

Themed editorial: How is hospitality education embedding sustainable practices in their curriculum and program delivery? An Asian perspective

If you run a search on a phrase like “Sustainability in the curriculum” the search engine results page provides a long list of college and university courses. This is also the case for hospitality and tourism education and there is a growing body of published work on how to become more sustainable – but more action is needed. I am pleased to welcome back theme editors Sanjay Sharma and Sandeep Munjal who in this issue, examine with their writing team the changes that are needed to accelerate industry-led change and innovative thinking in curriculum development for sustainable hospitality and tourism. I should like to thank Sanjay, Sandeep their contributors and survey participants for providing a detailed set of insights on this topic with particular reference to the Asian region.

Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes (WHATT) aims to make a practical and theoretical contribution to hospitality and tourism development and we seek to do this by using a key question to focus attention on an industry issue. If you would like to contribute to our work by serving as a *WHATT* theme editor, do please contact me.

Richard Teare
Managing Editor, WHATT

Sustainability and sustainable practices are increasingly important across all business segments; it is not only impacting the bottom line but also environmental, social and economic aspects in general. The recently concluded Glasgow climate pact arising from the UN climate change conference hosted by the UK in 2021, calls for a decade of climate action and the summit agreed on numerous agendas with a focus on climate change, emissions and on providing appropriate support to stakeholders. Like other industries, tourism and hospitality is a significant consumer of natural resources and as one of the world's largest employers, it is difficult to see how this situation can change as quickly as needed. In this context, we set out to explore some of the best sustainable practices adopted by hospitality organizations, with particular reference to the Asian region. A major, collaborative effort is needed to make a positive impact on climate change and our aim here is to identify some of the innovations and good practice in sustainability and the implications for hospitality education, the curriculum and the interface with industry.

It is reasonable to assume that the hospitality curriculum should evolve with the changing business environment but if this is to be managed well, sustained engagement between academics and students and industry professionals is needed. In facilitating dialog, colleges and universities have a key role to play as they educate the next generation of hospitality leaders and contribute to monitoring and responding to any gaps in industry operations and their development. Given the attention that sustainability is now receiving, it is becoming a priority for industry and, in the post pandemic era, awareness of and demand for sustainable practice is even higher. This poses several questions: *Is the*



hospitality education sector ready to adopt these changes and if so, to what extent? Further, Is there still a gap between the needs of industry in this regard and the provisions made by the hospitality education sector? As noted earlier, in this issue we examine the current situation with particular reference to the Asian context and we hope that you will find this collection of articles useful and thought-provoking.

Sanjay Sharma and Sandeep Munjal
Theme Editors

About the Theme Editors:

Sanjay Sharma is a certified hospitality professional who studied at Oxford Brookes University, UK and has over two decades of work experience in the hospitality industry and academia. Sanjay also holds an MBA from Birmingham City University, UK and he has worked with Taj Hotels, The Park, IHM PUSA, IIMT Oxford Brookes University, Premier Inn, UK and Whitbread, UK among others. In his current role as Head of School at Vedatya Institute, India, where he is responsible for academic and administrative affairs and collaboration with industry. Sanjay is also a keen researcher and he has published text books, presented papers at international conferences and published articles in the area of sustainability, gastronomy, culinary heritage, slow food and culinary tourism.

Sandeep Munjal is Professor and Director of the Vedatya Institute in India and he has 25 years of diverse experience in industry and academia. During his early career he worked in management positions in the hospitality and retail sectors both in India and internationally with Taj Group of Hotels, Aramark Corporation (USA) and Compass Group among others. He is an active researcher and has published widely on strategic management, operations management and sustainable tourism in international and domestic journals. His most recent books are: *The Indian Hospitality Industry: Dynamics and Future Trends* and *The Food and Beverage Hospitality Industry in India -An Emergent Segment* both published in New York by Apple Academic Press.

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