

**Title:** “WITH”: Refugee-Background Research Practices in Tourism

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Dr Alison McIntosh is Professor of Tourism and Hospitality at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. As a critical scholar, her main research interests are in social justice, inclusion and advocacy through tourism and hospitality; accessible tourism; community hospitality; reflexivity, creative and participative research approaches, and community engagement methods. She has published widely in leading international journals and is Founding Co-Editor of the interdisciplinary journal, *Hospitality & Society* and the open access journal, *Hospitality Insights*.

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Despite some encouraging moves towards emancipatory research practices, tourism studies predominantly still exhibit limited research and relationships *with*, rather than *on*, refugee-background communities. Sieber, (2009, p. 2) proffers that a reason for this could be because refugee-background communities create “some of the most difficult methodological and ethical challenges in the field of human research”. These ‘difficulties’ stem from the collective trauma that refugee-background communities have faced from their displacement, and often from their experiences with authorities. These experiences have often not been positive, the sum of which creates suspicion, mistrust, cynicism, and in some cases rage (Karoooma, 2019; McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2019; Pascucci, 2017). Similar to indigenous communities, for many refugee-background communities, research is seen as part of system of surveillance and control “with many community groups calling academic researchers ‘epidemics’” (Cockburn-Wootten, McIntosh, Smith & Jefferies, 2018, p. 1487). This view of researchers as a disease - that taints those who are touched by it - stems from experiences of being researched as objects and that the participant’s non-western knowledge and experiences are inferior, or can only be understood from the typically pakeha<sup>1</sup> privileged researcher’s position, assumptions and cultural understandings (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

In the context of critical tourism research, this conference paper aims to open up discussion on the concept of researching “*with*” refugee-background communities and illustrates two things. First, a systematic review of the tourism literature is carried out to identify the gaps and preferences of academic published research that has focused on refugee-background communities. Second, we begin to pose possible suggestions for how we can begin to privilege research and value approaches that put the refugee-background person at the forefront of the process. We aim to begin the conversations “*with*” you to examine methodological approaches that inhibit inclusion, empowerment and reduce dissemination channels for refugee-background communities. By conducting a systematic literature review on refugee research in tourism, our paper identifies that much of the research in tourism has positioned refugee-background communities as a threat to the industry with their voices virtually absent from tourism research. Our systematic literature review also indicates that even studies that try to include the voices of refugee-background communities, still adopt western methodologies, which may exacerbate colonial knowledge at the expense of doing justice to hearing refugee-background communities’ diverse and important experiences. We conclude by highlighting

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<sup>1</sup> The Maori-language term for the white dominant settler population.

possible contributions from creative and indigenous methodologies and research processes which could help contribute to justice and inclusion; to more effectively work *with* refugee-background communities.

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