

TTRI Research Seminar

Thursday 23rd October 2008

17.00 —19.00

Room A26 Business School South
Jubilee Campus

**Local politics and tourism events policy: How and why
the 'Bollywood Oscars' came to Yorkshire**

Rhodri Thomas

Rhodri Thomas is ITT Professor of Tourism and Events Policy at the UK Centre for Events Management, Leeds Metropolitan University. Originally trained as economist, Rhodri now engages in multi-disciplinary public policy research (especially in relation to SMEs) in the context of tourism and the events sector.

He has co-authored or edited six books, written numerous papers and been an invited keynote speaker at conferences in China, Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Spain and the UK. Rhodri is a member of the Editorial Advisory Boards of journals in the following research fields: tourism, economic development, small business, and is the current Managing Editor of the *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*.

During recent years he has acted as a 'specialist expert' on policy issues for the OECD and the European Commission, and has worked on a variety of projects for government departments and other agencies in the UK. As a Non-Executive Director of Yorkshire Tourist Board, Rhodri seeks to make a positive contribution to tourism policy formation within that region. Rhodri's research is supported by The Institute of Travel and Tourism (ITT), the largest tourism professional association in the UK.

See abstract over page.

Please note: refreshments will be served during networking period before Seminar and a light buffet will be provided after the Seminar.

Please email your response to deborah.timmermans@nottingham.ac.uk

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Abstract

In spite of apparent stiff competition, the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Weekend and Awards Ceremony (the 'Bollywood Oscars') came to Yorkshire in June 2007. The event comprised a series of parties, dinners, a film premiere, a celebrity cricket match and culminated in the awards ceremony itself. The four day 'weekend' cost an estimated £5 million to stage, of which more than £2 million was provided by the regional development agency. The event was considered a great success, officially at least, because it attracted significant media attention in the UK and abroad (especially in India) and generated additional revenue from visitors, thus strengthening the regional economy. Such perceptions are, of course, contested.

Decisions to support events and festivals such as this emerge from local political processes. Yet, as Hall and Rusher (2005:229) have noted, 'Despite their significance, there still remains relatively little analysis of the political context of events and the means by which events come to be developed and hosted within communities.. ' This seminar will respond to this deficiency by considering the following: Why were the awards staged in Yorkshire? What was the process of attracting the awards to this locality? How should we interpret or understand such a process of tourism policy formation?

