

The Innovation Imperative in Smart Cities and Smart Tourism: A Call for Collaboration Toward Building and Sharing Knowledge of Patterns of Success in Sustainable Living and Climate Renewal.

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The imperative of addressing the dual complexities of climate change and the wider sustainability challenge has never been of more importance (Hoegh-Guldberg et al., 2019). Without meaningful, purposeful and actionable steps being embraced by the global community and adopted by civil society, climate change will continue unabated and cause average global temperatures to increase beyond 3°C, with significantly adverse impacts on every ecosystem (Zhenmin and Espinosa, 2019). According to the UN (2020) “it is still possible, using a wide array of technological measures and changes in behaviour, to limit the increase in global mean temperature to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.”

Whether we hold dystopian or utopian views of our future wellbeing against this backdrop, supported through today’s technologies, it is likely that trajectories are toward further human adoption and embedding of enabling platforms, sensors, computing and processes that support an internet of things to better measure and manage human impact in the biosphere (Thiele, 2020). This inherent ‘smartness’ in design is already being engineered into our cities, societies, their tourism and its offerings (Calzada, 2019; Buhalis and Michopoulou, 2013; Gretzel et al., 2015). What is missing, is an agreed methodology and approach to establishing what is mission critical at a granular level in the fight against climate change and introducing incentives and mechanisms to bring about shifts in policy that support a reduction in climate challenging behaviours (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2017). Smart city and smart tourism policies globally has seen ICT infrastructure, urban data hubs and experience design play larger roles in the building of contemporary governance structures with a myriad of solutions being trialled around the world (Calzada, 2020; Shafiee et al., 2019).

Where then, are the most promising of these emerging and more integrated techno-cultural ecosystems which are steered toward meeting the grand challenges of climate renewal and citizen led sustainability practice (Calzada, 2021)? What approaches have been successful in awakening society and co-creating new cultural norms of global citizenry that could be accepted and adapted into wider culture of travel and tourism for the benefit of humanity (Calzada and Arranz, 2017)? What are the behaviours of proactive ‘Citizitors’ in inspiring a global pathway toward a more sustainable human presence on earth? In a short 5 minute presentation, stemming from previous experimentations and research findings in post-violence Basque Country, lessons learnt, and ongoing transferred and project exchange with the Northern Ireland, this paper focus on one of Belfast’s proposed pilot smart city experiences for ‘Citizitors’, a call is made for wider collaboration through IFITT toward building a database of emerging smart tourism and smart cities solutions that are showing promise in meeting the global imperative of climate renewal and more sustainable living.

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Smart Cities, Smart Tourism, Climate Change, Sustainability, Citizitors, Experience Design, Living Labs, Smart City Citizenship