



澳門旅遊大學
UNIVERSIDADE DE TURISMO DE MACAU
Macao University of Tourism

In collaboration with



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16th UTM – UN TOURISM TRAINING PROGRAMME TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY IN MEETINGS AND EVENTS INDUSTRY

MACAO SAR, CHINA; 19 – 22 November 2024

Venue: UTM and MGM Cotai

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background

The World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) is the United Nations specialized agency mandated with the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

In 2015, UNWTO (currently known as UN Tourism) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Macao SAR Government, aiming to enhance collaboration in nurturing tourism talents and advancing the sustainable development of the tourism industry. Subsequently, in 2016, IFTM (currently known as Macao University of Tourism, UTM) established the Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training to engage in joint initiatives, elevating the quality of human capital and bolstering the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Through tailored training and support, these programmes address the unique needs of the Member States, equipping tourism officials and industry representatives with the essential skills and knowledge to contribute to the sustainable development and competitiveness of tourism destinations, particularly in Asia and the Pacific.

The Training Programme, with an emphasis on successful capacity building, brings together high-level government officials from across Asia and the Pacific. It serves as a vibrant platform for exchanging insights and experiences. Participants will have the chance to refine their strategic tourism skills and build a network of regional peers, aiding their ongoing professional growth. The upcoming 16th edition of the Training Programme will be held under the theme “**Transformative Power of Technology in Meetings and Events Industry**”.

2. Context

According to the UN Tourism World Tourism Barometer released in May 2024, tourism direct GDP recovered pre-pandemic levels in 2023, reaching an estimated USD 3.3 trillion, equivalent to 3% of global GDP. International tourism reached 97% of pre-pandemic levels in the first quarter of 2024.¹ Within the broad spectrum of the global tourism market, event tourism, as a high-value segment, contributes significantly to the global economic development. In various reports and forecasts

¹ World Tourism Organization (2024), World Tourism Barometer, volume22, issue 2, May 2024, UN Tourism, Madrid
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/wtobarometereng>



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released between 2023 and 2024², expected to record a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) ranging from 4.3% to 6.8%, anticipating USD2.179 to 2.5 trillion Projected Market Revenue in the upcoming decade. Its impact on the global economy is too substantial to be overlooked.

Apart from its pivotal role in the global economy, event tourism also serves as a dynamic mosaic of human connection, knowledge exchange, and cultural understanding. How this important segment should be further constructed and nurtured has therefore been brought to the attention of industry leaders, innovators and policy-makers.

In the wake of the global pandemic, unprecedented challenges have propelled us into new trends. From virtual platforms that bridge distances to sustainable practices that protect our planet, the future of meetings and events industry, reimagined through the lens of technology and sustainability, should hold the promise of not only reviving its pre-pandemic glory but also setting new benchmarks for excellence.

3. Objectives and Topics

Alongside the evolvement in meetings and events, there is a growing awareness of the environmental impact on the industry as balancing progress with responsibility should always be the top priority. With technology playing a major role in shaping future experiences, the industry continues to respond to global trends, attendee expectations, and broader economic conditions. Organizers and stakeholders must remain vigilant and proactive to thrive in this dynamic landscape. To this end, the 16th UTM-UN Tourism Training Programme will focus on:

- **How technology is reshaping meetings and events:** Today's meetings and events industry is undergoing a digital revolution, driven by innovations such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and sophisticated digital platforms. These technologies are not only enhancing operational efficiency but are also enriching attendee experiences through personalized content, interactive features, and virtual engagements. However, adapting to changes in this digital age brings challenges, such as the security of personal data, the digital readiness of work teams, etc. How can technologies be employed to streamline event logistics, improve decision-making, deliver immersive experiences and develop marketing strategies? Current applications and future potentials of these technologies will be explored, with an aim to help participants gain insights into best practices for integrating tech-driven solutions into their event strategies.

² Including the reports of the Allied Market Research (2023): <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/tourism-event-market-to-reach-2-5-trillion-globally-by-2032-at-4-6-cagr-allied-market-research-301889324.html>, the Custom Market Insights (2024): <https://www.custommarketinsights.com/press-releases/tourism-event-market-size/> and the Future Market Insights (2024): <https://www.futuremarketinsights.com/reports/event-tourism-sector-outlook>



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- **How technology is addressing sustainability in meetings and events:** Due to severe climate change, sustainability has become a central theme across various industries. In the context of the meetings and events industry, this means we need to think about how our actions impact the environment. This includes everything, like the venues we choose, the suppliers we work with, the way we manage waste, etc. Current sustainable practices with the support of technologies will be introduced and discussed, aiming to inspire actionable steps.

The topics will be covered in four sessions, namely:

- Session I: Future of AI for the Meetings and Events
- Session II: Digital Marketing Tools for Smart Destination Management
- Session III: Digital Skills for Professionals in the Meetings and Events Industry
- Session IV: Enhancing Destination Sustainability with Technologies

Through discussions, sharing of best practices, case studies, and success stories from industry leaders, scholars, and experts, by the conclusion of the Training Programme, participants should be able to describe and identify the trends in the meetings and events industry fueled by the application of technology.

4. Participants

The 16th UTM-UN Tourism Training Programme will bring together professionals and experts in the fields of the meetings and events industry, including:

- Ministries of Tourism and National Tourism Organizations from UN Tourism Member States
- International and Regional Organizations
- Regional and Local Destination Management Organizations
- Academic institutions (universities, research facilities) specializing in meetings and events tourism