

10 Conclusions

Learning objectives

- **Understand the strategic relationship between festivals and their host territories**, analysing how festivals function as tools for territorial communication, identity construction, and destination marketing within sustainable development frameworks.
- **Analyse the role of territorial identity, authenticity, and local resources** (natural, cultural, and structural) in shaping festival image, branding, and tourist attraction, with particular attention to the alignment between real, desired, communicated, and perceived identities.
- **Evaluate the importance of local community involvement and stakeholder collaboration** in enhancing social capital, visitor satisfaction, and long-term festival success, considering both internal (residents) and external (visitors and media) perceptions of territorial image.

The social value of festivals: key concepts, implications and research perspectives

This volume has demonstrated that festivals extend well beyond their conventional understanding as cultural events or instruments of tourism development. Rather, they can be conceptualised as complex social arenas through which multiple forms of value are produced across individual, collective and territorial dimensions. The growing scholarly attention to the notion of social value reflects a broader paradigmatic shift within event studies, moving from a predominantly economic focus towards more nuanced and multidimensional socio-cultural perspectives (Richards, 2017; Ziakas, 2016).

Within this framework, several key tenets can be identified. First, festivals play a significant role in the construction of identity and the reinforcement of a sense of belonging. They provide symbolic spaces in which collective meanings are negotiated and reproduced, fostering place attachment and civic pride (Derrett, 2003; Quinn, 2005). In this sense, festivals contribute to the social and cultural reproduction of communities.