

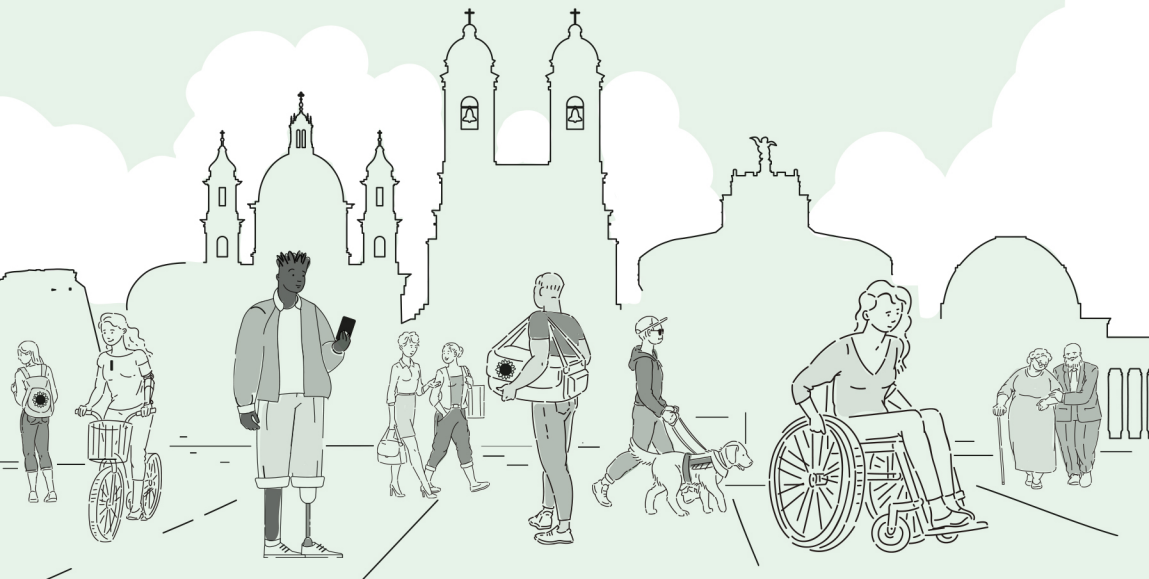
An illustration of a city skyline where the buildings are represented by the silhouettes of people in various states of disability and tourism. At the top, several figures are shown upside down, including a person in a wheelchair, a person with a camera, and a person with a backpack. The skyline below features various architectural elements like domes and spires.

THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE

THE DIS/ABLED TOURIST

Navigating an Ableist Tourism World

BRIELLE GILLOVIC • ALISON MCINTOSH
SIMON DARCY



The Disabled Tourist

THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE

Series editor: Richard Sharpley

The Tourist Experience series addresses a notable gap in the literature on Tourism Studies by foregrounding the tourist experience in a cohesive and thematically structured manner.

Taking a novel approach by presenting both short form publications and longer form monographs exploring issues in the tourist experience, the series will seek to build a comprehensive set of texts that collectively contribute to critical discourse and understanding of the contemporary tourist experience. Short form publications will review specific types of tourist by focusing primarily on the influences and nature and significance of their experiences within a socio-cultural framework while longer titles will embrace contemporary empirical and conceptual perspectives and debates as a means of understanding experiences.

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The Disabled Tourist: Navigating an Ableist Tourism World

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL.

First edition 2024

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80455-829-4 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80455-828-7 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80455-830-0 (Epub)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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About the Authors

Brielle Gillovic is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Hospitality and Tourism at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand. She was awarded a Doctorate (PhD) by the University of Waikato, New Zealand, for her thesis titled *Experiences of Care at the Nexus of Intellectual Disability and Leisure Travel*. Her doctoral research contributed original insights into the practical, emotional, and relational dimensions of care during travel as experienced by carers and adults with intellectual disability. Brielle's specific areas of research expertise are in disability, accessibility, and inclusion. Her wider research interests are founded in critical tourism studies, with a particular focus on issues of human dignity and equity, rights, and ethics. Brielle is on the editorial boards of *Tourism Management Perspectives* and *Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism*, and is a regular reviewer for leading academic journals, including *Annals of Tourism Research* and the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. Brielle is also the Project Lead for AUT's Tourism for All New Zealand Research Group, which champions accessible and inclusive tourism in New Zealand, and recognises the citizenship rights of people with disability and those living with chronic pain or terminal illness to tourism as an inclusive leisure activity.

Alison McIntosh is a Professor of Tourism in the School of Hospitality and Tourism at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand. Alison is known internationally for her work as a critical tourism scholar. She has published extensively in leading international tourism and hospitality journals. A central theme of her research is the idea that experiential, qualitative, and social justice analyses reveal subjective, emotional, spiritual, and neglected aspects of tourism experiences. Her research prioritises otherwise unheard voices, personal dimensions, distinct types of tourism encounters, and tourism in marginalised contexts. Her publications in the field contain both empirical and conceptual originality and contribute innovative research methodologies that prioritise issues of equity and empowerment through participation. In 2011, she was Founding Co-Editor of the international peer-reviewed journal, *Hospitality and Society*, a journal aimed at supporting critical and multidisciplinary perspectives on hospitality, and in 2017 she co-founded the online open access journal, *Hospitality Insights*, to provide open access summaries of academic research to the hospitality industry and community. She is an active advocate of social change through meaningful research-community partnerships. In 2019, she established AUT's Tourism for All New Zealand Research Group to champion accessible and inclusive tourism.

Previously, in 2014, she was Founding Co-Convenor of the University of Waikato's New Zealand Network for Community Hospitality, which bridges academia and not-for-profits in tackling social issues facing our societies.

Simon Darcy is a Professor of Social Inclusion at the UTS Business School, University of Technology Sydney, Australia. He is an interdisciplinary mixed methods researcher with expertise in developing inclusive organisational approaches for diversity groups. Simon's academic and industry-based work in disability, tourism, and accessible tourism has defined the field and led to collaborations with local, regional, national, and international destination management organisations, including the United Nations World Tourism Organization. As one of the few scholars with lived experience of disability, as a high-level individual with a spinal cord injury who uses a power wheelchair, he brings an insider's perspective that seeks to develop transformative solutions for transport, travel, and tourism for the group. His seminal work on accessible tourism has paved the way for the global study of disability in the context of tourism, hospitality, and events. His research and industry collaborations on accessible tourism have been recognised as outstanding through the World Leisure Organization's Innovation Prize, and the United Nations World Tourism Organization's publications on best practice in 2015 and 2021. His research team's article on accessible tourism as part of destination competitiveness was awarded the Asociación Española de Expertos Científicos en Turismo best tourism research paper. Simon presented the Richard Jones Oration for the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission examining issues of transport, travel, and tourism as it relates to the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Simon is also a qualified environmental planner and access auditor who has used these skills in strategic planning and research to improve the business practice of venues and major events, and through volunteer management research with the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee. He is also a member of Standards Australia's revision of AS1428 Access and Mobility and is Standards Australia's representative on the International Organization for Standardization's development of ISO/DIS 21902 *Tourism and Related Services – Accessible Tourism for All*. Simon is actively involved in changing the practice of business, government, and the not-for-profit sector through implementing the outcomes of his research.

Foreword

This volume, by leading tourism and disability scholars, brings fresh and important insights to debates in the field of tourism and ‘accessible tourism’ in particular. The authors challenge their peers to reflect critically on the prevailing concepts and language surrounding disability, which have shaped the study and, indeed, the practices related to tourism accessibility and inclusion over the past decades. A central thesis of their work is that the term, ‘the dis/abled tourist’, draws our attention to ‘...the disabling discourses that currently marginalise and oppress people with disability in their role of tourist’. While disability studies recognise the social and political implications of language, it is the goal of this book to expose, challenge, and dismantle the normative structures of a disabling and ableist tourism world. What really strikes home, is that the tourism sector has largely failed to recognise its moral responsibility to the voices and lived experiences of people with disability, in designing tourism services that should ostensibly be ‘for all’, without segregation or discrimination.

Tourism, in the way it is constructed, managed, and presented, is inevitably a reflection of the society in which it is situated. This makes accessible tourism a valuable subject when examining disability and the place of people with disability in society. Importantly, the authors indicate the need for a new mindset among tourism scholars, policy makers, and providers, with respect for and recognition of the diverse backgrounds, interests, and abilities of people with disability. With new and emerging frameworks and guidelines, there is an optimistic message that tourism sector actors and stakeholders can work together to deliver full and equitable access and inclusion of all tourists in the communities they visit.

By Ivor Ambrose,
Managing Director,
ENAT – European Network for Accessible Tourism