

# STORYTELLING FOR RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT OBESITY AND ENCOURAGING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: THE CASE OF TRAVEL WRITING IN SLOVENIA

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Using storytelling as a tool in preventing and addressing obesity can be an effective and engaging approach. Its power lies in conveying information, creating emotional connections, and fostering behaviour change. Storytelling can be employed across various strategies, including educational and personal narratives that are tailored, culturally sensitive, and focused on promoting positive actions like healthier nutrition and increased physical activity, particularly accessible forms such as walking. Stories should inspire and empower individuals towards healthier practices. Sharing personal makes messages relatable and motivating. Furthermore, storytelling can mobilize communities to advocate for policy changes and support initiatives promoting access to healthy food, healthcare, and environments conducive to active living, like safe parks and walking trails. Personal narratives spark conversations, challenge stigma, and motivate collective action against obesity's root causes.

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## 1 Introduction to EDU-FIT and Health

Obesity remains a significant global public health challenge, associated with numerous chronic diseases and substantial healthcare costs (Griffith et al., 2016; Sánchez-Carracedo, 2022). Traditional health communication often struggles to inspire lasting behavioural change. The European Union actively promotes healthy lifestyles through initiatives like the Erasmus+ project EDU-FIT, leveraging digital platforms. Storytelling emerges as a potent strategy, capitalizing on its ability to convey complex information, forge emotional connections, and motivate shifts in behaviour (Griffith et al., 2016). This includes promoting accessible physical activities like walking – a cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle – and utilizing the inspirational power of literary stories and the experiential potential of literary tourism. This paper explores the application of storytelling techniques on multilingual digital platforms within the EU context (e.g., EDU-FIT, EU public websites) for raising obesity awareness and encouraging healthier lifestyles across work, study, and leisure, with specific attention to integrating walking narratives and leveraging literary connections.

This work aims to encourage other teachers to include and explore these elements, shown in the table 1 below, in their own teaching by providing a framework, examples and discussion of their implementation during the EDU-FIT project:

**Table 1: Narrative theory, walking, story-form writing and nutrition science in pedagogical practice**

Learning Element	Engagement Process and Pedagogical Practice
Narrative theory	Working with Greimas' four-stage trajectory updated by contemporary researchers.
Walking	Outdoor fieldwork.
Story-form writing	Journaling from the field and sharing narrative non-fiction with peers as travel writing.
Nutrition science	Discovering links from local culture with nutrition practices and following-up these discoveries with reading of more specialist scientific literature.

## 2 Literature Review Storytelling as a Health Intervention

### 2.1 Storytelling as a Health Intervention

Posthumanist approaches to fitness and well-being, as we move towards the third decade of the twenty-first century, propose affirmative re-figuring of the problems that have traditionally been tackled by the application of drugs. Rosie Braidotti looks initially at the overall state of exhaustion experienced by lecturers and students in western universities as a recognised health issue:

‘Provocatively perhaps, I would like to pick out some components of the exhausted condition, which transcend the negative and are capable of producing generative states. These aspects have less to do with what the professionals call ‘reduced performance’ than with a sense of evacuation of selfhood, a low-energy opening out beyond the frame of ego-indexed identity. Such an opening can be quite liberating and afford the possibility of actualizing yet unrealized potentials. Approaching the state of exhaustion affirmatively, offers some unexpected options’ (Braidotti, 2019: 16).

Above Braidotti proposes that selfhood can be retold so that negative connotations are replaced in the new story of the self as a state in which new creativity can be engendered. She goes on to show how this might be achieved:

‘Exhaustion thus defined is not a psychological mood, but rather an intransitive state that is not linked to a specific object, let alone a mental disposition. As such, it is capable of pervading the full spectrum of our social existence. ‘We are tired of something’, writes Deleuze in his commentary on Beckett, ‘but exhausted by nothing’ (Deleuze, 1995: 4). Let me dare to suggest that there is a creative potential here, which means that exhaustion is not a pathological state that needs to be cured, as an actual disorder, but a threshold of transformation of forces, that is to say a virtual state of creative becoming. Of course, I do not mean to disregard the pain, but rather encourage us to see the intensity of the discomfort as a motor of change, expressing also the capacity to open up to [...] other-than-human forces. This ability to sense, grasp and work with the virtual is one of the distinct qualities that makes us human in the first place. Which is not to say that we have always been posthuman, but rather that the specific contemporary manifestation of this contradiction need not inevitably breed negative reactions’ (Braidotti, 2019: 16-17).

In the above, Braidotti, a leading European voice on posthumanist re-thinking, calls on university educators to experiment affirmatively with innovative re-designs of humanist and social science teaching curricula. Teachers and lecturers can modify the learning environment to create activities that valorise students' own creativity as they engage more fully with the total environment outside the classroom. In her own example, above, Braidotti has drawn on the literary texts of Samuel Beckett via Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze, 1995), to offer new, imaginative ways of conceiving of the body in situations of learning and becoming. Literary texts provide possibilities for the body which open the field to creative practices, often referred to as poesis, or making. The literary text can combine emergent ideas and walking (Schaff, 2022) to set the learner in an environment of creativity.

Storytelling as a health intervention has been adopted in health education for over a decade now; in particular for examining processes in community-based participatory research (CBPR) alongside active intervention in health management (LeBron et al., 2014). Further, storytelling during physical activity has been analysed to reveal benefits for taking time for the self, away from the pressures associated with working and family life in some cultures (Banks-Wallace et al., 2007). The intellectual demand of recounting narrative fragments offers the storytelling student or teacher, an opportunity to realise an affirmative selfhood. Whilst the listeners enjoy the complexities of reconstructing the fragments into a new narrative.

With the integration of mobile Web 2.0 technologies that put field researchers and students in contact with both their colleagues back in the laboratory, and with nature and geo-information systems, a new literary writing has been identified in the academic literature. The elements of this posthumanist literary compound are enumerated here by Dong et al.:

*'Considering the salient linkages to Deleuzian and ecofeminist thought: (i) Characters with fluid identities align with Deleuze's deterritorialization. (ii) Nonlinear narratives mirror interconnected ecofeminist perspectives. (iii) Technology reshaping human relationships reflects risks of environmental alienation. (iv) Intertextuality embodies Deleuze's creative repetition. (v) Reimagined archetypes challenge dualisms. Contemporary literature, in its myriad forms, reflects the evolving societal consciousness, drawing heavily from philosophical wellsprings like Deleuze and ecofeminism. As readers delve into these narratives, they engage with stories and profound philosophical inquiries' (Dong et al., 2023: 305).*

Students and lecturers can be introduced to these theoretical elements so that they consider them in the creation of their own literary artefacts. Through digital dialogue with their colleagues back in the university they can share fragments in from their live journaling in online notebooks from the mountain walk. The fragment is one of the key elements proposed by Deleuze in the literary machine, as readers and writers are in the act of becoming part of the more-than-human world. The elements that Deleuze lists below are taken from his reading of Proust's novel (Proust, 1987):

‘The dragons of Balbec, the patch of wall in the Vermeer, the little phrase of Vinteuil, mysterious viewpoints, tell us the same thing as [the] wind [...] they do not make the [literary] work into an organic totality, but rather each acts as a fragment that determines a crystallization’ (Deleuze, 2000: 115).



**Figure 1: Road Sign for the famous Trojane Restaurant Producing Famous Raised Doughnuts.**

Photograph by the author: Jasna Potočnik Topler, July 2019.

Thus, the creation of the story can proceed by fragments noted and stored as the case study participant does during her journaling for this travel writing project (Picture 1), the Both project, documented in Mansfield and Potočnik Topler (2023):

*'Dober dan. Kaj boste?' 'Dober dan. Štiri krofe, prosim', 'Z marmelado?' 'Z marmelado, prosim', 'Izvolite'. 'Hvala'. Many people, colourful Slovene dialects mixed with some German. The service was speedy. I went for some cold juice and doughnuts for later. 12 euros and 30 cents altogether. Receipt dated 19 July 2019 - Jasna field notes 2019' (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023: 115)*

Notice how stopping for food forms an important moment around which the research journey unfolds, but these stops also result in the Deleuzian fragments of the new literary form identified by Dong et al., (2023) above.

*'[...] we made a dinner break at the Grof Restaurant – another one with an enviable tradition – since 1901. A hundred years ago this was a stop for coachmen, today some exhibited objects, photographs and furniture hide and reveal stories about the way of living of our great grandparents. On arrival, the smell was tempting and the atmosphere great. And the parking areas were full, which is always a good sign of the service quality - Jasna field notes 2019' (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023: 116)*

### **3 Methodology: Storytelling as a Pedagogical Method**

Storytelling as a pedagogical method enhances critical and creative thinking, as well as communicative techniques. Employing storytelling is crucial for helping students contextualize and articulate their work – from initial ideas through analysis, visualization, and final expression (McDrury & Alterio, 2003). What is more, storytelling helps students to overcome difficulties with creative ability and communication in the design process, providing reflective and experiential techniques (Lee et al., 2023).

According to Medupin (2024), students responded very positively to using storytelling as a learning tool. They, in fact, reported that it helped them connect academic material to real-life situations, fostered a strong sense of community and teamwork, and left them wanting more time for discussion (Medupin, 2024). The collaborative nature of storytelling was identified as a crucial factor for its success,

promoting social interaction that sustained their interest and prolonged engagement with the subject matter (Medupin, 2024). In another study, performed by Zhulamanova and Bernhardt (2024), students reported that the storytelling exercises improved their focus, helped in remembering assigned material, and deepened their comprehension of course concepts; their feedback also highlighted the activity's usefulness for personal reflection and applying concepts to real-world situations. Research also indicates that the accessibility of digital tools creates extensive opportunities to employ various storytelling methods in higher education (Zaitseva et al., 2024). Rose and Johnson (2025) argue that for storytelling interventions to effectively shift student understanding, careful selection of the narrative and its format is of the utmost importance. The process starts by capturing attention with a story relevant to the lesson (educators can adapt existing tales instead of creating new ones, saving valuable time), after aligning the story with learning goals, teachers should scaffold instruction by guiding students to discuss key vocabulary and symbols (Rose and Johnson, 2025). Therefore, when implemented strategically through careful narrative selection and structured facilitation, storytelling transcends its role as a mere engagement tool and emerges as a transformative pedagogical strategy, capable of enhancing deeper cognitive engagement, building community, and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in modern education.

### **3.1 Travel Writing**

This section explores a case study of a group of master's students completing a travel writing activity based around the town of Brežice, Slovenia. The process for literary travel writing using dialogue journaling is a well-documented methodology (Mansfield et al., 2025). This processual approach was used with the students and with a heritage industry-specialist from the museum in Brežice (Figures 3 and 4). The group were trained in dialogue journaling, so that all the steps for developing the written stories were archived as a genealogical record of how decisions were made in the story construction.

Travel writing activities around and beyond the campus site create experiential learning opportunities for teachers and students. Connecting with the land and landscape has become a valuable movement in posthumanist education practices in recent years since it gives the learner and teacher a way of encountering affect through all the senses and thereby being changed by the world that they are part of rather than observing through representational media:

‘[...] intra-acting [*s/z*] with outdoor experiential education in the researcher/teacher enactments afforded the opportunity to attend to the multisensory, thick, and affective materiality of relationships with Other(s). By affect, I am referring to the classical Spinozian meanings, which relate to the body’s capacity to affect something and to be simultaneously affected’ (Riley, 2019: 92).

Story structure has a long history of theory, the four-stage trajectory of narrative, from Greimas, offers educators an opportunity to apply established theory in teaching and in the co-creation of new tourism narratives:

‘[Greimas’ narrative trajectory] consists of four stages: (i) the manipulation stage: the events that lead to the subject of a narrative desiring a certain object; (ii) the competence stage: the events through which the subject acquires the ability to act in order to achieve this object; (iii) the performance stage: the subject either achieves the object, or not; and (iv) the sanctions stage: the subject’s actions are evaluated and sanctioned.’ (Moenandar et al., 2024: 312).

Learners improving their travel writing skills can be introduced to these four stages, both to give them a structure for their own creative work but also, as a framework for the research process that is required to discover aspects of the place under study that can be included in the travel stories. One key element of travel writing is the local foods available to the visitor and hence the reader of the travel stories, explained here in methods for travel writers:

“[Method Number] **(D6.) Respite, repose and restore.** Food, respite from the journey, restoration, drink, indoors, comfort. Offer to your readers places and passages of repose. Use the opportunity to discuss a local dish and its link to the terroir. The cafés you find and document on your walking route will help later visitors to plan that same route and ensure that they are in your footsteps to share some of your recorded emotions as you near the exact spot that is drawing you on your quest. This is also an opportunity to take out your notebook and writing instrument and make a record of your emotion here; the table in the café becomes a plateau” (Mansfield, 2020: 5).

In Greimas' stage (i), the students are shown important cultural artefacts from the local museum, the Posavje Museum. This can be done as fieldwork, during the project we completed this fieldwork in mid-May 2023, then documented our fieldwork by blogging; and supplemented the research in-class by using the museum's web pages. An oil painting from 1972 by a teacher at Brežice Grammar School, called Miroslav Kugler stood out as an important local connection during the dialogue work in the online sessions. The painting is called 'Hayracks 2', and shows agricultural hay-drying racks, a young couple, and a field of white flowering buckwheat. It was the hay-drying racks that first attracted both the research group and the exhibition curators as representative of the ethnography of the Lower Sava Valley, or Posavje, Slovenia.

However, for this activity the subjects of the narrative needed an object that would be a local food to find and enjoy as their narrative quest. The subject in travel writing is usually the I-narrator, recounting their walk through the town. In this way, the subject is easily identified with by the visitor reading the travel story.

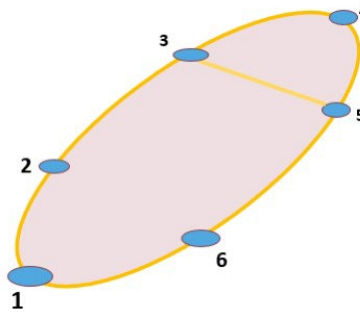
Greimas' stage (i) is called the manipulation stage by Moenandar et al. (Moenandar et al., 2024, p.312), which does not sound a positive process, however by using dialogue and prompting the students with questions, in the knowledge that we were trying to manipulate the research materials to create an object that is desirable, we arrived at an exciting discovery. It was not the hay in the drying racks, which is part of the dairy industry, but the buckwheat itself that led to the discussion of a Slovenian dish. A dough made from buckwheat flour is used in the dumpling or pastry dish called štruklji. To complete stage (i) academic research in journals reveals that buckwheat is desirable for someone interested in healthy eating:

'Buckwheat protein is of outstanding quality and, unlike popular cereals, is rich in essential amino acid, lysine. Health benefits of this plant include reducing plasma cholesterol level, anti-inflammatory, neuroprotective, anti-cancer, anti-diabetic effects and enhancing hypertension symptoms. Buckwheat is also used in a gluten free diet in people with celiac disease [...]' (Noreen et al., 2021: 15).

The filling for štruklji can be ricotta cheese, apple or walnut, so that it serves as a savoury or sweet course in a meal. Here the narrator of the travel story was quickly moving into (ii) the competence stage, the events and the acquiring of knowledge required by the narrator to act to achieve the goal; in this case to buy, enjoy and write

about a štruklji. If it could be a main course or a desert, then this knowledge would help in ordering it in a café or restaurant.

Into the performance stage (iii) the narrator follows a route around the town of Brežice using the literary travel writer's ellipse to plan their stops at cafés, shops and monuments, see Figure 2. Walking in urban spaces contributes to health, well-being and opens a new field of ethnographic inquiry for the learners (Larsen, 2025). This elliptical route, proposed by the current authors from their fieldwork in urban tourism, is to explore European towns built on riverbanks, and is shown below:



**Figure 2: The Literary Travel Writer's Elliptical Route Map, used to plan stopping points and to return writer to starting point 1.**

Source: Authors' design.

The story can then be recounted, trying first the pizza restaurant, Huda Pizza, where the narrator is unsuccessful but learns more about the dish, štruklji, and follows a suggestion to try the Kava Bar café higher up the street. Here the narrator discovers that some biscuit-making companies have begun to use buckwheat in snack biscuits, calling them Buckwheat Thins, which would be a useful street snack for tourists to carry with them when walking, but still no štruklji.

Finally, towards the end of Greimas' stage (iii) and moving into (iv), the narrator returns, apparently defeated, to the hotel Pr' Šefu, Prešernova cesta 17, 8250 Brežice, and recounts his lack of success in his quest for štruklji; a local researcher has written the word on a slip of paper to help with the pronunciation. The restaurant staff rally round and using their local knowledge create the dish for him using local cheese and buckwheat flour.



**Figure 3: Journaling at an elliptical table in the Kava Bar Jazz Pub, Trg Izgnancev 2, 8250 Brežice, Slovenia. 17 May 2023.**

Photograph: Charles Mansfield (author).

Stage (iv) could be a food review or a consideration of how to be more prepared for discovering local foods that have healthy properties. Through the online feature of Google Maps, called Local Guides, students can write their own reviews of cafés, meals and restaurants for a wider public to help students to gain experience of live publishing.

To conclude – the overall experience of the exercise of applying the narrative theory to the exploration of a holiday destination, gives the students and the teachers a valuable memory of the quest for healthy eating, and a model for future travel writing projects in professional life. The activity creates situations for dialogue but also enacts the theory from the page so that it can be applied with greater facility in subsequent place-writing projects.

## 4 The Role of Hiking for Well-Being

Hiking extends far beyond the realm of leisure and recreation, constituting a holistic practice that profoundly enhances physical, mental, and emotional well-being. From a physiological standpoint, hiking represents an excellent form of cardiovascular exercise that strengthens the heart, regulates blood pressure, and builds muscular endurance, particularly in the legs, core, and gluteal muscles (Ungvari et al., 2023). As a weight-bearing activity, it improves balance, enhances bone density, and plays a preventive role against osteoporosis. Furthermore, the natural exposure to sunlight during hiking supports vitamin D synthesis, which is essential for immune defence and contributes to improved mood regulation (Fundoiano-Hershcovitz et al., 2024). The psychological and emotional benefits of hiking are equally significant. The rhythmic motion of walking induces a meditative state that fosters mental clarity, alleviates symptoms of anxiety and depression, and stimulates creativity (Fundoiano-Hershcovitz et al., 2024). The act of reaching summits or viewpoints provides a tangible sense of accomplishment, bolstering self-esteem and resilience. In addition, hiking is not exclusively a solitary pursuit; when practised collectively, it strengthens social bonds by facilitating meaningful conversations and shared experiences, thereby mitigating loneliness and reinforcing community ties. In essence, hiking serves as a reset mechanism, reconnecting individuals with their bodies, their thoughts, and the natural world.

## 5 The Role of Hiking in Tourism

Hiking also holds a central position within the tourism sector, particularly as part of the rapidly expanding domains of adventure tourism, active tourism and ecotourism. It has the ability to function as an important economic driver, attracting thousands and millions of travellers annually who contribute significantly to local economies through expenditures on guides, accommodation, food, and transport. In many rural and mountainous areas, this revenue provides essential livelihood opportunities.

In addition to its economic significance, hiking aligns with the growing trend of sustainable and experiential travel. Contemporary tourists increasingly seek immersive engagements with landscapes, cultures, and communities rather than passive sightseeing. Hiking satisfies this demand by offering an intimate mode of interaction with both environment and heritage, while fostering environmentally

responsible practices that encourage conservation (Potočnik Topler, 2022). Certain trails have also acquired iconic status, becoming emblematic of their regions and serving as global tourism magnets. The Appalachian Trail in the United States, the Camino de Santiago in Spain, and the trails of the Julian Alps in Slovenia exemplify how hiking routes contribute to destination branding, creating unique niches within the tourism industry. Picture 4 is from the Uršlja Mountain in the Karavanks Range, the longest mountain range in Slovenia, mentioned also in the legacy of the Slovene author Lovro Kuhar, known by his pen name Prežihov Voranc. As both a writer and a committed social activist, his works are inextricably bound to the landscapes of Koroška and the Pohorje massif. Novels such as *Samorastniki* (*The Self-Sown*) and others portray not only the struggles of local communities but also the raw beauty and harsh realities of their environment.

For Prežihov Voranc, the landscape was not a mere backdrop but a narrative force shaping characters' lives and destinies (Potočnik Topler, 2022). This deep interconnection is celebrated through the "Voranc Trail" (*Vorančeva pot*), a long-distance hiking route traversing the very forests, villages, and mountains that defined both his life and literature (Potočnik Topler, 2022). By walking this trail, readers and hikers alike transform into literary pilgrims, experiencing the physical challenges and natural beauty that informed Prežihov Voranc's writing (Potočnik Topler, 2022). The embodied act of traversing the terrain bridges literature and lived experience, preserving the author's legacy in a tangible, participatory form.

## 6 Results: Key Storytelling Techniques Identified

1. **Personal Stories and Testimonials:** Featuring real individuals sharing their journeys towards healthier habits, including struggles, setbacks, and successes (e.g., workplace ergonomic changes, student stress management, adopting active leisure). This technique builds relatability and motivation.
2. **Scenario-Based Narratives:** Utilizing hypothetical situations to illustrate the consequences of choices and the benefits of healthy behaviours (e.g., managing exam stress, consequences of poor workplace practices). This aids in understanding potential outcomes.
3. **Cultural and Historical References:** Linking health messages to local traditions, diets, ethnobotany or historical contexts (e.g., promoting traditional

European diets, connecting outdoor activities to cultural heritage sites, values local produce). This enhances relevance and cultural resonance.

4. **Visual Storytelling:** Employing images, infographics, and videos to convey health messages powerfully. This engages visual learners and improves information retention.
5. **Engagement with theory:** Taking part in activities that put theory into practice encourages confidence in using properly-researched scientific theory to inform life-style practices, rather than relying on advertisers' promotional material.

## 7 Discussion

The findings underscore storytelling's versatility and power as a tool for obesity prevention and health promotion within the EU's multilingual digital landscape. The identified techniques align with evidence suggesting personal narratives foster identification and reduce stigma (Sánchez-Carracedo, 2022), while scenario-based stories facilitate comprehension of behavioural consequences. The emphasis on cultural and historical references is crucial; integrating health messages within familiar cultural frameworks significantly increases their acceptance and perceived relevance, moving beyond generic advice. This cultural sensitivity, delivered in local languages, fosters the empathy and understanding necessary for collective action on issues like food access and supportive environments.

The case studies demonstrate that effective storytelling is context-specific. Techniques must be tailored to the audience's life domain (work, studies, leisure) and their associated challenges. Furthermore, empowering individuals to share their stories, as advocated in the abstract, leverages user-generated content and community mobilization, amplifying reach and authenticity. This can spark crucial conversations, challenge societal norms contributing to obesity, and advocate for necessary policy changes, as seen in initiatives calling for better access to healthy food.

## 8 Conclusion

Storytelling is not merely a communication tool; it is a powerful catalyst for fostering healthier lifestyles and combating obesity within the European Union. Techniques like personal stories, scenario-based narratives, cultural references, and visual

storytelling, when tailored to the audience and context and delivered in local languages, are highly effective in engaging diverse populations, conveying relatable messages, and motivating positive behaviour change. By making the abstract challenges of obesity prevention concrete and personal, storytelling builds empathy, challenges stigma, and empowers individuals and communities. Future efforts should focus on integrating more visual storytelling, expanding culturally resonant narratives, and amplifying authentic personal voices. Continued innovation in applying these narrative techniques across multilingual digital platforms holds immense promise for creating a healthier, more inclusive, and obesity-resilient future for all EU citizens. The Erasmus+ EDU-FIT project exemplifies this commitment to leveraging narrative power for public health advancement. Beyond public awareness, its significance is profoundly educational. Integrating these narrative techniques into curricula equips students with critical health literacy and communication skills, serving as a foundational strategy for lifelong learning and proactive health management. Future efforts must, therefore, focus on both approaches: expanding culturally resonant public campaigns with authentic personal voices, while also embedding these methods into educational frameworks to train the next generations.

### **Webography**

The following websites are relevant to this chapter but are not directly referenced.

Erasmus+ EDU-FIT Project. <https://sites.google.com/g.uporto.pt/edu-fit>

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA). <https://osha.europa.eu/en>

European Youth Portal. [https://youth.europa.eu/home\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/home_en)

European Cultural Heritage Platform. <https://www.europeana.eu/en>

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Dr. **Jasna Potočnik Topler** is a full professor and English language lecturer at the University of Maribor. Her field of research spans across multiple disciplines, encompassing tourism, cultural tourism and its subtypes, tourism communication, and education. She is the author of several monographs, scientific articles, conference lectures, and an editorial board member of many journals, in addition to delivering guest lectures at foreign universities (such as Plymouth, Udine, Perugia, and Zagreb). She has been engaged in several international projects (as coordinator or partner), projects with the local community and students.

Dr. **Charles Mansfield** taught tourism management on post-graduate and undergraduate degrees, and literature and culture within the Faculty of Business at Plymouth University. His research focuses on city branding and cultural heritage tourism. He has published on literary tourism and in 2018 was awarded an ERASMUS+ Mobility to develop Plymouth's research and teaching with its French Riviera counterpart in Cannes. His doctoral researchers use literary travel writing as part of their methodology for their PhDs, and Mansfield has recently published more on this innovation in the practice-led thesis and on narrative inquiry in tourism development projects. In summer 2024, he was awarded a British Council writer's commission under the UNESCO Cities of Literature initiative.

