

PREFACE

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Mankind reflects in itself the continuous ambition to improve living conditions. The creative nature of human beings has led to inventions that have progressively revolutionised the working methods and the way we occupy our leisure time, which convey more quality and satisfaction, in both cases. This path of continuous development of societies had led to the emergence of systematic practices in the search for knowledge about places, cultures and dynamics linked to territories distinct from those we deal with in our daily lives. Whether influenced by the professional needs or by the achievements in terms of spare time activities, Tourism has emerged, around the Mid-20th century, as one of the main pillars of the world's economy in modern societies.

We can anticipate the 21st century as a fertile period in consolidating tourism practices, which will certainly be based on innovative processes that will affect the current state of knowledge about Tourism. This course of permanent change in social habits, searching for balances that promote quality of life, does not only reflect the creativity and innovation leveraged by the global business sector or by pressure from specialised civilian communities, but it is also a result from the contribution of academies, through a sustainable reflection of knowledge stimulated by scientific practice and sharing of that same knowledge.

The Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (IPL) is decidedly an organisation that intends to ensure international quality standards, in both teaching and applied research. Wide-ranging in the training programmes offered – covering a diverse range of areas, such as engineering, management, art and design, biotechnologies, social sciences, maritime technologies, tourism, hotel industry and catering, health – IPL has been awarded, due to the exceptional quality of some of its research projects, being inclusively distinguished for its ability to register patents, as corollary of the excellence of its research.

Committed to contributing to scientific diffusion in a singular way, IPL has included, in its strategic plan, the project of the scientific journal *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation* (EJTHR).

The EJTHR is a scientific journal born with the assumption of significantly contributing to divulge knowledge in the field of Tourism and its multiple intervention areas. It will try to create a solid po-

sition in the international scientific community, progressively entering the ranking of scientific publications that are a reference in the fields of Tourism and Hotel Industry. This is how we want to contribute to strengthen the Tourism Sciences. To implement the assertion strategy of this project, IPL trusts the Tourism Research Department (GITUR), located in its School of Tourism and Maritime Technology, with the responsibility of editorial management of EJTHR.

I take this opportunity to invite all academic communities, spread all over the world, to participate in the EJTHR project, by submitting papers dedicated to the Tourism field. I am certain that the criteria underlying our decision, editing and publication processes will rely upon high standards of ethical and scientific demand that are naturally compulsory to any scientific publication that aims for quality, rigour, merit and international recognition.