



2023 International Accessible Tourism Forum

The Future of Tourism for All: Advancing Accessible Tourism in the Asia-Pacific Region

11/12 December 2023

Seoul, Republic of Korea

1.3 billion people experience significant disability. Millions of us will develop **specific access requirements** due to factors such as age, dependency status or diverse health conditions. For these customers and their families, travelling is challenging and sometimes impossible. It is due to the way the environments and services that we depend on have been conceived, in all spheres of our lives, **including tourism.**

Improving the accessibility of tourism destinations, products and services **benefits all of us, local communities and visitors alike, with or without disability.** Upgrading accessibility also opens tourism up to an immense potential **market and new sources of revenue.** Seniors and travelers with disabilities often travel off-season, have time for leisure, and bring substantial financial benefits to the industry, with a higher spend per capita. Travelers with disabilities are loyal customers and usually don't travel alone.

This conference, will focus on Asia and the Pacific region and outline how making an investment in accessibility now will pay dividends in the future, creating a tourism experience that can be enjoyed by everybody. It will feature an enriching discussion engaging experts from Europe, Asia and Australia, and serve as a networking platform for launching new international projects.

Draft Agenda

Monday 11 December

10:00~10:20 **Opening Ceremony**

H.E. Ms. Jang Mi-ran, the 2nd Vice Minister, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) – Video message

Mr. Youngchoong Seo, Executive Vice President of the International Tourism Division, Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)

10:20~11:00 **Keynote Presentation**

Igor Stefanovic, Technical Coordinator of the Ethics Culture and Social Responsibility Department, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)- Specialist on Accessible Tourism

Fireside chat with **Martin Heng**, Communications Professional and Inclusive Travel Advocate and **Hailey Brown**, Founder of *Vacayit-Your guide to the world*, Australia

11:00~11:20 **Coffee Break**

11:20~13:00 **Session 1: The role of public administrations: How can public policies increase the accessibility of tourism destinations?**

This session will focus on the potential of policy tools, legislation and standards in advancing accessibility at regional, national and local level. Panelists will showcase examples of good practice and discuss why the joint elaboration of accessibility strategies with the industry and organizations of persons with disabilities, are key for improving our quality of life. (*15 mins presentation each + 40 mins debate*)

Moderator: **Prof. Lee Yeon-taek**, Hanyang University, Republic of Korea

Speakers:

- **Kang Ji-eun**, Director of the Tourism Policy Division, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea
- **Ruth Sear**, Policy Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
- **Kritsadakorn Pinthong**, Chief of International Cooperation Section, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand
- **Prof. Dr Yahaya Ahmad**, Malaya University, Malaysia
- **Silvia Susana Flores Bañuelos**, Barcelona Tourism, Spain (online)

13:00~14:00 Lunch

14:00~15:40 Session 2: The Business Case for accessibility: Understanding the benefits of 'Tourism for All' for companies and customers

In this session panelists will present success stories from the tourism sector and discuss the benefits that businesses and customers have seen from increased accessibility and tailored capacity building targeting tourism professionals. They will also bring up innovative and technology-driven solutions that are transforming how people with disabilities nowadays travel and communicate. *(15 mins presentation each+ 40 mins debate)*

Moderator: **Prof. Yoon Yoo-sik**, Kyung Hee University, Republic of Korea

Speakers:

- **Hong Seo-yoon**, Former President, Tourism for All KOREA
- **Magnus Berglund**, Accessibility and Inclusion Advisor, Founder and owner of Accessibility Business
- **Oneshot Hansol**, Korean Influencer and Content Creator on YouTube
- **Nagahashi Asami**, Japan Universal Tourism Research Institute
- **Hailey Brown**, Founder of Vacayit-Your guide to the world, Australia

15:40~16:00 Coffee break

16:00~17:00 Closing Session and Takeaways: How to prioritize accessibility solutions along the tourism value chain?

The closing session will consider the advantages that increased accessibility and specific solutions for a wide range of end-users can bring to the entire tourism value chain. It will also focus on all the positive impacts that this can have on local communities and their overall wellbeing. *(No presentations, only a 60 min debate)*

Discussion conducted by: Igor Stefanovic, UNWTO

Participants: **Martin Heng, Magnus Berglund, Ruth Sear, Kritsadakorn Pinthong, Hong Seo-yoon** and

Katerina Papamichail, Architect, ENAT Board of Directors, National Expert Greece, AccessibleEU Resource Centre (online)

17:00 End of the conference

Tuesday 12 December

09:00 ~ 18:00 Technical Visits