

Welcome

As we edge into mulled wine season and the final stretch of the year, this issue of the MGM Research Newsletter offers a warm snapshot of a community in full motion. Across the pages you'll find keynotes on food as living heritage, capacity-building around research integrity, new funding successes, and the return of In the MEANtime with a fresh line-up of voices. Together, they show how our work travels: from Diyarbakir to Alicante, from podcast studio to classroom, from funding bids to tangible KE projects.

A strong thread running through this issue is how we do research with integrity and care in a digital age: thinking critically about rankings, AI and ethics, while still celebrating success, from new grants and collaborations to our global 51–75 position in Hospitality & Tourism Management. Well done to colleagues who always seek out opportunities, not just for themselves, but also to hold space for each other and make this community a better place.

Thank you for everything you have contributed this term. I hope you can take ten quiet minutes, a hot drink of your choice in hand, and enjoy catching up with what your colleagues have been doing.

Wenjie

Keynote Speaker



In early November, **Dr Hai Nguyen** delivered a keynote on “Tasting Heritage: Food as Intangible Culture in Tourism” at the 3rd International Mesopotamia Faith, Culture and Gastronomy Tourism Congress in Diyarbakir, Turkey.

The presentation highlighted how food offers a distinctive perspective on contemporary tourism, framing culinary experiences as living intangible cultural heritage that shapes tourists’ motivations, identities, and emotional connections to places. It explored differences among food-driven tourist segments, examined how authenticity is perceived across restaurants, markets, and festival settings, and demonstrated how sensory, cultural, and emotional dimensions combine to create memorable culinary experiences.

Drawing on concepts from the experience economy and authenticity theory, Dr Nguyen emphasised that thoughtfully designed, community-led, heritage-focused food experiences can enhance visitor satisfaction, support the preservation of local culture, and provide destinations with a meaningful competitive advantage. The presentation also noted that in the Diyarbakir region, the convergence of Mesopotamian, Anatolian, and Turkish culinary traditions, alongside its rich archaeological heritage, offers a unique avenue for further research and exploration in tourism studies.



On 11 November, we hosted the Academy of Marketing-funded ECR capacity-building workshop “Beyond Rankings: Reclaiming Research Integrity in Marketing Scholarship”. The day brought together academics and PhD students across the country. Co-organised by **Dr Yakun Zhang** and **Dr Wenjie Cai**, the workshop set out to move “beyond rankings” and open an honest conversation about how metrics, journal lists and institutional pressure shape marketing research cultures.



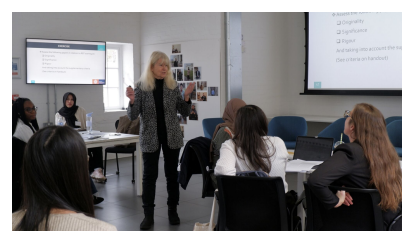
Professor Scott McCabe opened with a keynote on building a meaningful, values-led research career. He unpacked how system-level incentives and over-reliance on journal metrics can distort research agendas and undermine trust, and argued for stronger research ethics, open science, responsible use of generative AI and adoption of frameworks such as DORA to support research integrity. He also offered practical advice on developing a personal strategy, clarifying research identity and planning for progression.



The panel discussion that followed, chaired by Professor Neeru Malhotra and featuring Professors Pauline Maclaran and Scott McCabe, Dr Marion Karl, Dr Ryan Yung and Hannah Wilson, brought these themes to life through lived experience. Panellists spoke openly about navigating metric-heavy probation and promotion systems, and the emotional toll of rejection and comparison. They also highlighted less visible aspects of research culture, such as gatekeeping, invisible labour and the importance of senior academics using their positionality to shield ECRs, model generous reviewing practices and create spaces where early career scholars can ask questions without fear.



In the afternoon, Professor Pauline Maclaran demystified what “REF quality” really means by turning the room into a mock REF sub-panel. Working in small groups, participants read anonymised published papers and scored them for originality, significance and rigour before the journal titles and rankings were revealed. The exercise made visible how strong, innovative work can appear outside the highest-ranked journals and how ABS status is, at best, an imperfect proxy for contribution. It equipped colleagues with a more nuanced vocabulary for discussing quality and offered concrete arguments to use when pushing back against list-based policies in their home institutions.



The “Publish or Perish” card game, led by Dr Isabella Ye, added humour to these discussions. Participants drew research, mishap and life-event cards as they tried to “publish” manuscripts laid out on the table, encountering familiar obstacles such as limited time and unexpected setbacks. The game ended with a one-minute “defence” of each fictional publication portfolio and peer-voted awards for different trajectories, gently exposing how competition, gaming and citation chasing can creep into academic life while also showing how collaboration and shared risk can improve outcomes.



The closing session, “Publishing with Purpose: Finding Meaning Beyond Metrics”, was led by Dr Amalina Zakariah and Dr Ratna Khanijou. Drawing on their research into the experiences of non-Western ECRs in UK business schools, they shared how epistemic hierarchies and Western-centric norms can create “deep labour” and identity compromises for many scholars. Through a series of activities, the session created a safe space to talk about identity, struggle, pride and aspiration. Groups then reflected on strategies for protecting their sense of purpose, supporting one another and finding meaning in their work.



The day ended with a shared commitment to nurture a more generous research culture: one where integrity matters more than league tables, wellbeing is not an afterthought, and success is measured not only in ABS stars but in the quality, creativity and care of the scholarship we create together.



In the MEANtime Season 2

MGM's research podcast, In the MEANtime, is back for Season 2. After a longer-than-planned break to settle into a new studio (and navigate a few technical hiccups along the way), the team has relaunched the series with a fresh line-up of subject experts to chat about research. Produced and hosted by **Dr Lauren Siegel, Dr Rami Shamseen, Dr Chen Yang, Dr Ryan Yung** and **Dr Wenjie Cai**, the podcast continues to spotlight the people, projects and ideas that shape our research culture. Three new episodes will be released before the end of the year, with further episodes following in the new year. In addition to speaking to our colleagues, we also have external guests this season.

Please scan the QR code and listen to the episodes.



Funding Success



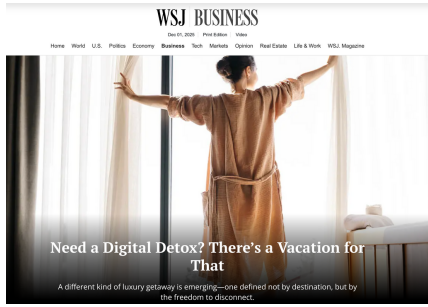
Dr Elisa Pannini has secured a DTA Supervisor Grant from the University Alliance Future Societies Doctoral Training Alliance to run a one-day workshop on the ethical use of AI in research. The £1,810 award will support an interdisciplinary event at the University of Greenwich in June 2026, co-led with Dr Anna Piazza, Dr Guido Conaldi and Dr Emanuele Lobina.

The workshop will bring together around 20 doctoral researchers and 20 supervisors from across the DTA network to explore how AI tools can be used responsibly in both quantitative and qualitative research. A key output will be a co-created Doctoral AI Chart, setting out shared principles to guide responsible AI use during the PhD journey and beyond. The project aims to open up conversation, align supervisory practice and contribute to sector-wide debates on AI, research integrity and future researcher development.

Jo Goodey and Dr **Juliane Thieme**, together with Dr Ella Simpson (Law & Criminology), have secured KE4Impact Kick-starter funding for their cross-faculty project "Events for Social Justice: UK Prison Reform Concert – Exploratory Project Phase." The team will work with Justice DAO CIC, a lived-experience-led organisation focused on transforming justice systems, to scope a major UK Prison Reform Concert to be hosted on the Greenwich campus.

The exploratory phase funded by KE4Impact will centre on stakeholder engagement and feasibility work. The team will run a series of co-design workshops with people who have direct experience of the criminal justice system, community partners, staff, and students from Events Management, Law and Criminology. These activities will map out what a large-scale, public-facing concert could look like, how it can platform lived experience ethically, and how it can create space for dialogue around prison reform. By building new partnerships and creating hands-on opportunities for students, the project aims to lay the groundwork for long-term social justice impact and strong community links.





Dr Wenjie Cai's research on digital-free tourism has been featured in a Wall Street Journal article titled "Need a Digital Detox? There's a Vacation for That."

Drawing on Google Trends and industry data, the piece explores the rapid rise of interest in "digital detox" and "digital detox retreat" holidays. Wenjie explains that most travellers drawn to these breaks are knowledge workers and urban residents who feel the strain of constant connectivity and the blurred boundaries between work and home. Stepping away from devices, he notes, gives people space to rest, recharge and reconnect with themselves and those they care about. The article highlights findings from Wenjie's digital-free tourism studies, where participants showed measurable improvements in wellbeing, including calmer physiological responses, better sleep and a stronger sense of rejuvenation. Travellers also report heightened senses and a deeper immersion in nature when phones are set aside. Looking ahead, Wenjie suggests that digital detox travel is "here to stay" as a distinct and maturing market segment within the wider tourism landscape.

Read the article [HERE](#)

Jo Goodey joins the Centre for Events and Festivals – Professor Board

Jo Goodey has recently been invited to join the Professor Board for the Centre of Events and Festivals. The Centre for Events and Festivals (CEF) is an international Not-for-Profit providing resources to all event and festival sectors – from sports, business and private events to public, arts, and cultural festivals. This is done by harnessing the collective intelligence of leading industry experts and professors, practitioners, and bringing together our vibrant community to meet, debate and collaborate on intellectual and business challenges. Of joining the board, Jo said "I'm passionate about advancing critical, inclusive, and sustainable approaches to all forms of events education and practice. By joining the Centre of Events and Festivals Professor Board I look forward to opportunities to collaborate, share research insights, and strengthen the academic and industry impact of our field."



Global Ranking of Academic Subjects



The University of Greenwich has been ranked in the 51–75 band worldwide for **Hospitality & Tourism Management** in the 2025 Global Ranking of Academic Subjects (Shanghai Ranking).

Shanghai Ranking's subject tables are based almost entirely on research performance, using indicators such as world-class faculty, volume of publications, citation impact, high-quality journal output and international collaboration. Our position in the 51–75 range therefore reflects the strength and growing visibility of our hospitality and tourism research on the global stage.

This achievement is a testament to the sustained work of colleagues across our tourism and hospitality team, whose publications, collaborations and impact activities are shaping debates in the subject area. Congratulations to all our hospitality and tourism colleagues whose efforts have contributed to this international recognition.

Dr Humeyra Dogru Dastan and **Dr Zivai Mare** attended the World Social Marketing Conference, held from 5–7 November in Alicante, Spain, where they presented two refereed papers.

AI in Social Marketing: Promoting Healthy Eating and Exercise Behaviour

Zivai Mare & Humeyra Dogru Dastan

Presented by Dr Zivai Mare, this study examined how artificial intelligence can support social marketing interventions aimed at promoting healthier eating and increased physical activity. Against the backdrop of rising obesity rates and associated chronic health conditions, the research used a netnographic approach to analyse naturally occurring online discussions. The study explored public perceptions of AI's role in shaping health behaviours, identifying both opportunities and concerns around its use. The work makes a dual contribution by showcasing digital ethnography as a method for capturing rich, contextual insights and by advancing understanding of how AI can be harnessed for social good in public health.

A Netnographic Analysis on Sustainable Cities towards Sustainable Tourism

Humeyra Dogru Dastan & Zivai Mare

Presented by Dr Humeyra Dogru Dastan, this paper explored how sustainable cities are imagined and discussed in the context of global urbanisation and sustainable tourism. Using qualitative content analysis of Reddit discussions and guided by the Triple Bottom Line framework across micro, meso and macro levels, the study identified key challenges and priorities for sustainable urban development. Findings highlighted the importance of regulation, community awareness and education within the social dimension; biodiversity, green spaces, energy conservation and waste management within the environmental dimension; and economic pressures and housing affordability within the economic dimension. The research offers valuable insights into how online communities envision more liveable, resilient cities that can support sustainable tourism.

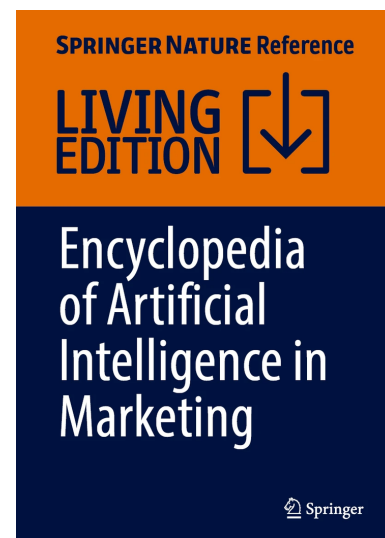


Jo Goodey attended the Sustainable Events Show to take part in the debate "Taking the Bull by the Horns: Are Event Leaders Short-Changing Gen Z?" alongside Nathan Angus of Wildfire. The discussion explored common perceptions of Gen Z workers as a demanding workforce, particularly regarding their expectations for workplace flexibility, mental-health support and overall wellbeing.

Jo argued that Event Leaders must listen more closely to Gen Z in the workplace, highlighting that the events industry has historically lacked structured career pipelines and talent development. This, she noted, has contributed to limited workforce diversity, as younger generations often leave the industry when they cannot envision a long-term future within it. The debate also examined long-standing expectations placed on event professionals to work excessive hours or sacrifice holidays, weekends and social lives due to the perceived 'demands of the job'. A lively audience discussion followed, focusing on career burnout, wellbeing and the urgent need for the industry to improve working conditions. Participants stressed that the sector must align with contemporary standards of inclusion, accessibility and equity, rather than continuing to treat being overworked as a 'badge of honour'.

Dr Angie Ratcharak and her co-author explore how AI-driven service robots are reshaping marketing practice in their new chapter, *Service robots in marketing: Impacts on customer experience, workforce dynamics, and satisfaction*, published in the *Encyclopedia of Artificial Intelligence in Marketing*. Focusing particularly on hospitality and tourism, they draw on online review analytics and big data to show how robots are influencing customer perceptions, emotions, and satisfaction, and how these effects often depend on rapport and context. The chapter also looks at what this means for employees, highlighting the new skills required for hybrid human–robot collaboration on the frontline. From personalised services and e-reputation management to real-time data collection, the authors outline key strategic opportunities for marketers, while also acknowledging challenges such as technological limits, trust and adoption barriers, and regulatory uncertainty. Looking ahead, they position service robots within the broader vision of Industry 5.0, emphasising human well-being, meaningful collaboration, and sustainable innovation. When implemented thoughtfully, they argue, service robots can move beyond being merely functional tools to become emotionally resonant and strategically valuable touchpoints in future service experiences.

- Borghi, M., & **Ratcharak, P.** (2026). Service robots in marketing: Impacts on customer experience, workforce dynamics, and satisfaction. In R. Ladhari (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of artificial intelligence in marketing*. Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-75316-9_72-1



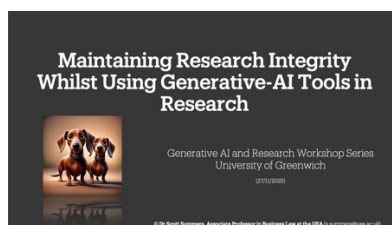
TMRC Seminar



The Tourism and Marketing Research Centre (TMRC) held its second research seminar of the term on 12 November, featuring a presentation by **Prof. Nathália Körössy** (Departamento de Hotelaria e Turismo, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil) invited by **Dr Peter Vlachos**.

Prof. Körössy first provided an overview of her previous work on film tourism, outlining how screen productions shape destination image, visitor motivations and patterns of place consumption. She then introduced, together with Dr Vlachos, their joint project on the development of a film tourism research model. The seminar set out plans for a network analysis of three London boroughs to examine the relationships between film production, film tourism and wider urban consumption, positioning this study as the first phase of a wider UK research agenda on film tourism.

Generative AI and research integrity Workshop



Dr Wenjie Cai recently hosted the first session in the Generative AI and Research Workshop Series: “Maintaining Research Integrity Whilst Using Generative-AI Tools in Research.” The session was led by **Dr Scott Summers**, Associate Professor in Business Law at the University of East Anglia.

Speaking to GBS colleagues and PGRs, Scott offered a clear, practice-focused overview of the ethical and legal landscape surrounding generative AI tools. He highlighted key risks around transparency and bias, data protection, re-identification, informed consent, and intellectual property, stressing that researchers should treat Gen AI like a powerful piece of equipment: you must understand how it works, what it can and cannot do, and remain fully accountable for the results it helps to generate. The workshop set out concrete due-diligence steps for researchers, including scrutinising privacy policies and terms of use, avoiding the input of personal or confidential data, opting out of training wherever possible, and documenting tool versions, prompts, dates and outputs to support transparency and reproducibility. Scott also encouraged participants to build AI use explicitly into consent and data management plans, and to maintain robust human oversight over all AI-assisted analysis and writing.

PGR Training

The MGM PGR training series opened this term with a hands-on workshop led by **Dr Ryan Yung**. Drawing on his experience on several systematic literature review projects, Ryan introduced PhD students to systematic quantitative literature reviews (SQLR) and their role in producing publishable, theory-driven work.

The session walked participants step by step through the SQLR process using Scopus and other key databases: refining search terms, setting appropriate inclusion/exclusion criteria, and applying PRISMA flow diagrams. Ryan demonstrated how to export and structure search results in Excel, and how to code methods, theories and contexts in ways that make gaps and patterns in the literature visible.

Designed to be highly practical, the workshop was particularly valuable for students planning to use systematic reviews in their theses, but also offered transferable techniques for general literature searching and for scoping conceptual papers. The session was well attended, with lively discussion around search strategies, database quirks and publication expectations, setting a strong foundation for the rest of the MGM PGR training series.



Meet our new colleague



Dr Tippiyanet Sorosrungruang joined us as a Lecturer in Digital Marketing & Data Analytics. Her research sits at the intersection of digital marketing, information systems, and consumer psychology, with particular interests in AI-enabled influencers, AI-enhanced technologies, and responsible AI. She investigates how emerging technologies shape consumer engagement, trust, well-being, and decision-making in digital marketing contexts. Her doctoral research adopts a mixed-method approach, integrating a systematic literature review, a quantitative study, and industry expert interviews to develop a holistic understanding of AI-driven persuasion and its implications for both consumers and developers, as well as policymakers. She also contributes to the academic community as a reviewer for academic journals, including *Tourism Management*, *Internet Research*, and *Information Technology & People*. Prior to academia, Tippiyanet gained extensive industry experience in marketing, brand management, and digital transformation. She has held positions such as Marketing Manager and Business Development Manager across organisations, including True Corporation (telecommunications), IBM, Coca-Cola, and Chevron.

Publications:

- Sorosrungruang, T., Ameen, N. and Hackley, C. (2024). How real is real enough? Unveiling the diverse power of generative AI-enabled virtual influencers and the dynamics of human responses. *Psychology & Marketing*.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.22105>
- Ameen, N., Hoelscher, V., Cheah, J.-H., Xia, S., Sorosrungruang, T., & Do (Bin), T. K. (2024). Responsible AI and Service Inclusion in Self-Tracking Health Services. In *Responsible AI and Service Inclusion in Self-Tracking Health Services*. International Conference on Information Systems.
https://aisel.aisnet.org/treos_icis2024/147/