morocco
- Omar BENCHAREF - Faculty of Science and Technology, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)

- **Scientific Committee**

- Ahmet ATALAY - Ardahan University (Turkey)
- François BÉDARD - School of Management Sciences, UQAM (Canada)
- Jihane BENMASSOUD - Normal Superior School, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Brahim BENBBA - ENCGT, Abdelmalek Essaadi University (Morocco)

- Marc BIDAN – Polytech Nantes, Nantes Université (France)
- Said BOUJROUF – Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Management, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Lucília CARDOSO – CiTUR, Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (Portugal)
- Imane CHARHADDINE - Higher School of Technology of Essaouira, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Olivier DEHOORNE – University of the Antilles (France)
- Mantas DILYS – Kauno Kolegija Higher Education Institution (Lithuania)
- Tomáš GAJDOŠÍK – Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (Slovakia)
- Mohammed EL AKLAA – Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Majda EL BOUKHARI, ENCGA, Ibn Zohr University, Morocco
- Carla FRAGA – Federal University of Juiz de Fora (Brazil)
- Fernando Martinez DE CARNERO CALZADA – Sapienza Università di Roma (Italy)
- Mohamed Réda KHOMSI – School of Management Sciences, UQAM (Canada)
- Faysal LEMJIDI – Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Sciences Marrakech, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Luiz MOUTINHO – Suffolk University (United Kingdom)
- Hmad OUADDI - Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences, Ibn Zohr University (Morocco)
- Dalia PERKUMIENĖ – Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania)
- Maria Alzira PIMENTA DINIS – Fernando Pessoa University (Portugal)
- Sara QASSIMI – Faculty of Science and Technology, Marrakech, Cadi Ayyad University. (Morocco)
- Ali RACHID – Higher International Institute of Tourism of Tangier (Morocco)
- Paulo ALMEIDA – CiTUR, Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (Portugal)
- Luís Lima SANTOS – CiTUR, Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (Portugal)
- Marios SOTIRIADIS – Joint Institute of Ningbo and Angers Universities (China)
- Oumaima STITINI - ENS Marrakech, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Inga STRAVINSKIENĖ – Kauno Kolegija Higher Education Institution (Lithuania)
- Yuejiao WANG - Joint Institute of Ningbo and Angers Universities / Sino-European Institute of Tourism and Culture, Ningbo University (China)
- Mohamed ZNIBER – Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Cadi Ayyad University (Morocco)
- Rositsa RÖNTYENEN – JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Jyväskylä, Finland.

- **Organizing Committee**

- PhD Students - Laboratory for Studies on Resources, Mobility, and Attractiveness (LERMA)
- PhD Students - Computer Engineering and Information Systems Laboratory (L2IS)
- Students - Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Management School

- **Registration and fees**

- Early Bird Rates (until September 20, 2026)
 - Full Rate: €410
 - PhD Student Rate: €190

- **Low-Income Countries:**

A discounted rate of up to 40% will be available for participants from low-income countries and Moroccan scholars, upon presentation of appropriate justification. Please contact the organizing committee at mictr.conference@gmail.com to verify your eligibility.

- **The Full Rate Includes:**

- Conference materials
- Lunches and coffee breaks
- Gala dinner
- Guided tour of Marrakech, its monuments
- Visit of the Atlas Mountains and lunch