Attention to urban tourism has been growing rapidly. Researchers, practitioners and policy-makers should carefully reconsider the nature, distinct role, and connections of tourism in the frame of urban economies. Tourism is undergoing fundamental changes regarding the market, the industry’s structure, and the ‘product’ itself. Motivations, preferences and modes of traveling to and experiencing a destination have been changing and proliferating in their number and range, thereby challenging traditional models of tourism management and planning. Cities, towns and mega-cities which are key destinations in the geography of global tourism constantly change, so that a focus on the links between the travel industry and the urban dynamics of change is of great importance. In this regard, a paradigm shift has been recently affirmed at the 3rd Global Summit on City Tourism organized by the UNWTO and titled “New Paradigms in City Tourism Development”, which promoted an understanding of tourism as a key component of local economies and the social life of urban communities.

Despite the evident links between the travel industry and the urban dynamics of change, limited advances in the field have been made. This Workshop, which takes place in L’Aquila (Italy) from June 15th to 16th, provides an international and interdisciplinary platform for critical discussion – from a policy-oriented standpoint – of the interconnections between tourism(s) and the city, in order to outline a research agenda that combines tourism perspectives with urban models, issues and challenges.

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L’Aquila

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