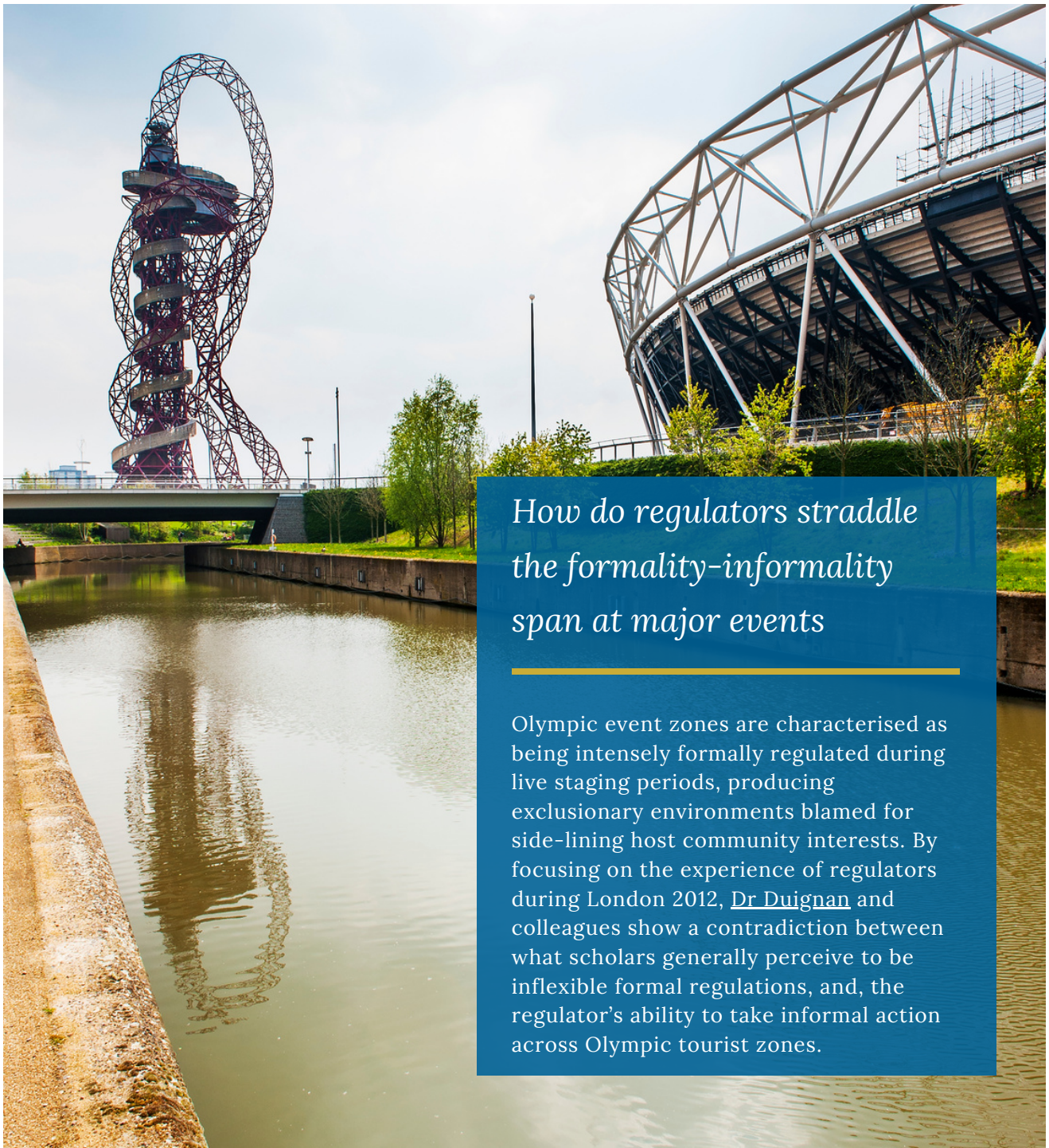


Academic Weekly Digest

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



How do regulators straddle the formality-informality span at major events

Olympic event zones are characterised as being intensely formally regulated during live staging periods, producing exclusionary environments blamed for side-lining host community interests. By focusing on the experience of regulators during London 2012, [Dr Duignan](#) and colleagues show a contradiction between what scholars generally perceive to be inflexible formal regulations, and, the regulator's ability to take informal action across Olympic tourist zones.

Regulatory Informality Across Olympic Event Zones

Dr Michael Duignan

We show how regulators simultaneously oscillated between strategically conceived and tactically implemented modes of formality and informality, straddling what Misztal (2000) refers to as the 'formality-informality span'. Our results and application of in/formality concepts critiques existing explanations of how regulation is enacted in mega-sporting event settings and provides new insights into the way organisers balance formal and informal regulation, which can lead to more emancipatory regulatory policies and more equitable outcomes for local host communities.



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In highlighting the contradiction between the presence of seemingly overbearing and draconian formal regulations and the ease at which informal resolutions were found, we demonstrate that even in the most rigid of legislative contexts, set in the most powerful of criminal statutes, human agents' power of discretion and interpretation determined the Olympic regulators' engagements with small businesses at London 2012.

As such, the findings of this research help counter existing research depicting mega-sporting event specific regulations as highly formalised with little to no latitude for local negotiation between the regulator and small businesses (e.g., Pappalepore and Duignan, 2016; Kelly, et al., 2019; Duignan, et al., 2019).

Further Reading:

Walsh, L., Down, S., & Duignan, M.B. (2022). Regulatory Informality Across Olympic Event Zones, *Event Management*.

Link: bit.ly/3tbCTI7