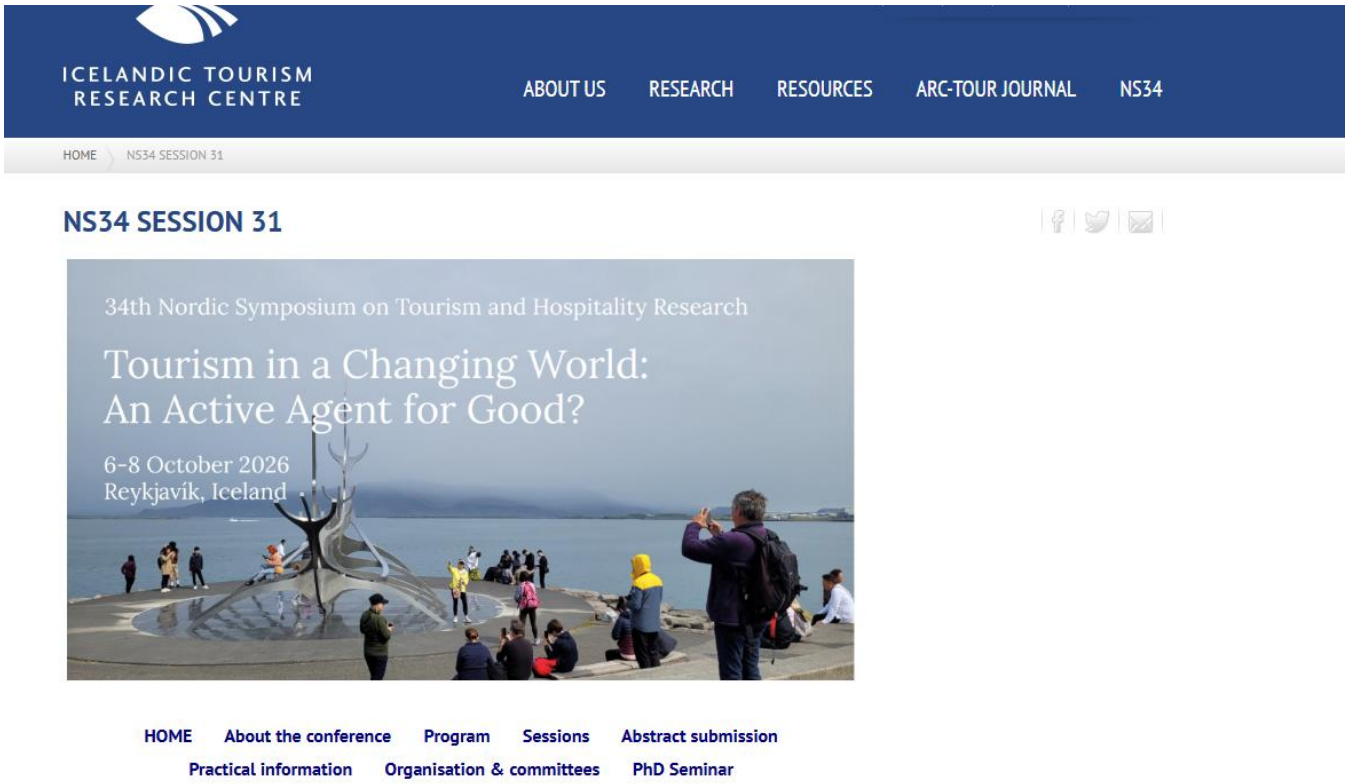

Title: Work in Tourism and Hospitality: Precarity, Power, and Possibilities for Change

Organisers: Eleonora Rossi, Maria Thulemark, Tara Duncan and Susanna Heldt Cassel

Affiliation: Örebro University, Dalarna University and Thompson Rivers University

Description

The tourism and hospitality industry employs millions globally and is frequently positioned as a vehicle for inclusive growth, regional development, and social mobility. Yet, tourism and hospitality labour is also characterised by precarity; seasonality; informality; gendered and racialized hierarchies, migrant dependence, and exposure to environmental and economic shocks. As tourism systems confront climate change, digital transformation, overtourism, demographic shifts, and post-pandemic restructuring, questions of who benefits from tourism, and under what conditions, become increasingly urgent. If tourism is to act as an 'active agent for good', its labour regimes, employment practices, and value distributions require critical scrutiny.

This session invites contributions on the changing nature of work in tourism and hospitality and its implications for equity, sustainability, and justice. We welcome conceptual, empirical, and methodological papers that interrogate how work is organised, governed, experienced, and contested across tourism contexts. Contributions may examine tensions between growth-oriented tourism models and decent work aspirations; or the lived experiences of workers navigating insecurity, care responsibilities, and shifting regulatory environments. We are particularly interested in research that foregrounds workers' voices and examines how labour practices shape tourism's capacity to contribute positively to societies.

We welcome research grounded in diverse theoretical and empirical contexts, including but not limited to:

- Decent work, precarity, and labour market segmentation in tourism and hospitality
- Gendered, racialized, migrant, and youth labour inequalities
- Platformisation, algorithmic management, and digital labour in tourism services
- Emotional, embodied, and affective labour in hospitality settings
- Unionisation, collective organising, and new forms of labour activism

Title: Sexual Harassment in Extended Client Relationships: A Case Study of Ski Instructors
Authors: Nelli Heiskanen, University of Eastern Finland, and Kelsey M. Johansen

Sexual harassment generates substantial organizational costs while undermining employee job satisfaction, performance, and commitment (Chen et al., 2023; Zhang & Shum, 2025). While tourism and hospitality research has examined harassment in hotels, restaurants, and guiding (Alrawadieh & Alrawadieh, 2020; Mousa et al., 2024), they largely focus on brief or group-based encounters. Ski instruction differs: instructors spend entire days — sometimes weeks — with the same clients, involving sustained physical proximity, blurred professional-social boundaries, and limited managerial oversight. These conditions make harassment more likely to occur and more difficult to interrupt. Extended client relationships can constrain disengage, tie income and evaluation to individual clients, and enable gradual escalation and normalization of inappropriate behaviour – dynamics that remain underexamined.

Drawing on the Pressure-Disorganization-Regulatory Failure framework (Knox & Bohle, 2024), and Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), this study links structural conditions to lived experience. Seasonal employment and limited oversight sustain exposure to risk, while repeated, inescapable interactions result in cumulative resource depletion, inhibiting recovery.

This study asks: (1) how harassment develops under prolonged one-on-one contact; (2) which environmental characteristic and features of ski instructions invite, increase, and sustain vulnerability; (3) how organizational practices shape instructors' responses; and (4) which organizational policies and leadership-driven interventions effectively disrupt these dynamics. A sequential mixed-methods design combines anonymous narratives (n = 50–100) with follow-up semi-structured interviews (n = 25) to identify patterns, mechanisms, and interventions through thematic analysis.

Findings advance beyond documenting prevalence by showing how temporally extended, relationally dependent interactions produce self-reinforcing harassment dynamics, and generate prevention strategies including boundary-setting protocols, structured client pairing, and support systems for low-oversight environments.

Keywords: sexual harassment; Extended Client Relationships; ski instructors