PARTICIPANT WORKING GUIDE

AI HOTEL & RESTAURANT BLUEPRINT

STOP TALKING ABOUT AI. BUILD THE BLUEPRINT.

People at the front. Intelligence built into hospitality businesses.

BRAIN Think Tank | Thursday, 26 November 2026 | Hilton Malta

The purpose

What would it take to design and deliver a practical AI Hotel and Restaurant project for the Mediterranean? This Think Tank will define the PROJECT BRIEF and the PATHWAY for a structured initiative that investigates, designs, tests and ultimately delivers an implementable AI-enabled operating model for hotels and restaurants.

The outcome is not a completed technology blueprint or a collection of isolated AI tools. It is an agreed project mandate: purpose, scope, workstreams, research and design methodology, stakeholder roles, governance, milestones, resources, pilot approach and measurable success criteria. Responsible AI, cybersecurity, data protection and human oversight must be built into the project from day one.

Participation is open and evolving

This is an open, collaborative Think Tank for anyone genuinely interested in the future of AI-powered hospitality. The people named in Appendix A form an initial, provisional group, not an exclusive or confirmed list. Participants, roles and numbers may change or increase; additional hoteliers, restaurant operators, employees, researchers, educators, policymakers and technology specialists are welcome.

At a glance

When	What
13:00	Networking lunch — Spinola Foyer, Hilton Malta
14:30–17:00	AI Hotel and Restaurant Blueprint BRAIN Think Tank
Joint facilitators	Simon De Cesare, Kushal Raju and Kevin Camilleri (GWU)
Working principle	Define a project brief and phased pathway for an AI Hotel and Restaurant initiative
Intended output	Draft project mandate, scope, workstreams, governance, partners, milestones and next steps

How BRAIN works

BRAIN brings together hotel and restaurant operators, chefs, employees, researchers, technology specialists, suppliers and policymakers. Participants are not expected to design an AI system during the session. They should help define what the project must investigate, who needs to participate and how to progress from concept to a validated, practical blueprint.

Programme and working method

Time	Activity
14:30–14:45	Welcome, objectives, facilitation and ground rules
14:45–15:20	Part 1 — Define the AI Hotel and Restaurant project ambition, scope and evidence
15:20–16:05	Part 2 — Develop project brief, workstreams, methodology and phased pathway
16:05–16:35	Group reports: proposed mandate, deliverables, stakeholders and safeguards
16:35–16:55	Consolidate the draft project brief, project stages, partners and next steps
16:55–17:00	Closing and follow-up

Times and group allocations are indicative and may be adjusted according to attendance.

Scope of the AI Hotel and Restaurant project

The proposed project should examine hotel AND restaurant operations: revenue and reservations; finance and procurement; recruitment, training and rostering; kitchen production, food waste and inventory; energy and maintenance; housekeeping and service operations; guest and diner experience; and the systems, data, people and suppliers connecting them.

Five proposed project workstreams

01 REVENUE, FINANCE AND COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Hotel revenue, restaurant reservations and demand, pricing, distribution, forecasting, marketing, procurement and financial workflows.

02 PEOPLE, SKILLS AND WORKFORCE

Recruitment, onboarding, learning, rostering, staff support, employee rights and better jobs across hotels and restaurants.

03 HOTEL AND RESTAURANT OPERATIONS

Housekeeping, maintenance, kitchen operations, stock control, procurement, food production, service workflows and back-office processes.

04 RESOURCES, FOOD WASTE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Energy, water, food waste, preventive maintenance, resource efficiency and environmental measurement.

05 GUEST, DINER AND HUMAN SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Hotel guest and restaurant diner journeys, reservations, personalisation, accessibility and staff-augmented service.

Five principles for redesign

Principle	Working question
Eliminate	Which unnecessary processes or tasks should disappear?
Automate	Which repetitive activities can AI safely perform?
Augment	Where can AI support better human decisions and service?
Orchestrate	How should systems, teams and data work together end to end?
Humanise	How do we strengthen jobs, trust and authentic hospitality?

Responsible AI: non-negotiable design conditions

Each proposed use case should specify: human accountability and escalation; lawful and proportionate personal-data use; cybersecurity and vendor access; fairness and bias controls; transparency to staff and guests where relevant; training and change management; integration with existing systems; and a clear fallback when AI fails. Sensitive workforce and guest decisions must retain appropriate human review.

Discussion prompts — defining the project

Part 1 — Define the ambition and evidence needed

- What should an AI Hotel and Restaurant blueprint enable businesses to do better, and for whom?
- Which existing international examples, technologies and research should the project examine?
- Which types of hotels and restaurants should be represented, and what baseline data is needed?
- How can the project strengthen the human side of hospitality and protect workers and guests?

Part 2 — Design the project brief and pathway

- Agree the project objective, boundaries, core research questions and deliverables.
- Define the workstreams, partners, expert group, participating businesses and responsibilities.
- Propose a phased pathway: discovery and baseline; process redesign; blueprint development; pilot validation; refinement and scale-up.
- Identify measures of success, evidence requirements, funding/resource needs and decision gates.
- Set out governance, ethics, privacy, cybersecurity, staff consultation and human oversight from the outset.

What success looks like

By 17:00, aim to agree a draft project brief and phased pathway for developing the AI Hotel and Restaurant Blueprint: project purpose and scope, five investigation workstreams, proposed expert and industry partners, research methodology, governance, initial milestones, pilot selection criteria and immediate next steps. Candidate AI use cases are evidence for the project, not its final output.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need AI expertise?

No. Real-world hospitality experience, research, workforce perspectives and creative problem-solving are equally valuable.

Is this about replacing hotel or restaurant employees?

No. The initiative is people-first. Worker participation, meaningful human oversight, quality employment and excellent hospitality service are fundamental design requirements.

Must I prepare a presentation?

No. Bring examples, operational challenges, potential pilot ideas or relevant contacts.

Are we selecting a technology vendor or building an AI tool today?

No. The Think Tank defines the project to research and design the AI Hotel and Restaurant Blueprint, not a vendor solution.

Are the participants and groups final?

No. The list is provisional, may change or grow, and participation is open to interested stakeholders.

What happens afterwards?

MTF can consolidate the draft brief into a formal project proposal, establish an expert and stakeholder group, agree resources and launch a phased scoping and design programme.

PROPOSED PROJECT BRIEF AND DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

Project mandate — Define the purpose, intended users and scope of a replicable AI Hotel and Restaurant Blueprint for Mediterranean hospitality businesses.

Phase 1 | Mobilise and scope — Establish project governance, a multidisciplinary expert council, hotel and restaurant partners, staff representation, budget assumptions and research questions.

Phase 2 | Map and benchmark — Document existing operating processes and technology/data readiness; review international practices, workforce implications, regulatory and ethical requirements.

Phase 3 | Design the blueprint — Apply Eliminate, Automate, Augment, Orchestrate and Humanise to selected processes; define interoperable architecture, human roles, safeguards, skills and measurable indicators.

Phase 4 | Validate with pilot businesses — Test prioritised workflows in willing hotels and restaurants, compare against baselines and review risks, workforce impact and guest experience.

Phase 5 | Refine and share — Publish a practical implementation toolkit, training recommendations, governance checklist and scale-up roadmap.

Decision sought from this Think Tank — Agreement in principle on the project brief, the phased pathway, priority partners, a lead coordination structure and the first 30–90 days of work.

APPENDIX A — INITIAL PARTICIPANTS AND SHORT PROFILES

Names, countries and professional titles below are based on the supplied provisional participant list. Individual titles and affiliations should be checked before external publication. The list may change or expand. The

facilitators will work across groups rather than being assigned to a single table. Joint facilitators: Simon De Cesare, Kushal Raju and Kevin Camilleri.

Simon De Cesare — Facilitator

Chief Executive Officer, Eden Leisure Group; MHRA Council Member. Hospitality leadership and operational implementation.

Kushal Raju — Facilitator

Entrepreneur and Product Leader. Product strategy and translating technology ideas into workable solutions.

Marco Valeri — Participant

Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior, Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy. Organisational change and hospitality workforce transformation.

Giampaolo Viglia — Participant

Professor of Marketing, University of Portsmouth; Editor-in-Chief, Psychology & Marketing. Marketing research, customer behaviour and evidence-based decision-making.

Dijana Spasojevic — Participant

Global Head of EU Market, KPMG; Executive Director, EU Institutions Account, KPMG Belgium. Institutional strategy and large-scale transformation perspectives.

Roberto Costa — Participant

President, FIPE Coordination of Italian Restaurants Abroad; Founder, Macellaio RC. Restaurant operations and entrepreneurial hospitality.

Filippos Venetopoulos — Participant

Executive Chairman, Variety Cruises; President, Hellenic Professional Yacht Owners Association. Cruise and maritime hospitality management.

Lefteris Lazarou — Participant

Chef, Greece. Professional kitchen operations, culinary creativity and food waste.

Aikaterini Apostolopoulou — Participant

Chef, Greece. Culinary operations and practical kitchen workflows.

Carmen Hiu — Participant

Special Advisor – Hospitality, Deloitte; Founder, c3 Platinum, UK. Hospitality advisory and business transformation.

Alexander Rayner — Participant

International Tourism Strategist; Former Amadeus Director; PATA Executive Board Member, Australia. Travel technology, distribution and international tourism strategy.

Francisco Almeida — Participant

Vice President, Partner Services – Southern Europe, Forbes Travel Guide, Portugal. Luxury service excellence, quality and guest experience.

Kai Koerber — Participant

Founder & CEO, Koer A.I.; AI Innovator and Mental Health Advocate, USA. Human-centred AI innovation and responsible design.

Chris Crowley — Participant

Partner, Kintela Group; Former Chief Revenue Officer, Duetto, UK. Hotel revenue technology and commercial strategy.

Wilhelm Weber — Participant

Hospitality Transformation Executive; Co-Founder, SHS Swiss Hospitality Solutions; Former VP, Kempinski Hotels. Hotel transformation and operational excellence.

Herman Konings — Participant

Founder, NXT; Psychologist. Consumer psychology and future-facing human behaviour.

Ilaria Nurra — Participant

Director General, SecondAI. AI leadership and cross-sector implementation.

Pablo Garcia — Participant

Hospitality Innovation and Sustainability Executive; World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. Sustainable hospitality innovation and implementation.

Maria Micallef — Participant

Chairperson, MCESD. Social dialogue and multi-stakeholder cooperation.

Konstantinos Psaroulis — Participant

Winery, Messina, Greece. Wine production and hospitality supply-chain perspectives.

Konstantinos Tselios — Participant

Chef, Messina, Greece. Professional food-service operations.

Joe Muscat — Participant

CEO, Gozo Tourism Authority. Destination management and regional tourism.

Victor Borg — Participant

Chef. Kitchen operations and food-service innovation.

Leslie Vella — Participant

Deputy CEO, Malta Tourism Authority. Tourism policy and destination strategy.

Maria Teresa Borges Tiago — Participant

Senior Associate Professor, University of the Azores; Director, CEEAplA. Applied economic research and tourism innovation.

Flávio Gomes Borges Tiago — Participant

Senior Associate Professor, University of the Azores; Former Regional Director for Science, Innovation and Development. Research, digital innovation and regional development.

Kevin Camilleri — Co-facilitator

Secretary General, General Workers' Union (GWU). Brings the employee, workforce development and social dialogue perspective to the project's design, governance and implementation.

APPENDIX B — PRINTABLE WORKING SHEETS

Worksheet 1 — Project ambition, challenges and evidence

Problem / process	Who is affected?	Current cost / friction	Available data / systems
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Worksheet 2 — Project brief canvas

Project title and intended beneficiaries: _____

Problem and opportunity the project will address: _____

Project scope — hotels, restaurants and functions: _____

Research questions and required deliverables: _____

People, guest and business outcomes: _____

Partners, participating businesses and expert roles:

_____

Ethics, employee voice, privacy, cybersecurity and oversight:

_____

Proposed phases, decision gates and responsible leads:

_____

Success measures, baseline and evidence needed:

_____

Worksheet 3 — Project pathway and milestones

Project element	Importance	Evidence / dependencies	Proposed lead / partner	Next decision
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Worksheet 4 — Five-minute project brief report

Project ambition and scope: _____

Why the project matters now: _____

Priority workstreams and research questions: _____

How people stay at the front: _____

Key deliverables and success measures: _____

Governance, ethics and critical risks: _____

Proposed partners and project leadership: _____

First 30–90 days and subsequent phases: _____

Facilitator consolidation — draft project mandate and pathway

Project phase / milestone	Lead / partners	Deliverable / success test	Decision / next step
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PEOPLE AT THE FRONT. INTELLIGENCE BUILT INTO HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS.