

Gastronomy Tourism Research Centre Management Plan
Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism, Prince of Songkla University

Rationale

The significance of gastronomy tourism has been well recognised both locally and internationally. Phuket has realised the significance of its gastronomy as a key component to complete tourist's holistic experience during their holiday. Increasingly, gastronomy, as part of cultural and creative tourism, has emerged as another vital tourism product, giving complements to its traditional sea-sun-sand core attraction. Due to its vast variety of cuisines on offer in Phuket ranging from unique local cuisine that has been passed on from ancestors, general Thai food, countless ethnic foods, fresh seafood, with a wide range of prices from affordable street food vendors, to mid-scale and upscale fine-dining restaurants, the renown of Phuket's gastronomy has been well recognised internationally and named City of Gastronomy by UNESCO in 2016.

The Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism (FHT), Prince of Songkla University (PSU) has played a major role in supporting the hospitality and tourism industry by offering education and research related to gastronomy tourism. Based on its expertise in food and beverage management education it has offered for more than 25 years, the faculty has accumulated a reasonable level of expertise and experience, together with state-of-the-art laboratories and facilities in providing education in the discipline. The faculty has gradually started research and publications in this area, resulting in a few notable international publications related to gastronomy tourism being registered in the past few years. Although the number of publications is still limited, it is an emerging and promising area of publication. The potential of international publication in this area has not been fully realised and it is now emerging to become a high potential key research area that can put FHT into international research arena.

Until recently, the faculty has involved in major activities dedicated towards supporting Phuket Municipality's Phuket City of Gastronomy project. The faculty's team, led by Assistant Professor Dr. Tatiyaporn Jarumanneerat, has been appointed consultant to the Municipality to coordinate with UNESCO as the focal point, as well as carry out tasks and implement projects in supporting the development of the Phuket City of Gastronomy project. The tasks have been on-going and progressing well, resulting in a continued and strong partnership between FHT and the Municipality. FHT is pleased and proud on its role as educational provider that utilises its expertise

to support local administration and development, especially for such an important international project of UNESCO City of Gastronomy.

One of the key problems with the provision of gastronomy teaching, academic services and research is that FHT has lacked a holistic approach to the acquisition of knowledge in this area. From time to time, a few lecturers have devoted themselves to teaching, academic services and research in this area, but it has been rather ad hoc instead of holistic. Therefore, this calls for the need to establish a centre of excellence that strives to advance in producing body of knowledge through research, which will subsequently serve as sources of knowledge and expertise for teaching, academic service providing, and international publication.

In conclusion, Gastronomy Tourism Research Centre (GTRC) has been established for two main reasons. First, it aims to lead FHT in supporting local administration and development in gastronomy tourism, especially with the UNESCO City of Gastronomy project. In order to carry out such task, FHT would be required to acquire additional expertise in gastronomy based on research. Therefore, GTRC serves to produce body of knowledge in gastronomy tourism through research and development, which will subsequently raise knowledge of expertise of the FHT academic staff. This will then help FHT with a more holistic provision of teaching to its students, training support to its industry, and consultancy to local administration. Secondly, it aspires to help FHT emerge internationally by providing excellence in research and publication in gastronomy tourism.

Objectives

1. To produce a pool of body of knowledge related to gastronomy tourism in order to be the sources for teaching, and academic service providing to the industry and local administration.
2. To become excellence in research and publication at international level in gastronomy tourism
3. To disseminate knowledge to public and local community through academic service projects and other channels

Focus of GTRC

1. Conducting large scale research projects which may be implemented with overseas partner universities/researchers
2. Establishing collaborations with key local partners for research and providing academic services to the local partners and the industry based on research and knowledge produced by the centre.

KPIs

No	Expected Output	Year			
		2021	2022	2023	2024
1	Scopus/ISI papers	2 (Under review)	3	4	5
2	External grant (research and academic service projects)	1M Baht	1M Baht	1M Baht	1M Baht
3	New sub research projects under one large theme	3	3	3	3
4	Seminar to external audience	1	1	1	1

Support from FHT

A total budget of 1,800,000 Baht per year from FHT Research Fund is allocated for GTRC. The budget includes the following activities:

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| 1) Research grant for research projects | 1,000,000 Baht |
| 2) Administration, seminar, academic services and etc. | 800,000 Baht |

GTRC Members

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|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Assistant Professor Dr. Tatiyaporn Jarumaneerat | Head |
| 2. Assistant Professor Dr. Kullada Phetvaroon | Member |
| 3. Mr. Kris Sincharoenkul | Member |
| 4. Mr. Supanut Petrugs | Member |
| 5. Acting Sub.Lt Piraporn Jindawattanapong | Secretary and co-ordinator |

Possible Key Partners

- Phuket Municipality Office for UNESCO City of Gastronomy
- Taylor's University, Malaysia
- Ginkgo College of Hospitality Management, China

Strategies

1. Establish collaboration with Phuket Municipality and other key partners in supporting the UNESCO Phuket City of Gastronomy project and other key gastronomy related projects.
2. Build research networks both locally and internationally by identifying and collaborating with key researchers in gastronomy tourism.
3. Co-author papers and conduct joint-research projects with leading professors and overseas partners.

4. Increase local and international visibility by actively presenting papers at international conferences, producing infographic summarising key research outputs, and organising seminars to disseminate knowledge to public.
5. Recruit part time research assistant or support graduate researchers with scholarships who conduct thesis topics related to food and gastronomy tourism
6. Disseminate knowledge obtained from research to FHT colleagues and transform it into industry training programs, teaching materials, and consultancy projects, in addition to the required publication.

Key research areas

1. Restaurant operations and management
2. Street food
3. Gastronomy tourists
4. Gastronomy destination marketing and management
5. Gastronomy and local community, culture and history

Possible research topics to be conducted by the centre:

- Local food risk perception and intention to eat local food of international tourists
- Risk perceptions and risk acceptance of street food by international tourists at a tourist destination
- Street food quality standards
- Destination food image, motivation and food consumption intention
- Gastronomy destination management practices during COVID-19: a comparative study between two UNESCO cities of gastronomy
- Key success factors of top-rated local restaurants by international tourists
- Food tourist segmentation
- Local food preferences and eating habits of international tourists at a sea-sun-sand gastronomy destination
- Restaurant management practices during COVID-19: a study of the restaurant industry at a UNESCO city of gastronomy

Action Plan for 2021

No.	Activity	Timeline											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Submission of GTRC plan for approval	x											
2	Signing of MOU with Phuket Municipality Office			x									
3	Research proposals development for grant approval		x										
4	Conducting consultancy project for UNESCO City of Gastronomy project	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
5	Conducting research projects			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	Manuscript preparation							x	x	x	x	x	x
7	Inviting overseas professors to co-author manuscripts and new research proposals										x		
8	Submission of manuscripts to journals												x
9	Organising seminar/projects with local community											x	

Budget for 2021

No	Topic	Amount (Baht)
1	Conducting one large research theme project on Gastronomy Tourism Management including joint research projects with overseas partners (3 sub projects)	1,000,000
2	Research assistant/scholarship to graduate researchers	200,000
3	Purchase of research materials/books/journals	20,000
4	Seminar/academic services/other projects in response to emerging issues in gastronomy	280,000
5	Travelling expenses for conference presentation/collaboration establishment and joint research	100,000
6	Visiting professors for joint-research/publication and new research proposal development	200,000
	Total	1,800,000