Preface

The chapters in this book address the most important established and emerging qualitative and quantitative research methods in tourism. There are many books on research methods, including research methods in tourism. The question thus arises: why another book? Our response to this question is that we are not aware of any book that structures the material on research methods in the way that the authors have done for this book. Each chapter is structured to provide detailed overview of the nature of the research method, its use in tourism, its advantages and limitations and future directions for research.

The process began with a determination of the major research methods that are used by tourism researchers, quantitative, qualitative and mixed. While we believe that we have selected the major research methods in current use, we are aware that some readers will be disappointed that one or other research method has not been included. To this we must plead that any book such as this has limitations on length. While we acknowledge that the book does not address all research methods used by tourism researchers, the content does capture the methods that are most used at the present time.

The next step was to invite authors to contribute to the book. All are active researchers in tourism and all have international standing in the discipline. All have published works that use the technique that they write about. The 42 authors are based in 30 universities in eight countries giving the book a truly international perspective. A biography for each contributor is given at the beginning of the book.

An important element of the book is that all of the authors were required to structure their chapter in the same way.

1. Nature of the technique and its evolution
2. Background and types of problems that the technique is designed to handle
3. Applications of the technique to tourism, including discussion of studies that have used the technique and their findings
4. Advantages and limitations of technique conceptually and for policy formulation
5. Further developments and applications of the technique in tourism research

We believe that this structure makes the contents of each chapter much more informative to the reader, providing a comprehensive discussion of the technique itself as well as its application in tourism and related contexts. We are confident that the imposed structure will result in the individual contributions making an important contribution to tourism studies, ensuring that each will be highly informative and widely referenced in the literature. The chapters are constructed in a way that they provide a detailed overview of the different techniques irrespective of their tourism applications. In this way the volume should appeal to social scientists in general and not just to researchers in tourism. We would like to take this opportunity to thank each of the contributors for the professional way that they approached their tasks and for the high quality of their contributions.