

Why sign up for a ETC Learning Lab?

Educational Travel has become an exciting and ever expanding field reflecting shifting interest in travel and emerging models of engagement. Planners, operators and tour guides are recognizing the emergent generations of travelers whose demands, interest, lifestyles and ways of engaging with the world are influenced by the influence of the rapid proliferation of technologies, services and products. With travel's expansion and development we have seen the emergence of widespread concerns about navigating the world in ways that reflect a commitment to:

- Personal Growth and Self Reflection
- Cultural Competence and Empathy
- Global citizenship and Social Responsibility
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Against this background, ETC's Learning Labs demonstrate the importance for planners, operators and tour managers/guides in an expanded "facilitator" role to:

- create safe and supportive tour environments characterized and defined by open dialogue and reflection
- facilitate dialogue and reflection and incorporate reflective activities e.g. group discussions, journey guided reflection
- promote critical analysis of experiences by connecting experience and insights to broaden concepts

As we continue to face an uncertain future all those engaged in the delivery of the next generation of educational travel programs must continuously ask the following questions:

- Where are the traditional roles of tour managers changing and why?
- How can your travelers and "tour facilitators" (aka tour managers and guides) on tour artfully move and navigate beyond traditional group tour designs to deliver transformational tour experiences?
- What does it take to incorporate authentic opportunities for engagement in diverse landscapes and cultures?
- Why are immersive and reflective pauses on tour sources of invaluable insights and moments of informal and transformational learning?
- Where might be the role of new and generative understandings of the nature of lifelong learning and its contribution to the world of educational travel and transformational learning through travel?

ETC's Learning Labs demonstrate how to apply the experiential learning practices to affinity travel/tours. These are not FAM or Sightseeing Tours in the Conference venue's destination. Rather these Labs are the learning platform upon which attendees will:

Develop a core understanding of the nature and scope of experiential and transformational learning.

Time is allocated for the recognition of the significant role of personal and collective reflection and the ways in which we can facilitate effective learning through travel. Reflections will include:

- What kinds of experiences are most important to design for our own travel programs?
- How might your travelers benefit from a more engaged/reflective and inquiry based approach to educational tourism?
- Based on this learning lab experience, what will you design differently in your travel programs going forward?

As a participant you will be able to:

- Identify what it takes to design and organize experiential educational travel programs.
- Describe the personal and collective impact and value of full immersion in a specific educational travel/tour experience.
- Fine tune curating unique, mission-focused tours and experiences by working with local people and resources.
- Use insights and learning from full travel/tour immersion experience to extend personal and organizational competence in the professional practice areas of educational tour and travel development.
- Consider travelers personal growth, cultural confidence, critical thinking and global citizenship.
- Understand how “tour facilitators” (aka tour managers/guides) can embrace the transformative potential of educational travel

ETC Learning Labs are the travelers pass key into local cultures, neighborhoods and the lived experiences of the neighborhoods and resident communities. By uniquely exploring and engaging with destinations we undertake journey of discovery, personal development and learning.

Each ETC Learning Lab is designed to build and strengthen your capacity to self engage and involve others in the practice of (critical) reflection. All of the learning labs rely on well established and highly regarded experiential technologies and practices.

Throughout the ETC Learning Labs you will be consistently invited to think deeply, ask questions and consider modifications for back home application and practice. This fully immersive learning and development process includes hands-on activities, specifically designed for promoting engagement with the environment of destinations.