

BRAZIL

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IBR

ECONOMICS AND
BUSINESS
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

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CHILE

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INTRODUCTION TO IBR

International Business Research (IBR) is an academic research project connected to the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Groningen. Since 2014, this faculty has been recognized among the top 1% of business schools worldwide, reflecting its commitment to high standards and excellent quality. Founded in 1988, IBR is led by an Executive Board and supported by an Advisory Board, with guidance from two supervising professors from the University of Groningen. The project involves around 20 to 24 carefully selected student consultants.

IBR focuses on carrying out customized research projects in emerging markets outside Europe. In 2026, we will conduct our research in Brazil and Chile. The project has a dual purpose. On the one hand, it provides companies with tailor-made research in these emerging markets at cost price, supervised by university professors to ensure academic rigor. On the other hand, it offers a group of talented senior students who are either in the final stages of their bachelor's program or pursuing a master's degree at the Faculty of Economics and Business, an unique chance to put their theoretical knowledge into practice. These students gain valuable experience both in the Netherlands and abroad.

Each research assignment is carried out by two student consultants, selected for their strong academic performance and extracurricular involvement. In addition, through the Local Student Consultant Project, local students are paired with the IBR student consultants, offering valuable local perspectives while also gaining international research experience themselves.

The project starts in January with an extensive desk research phase, which runs until the end of April. This is followed by five weeks of field research on location to collect the essential data for the final product. After returning to the Netherlands, the students finalize and present their research report. Throughout the entire process, confidentiality and integrity are strictly maintained to protect the interests of the participating companies.



WHY BRAZIL AND CHILE?

Brazil: A Global Powerhouse

Brazil is one of South America's largest and most diverse countries, with over 215 million people and a rich cultural mix. As a leading BRICS member, Brazil plays a crucial role in global markets, known for its vast natural resources like oil, iron ore, and agricultural products. Major industries include agribusiness, mining, manufacturing, and energy.

Recently, Brazil has also made strides in renewable energy and tech innovation. Cities like São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasília serve as major business hubs. Brazil is the world's top exporter of soybeans, coffee, beef, and sugar, and it is investing heavily in infrastructure, education, and clean energy.

In 2025, Brazil will host COP30 in Belém, providing a major platform for global climate leadership. With efforts to reduce bureaucracy and strengthen international trade, Brazil is solidifying its position as a key player in the global economy.

For IBR, Brazil offers immense research potential due to its diverse industries, rapid growth in innovation, and strengthening international trade relations, making it a prime location for exploring new business opportunities.

Chile: Stable and Innovative

Chile is one of the most stable and forward-thinking countries in South America, known for its strong national identity and political stability. The country's economy is a top performer in Latin America, driven by mining, agriculture, and fisheries. In recent years, Chile has focused on renewable energy, clean tech, and innovation.

Santiago, Chile's capital, is a growing business hub with a dynamic start-up scene and multinational presence. With over 30 free trade agreements, including with the EU, China, and the U.S., Chile is a strategic gateway between Latin America and Asia-Pacific. Chile is also investing in education and talent development, positioning itself as a leader in biotech, fintech, and agri-tech.

For IBR, Chile's stability, innovation focus, and strong trade network make it an ideal location to investigate sustainable business practices and emerging opportunities in high-tech sectors.

SUPERVISING PROFESSORS

The research conducted by IBR 2026 will be supervised by Dr. Maryse Brand and Dr. Araks Ayvazyan. Based on their extensive research experience, it is ensured that the conducted research will meet high academic standards. The professors will advise the students throughout the different research phases and accompany them during the field research.



Dr. Maryse Brand is Associate Professor at the Department of Innovation Management & Strategy. She obtained her PhD in Business-to-Business marketing and developed expertise in small business management, strategic cooperation, franchising, and entrepreneurship. She has published in journals such as *Entrepreneurship, Theory & Practice* and the *Journal of Small Business Management*. In addition to her academic work, she worked as an SME consultant for about eight years. Her teaching focuses on Small Business Management and Business Plan writing. Maryse is also active in educational innovation and management, and currently serves as programme director of the Pre-MSc programme. Bridging theory and practice is a central theme in her work.



Dr. Araks Ayvazyan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Innovation Management and Strategy at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen. She holds a PhD in Business and Finance from Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain. Her research focuses on innovation management, open innovation, corporate governance, and strategy. Araks has presented her work at leading conferences and institutions. She has also assessed applied projects in the past and brings an international perspective to her work, having lived and worked in several countries. This will be Araks' first time supervising IBR in Brazil and Chile, where she looks forward to guiding students in research projects with practical relevance for participating companies.



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RESEARCH DESIGN

Our main objective is to conduct business research in Brazil and Chile on behalf of Dutch companies. These research projects are tailored to meet the specific requirements of the companies, including objectives such as market research, competitor analysis, distributor assessment or market research. Additionally, we have the flexibility to combine these objectives as needed, as we provide customized research solutions.

The International Business Research project consists of three phases:

THE GENERAL PREPARATION PHASE

This phase focuses on equipping students with the knowledge needed for the destination countries, while also enhancing their expertise in market research and methodology. Students will attend guest lectures given by country experts, participate in sector analyses, and take part in workshops on research methodologies, led by the supervising professors. These professors will also accompany the students on the research field trip, ensuring they have the necessary skills to conduct their research effectively.

THE COMPANY-SPECIFIC RESEARCH PHASE

In this phase, the project is tailored to meet the specific needs of the client, involving the following key steps:

1. Research Framework:

A customized research framework is developed based on the client's requirements, and presented as a research proposal. Once approved, a contract will be finalized.

2. Desk Research in the Netherlands:

From January to mid-April 2026, the student consultants will carry out extensive desk research in the Netherlands. Progress and findings will be reported to the client, and strategies for the upcoming field research will be determined and prepared.

3. Field Research in the country of Destination:

Between April and May 2026, the student consultants will spend five weeks conducting field research in Brazil and Chile. During this time, they will visit companies, universities, and governmental institutions. Interim reports will be created and shared with provisional findings.

THE REPORTING PHASE

In the final phase, the research will be completed and the results compiled in a final report. All findings will be presented to the client by September 1st, 2026, with strict confidentiality and integrity maintained throughout the process.

TIMELINE

GENERAL PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

NOVEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

Students dedicate an average of ten hours per week to activities related to the IBR project. During this time, they will deepen their knowledge of Chile and Brazil and participate in several market research training sessions. Additionally, they will take a course specifically designed for IBR participants.

SPECIFIC PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

JANUARY 2026 - MID-APRIL 2026

Students increase their commitment to around twenty hours per week, focusing on their assigned research projects. Over these months, they gain deeper insights into their designated companies. Future meetings in Brazil and Chile are coordinated with the support of the Local Student Consultant program, which pairs IBR teams with students from leading local universities.

FIELD RESEARCH

MID-APRIL - MAY 2026

Students travel to their destination countries and, over five weeks, conduct intensive field research, dedicating an average of 40 hours per week to the project. All meetings and interviews with local companies and institutions take place during this period.

REPORTING PHASE

JULY - AUGUST 2026

In the final phase, students compile and document all findings and interviews into a comprehensive final report, offering well-reasoned recommendations. The report is confidential and will be presented to the client in August.



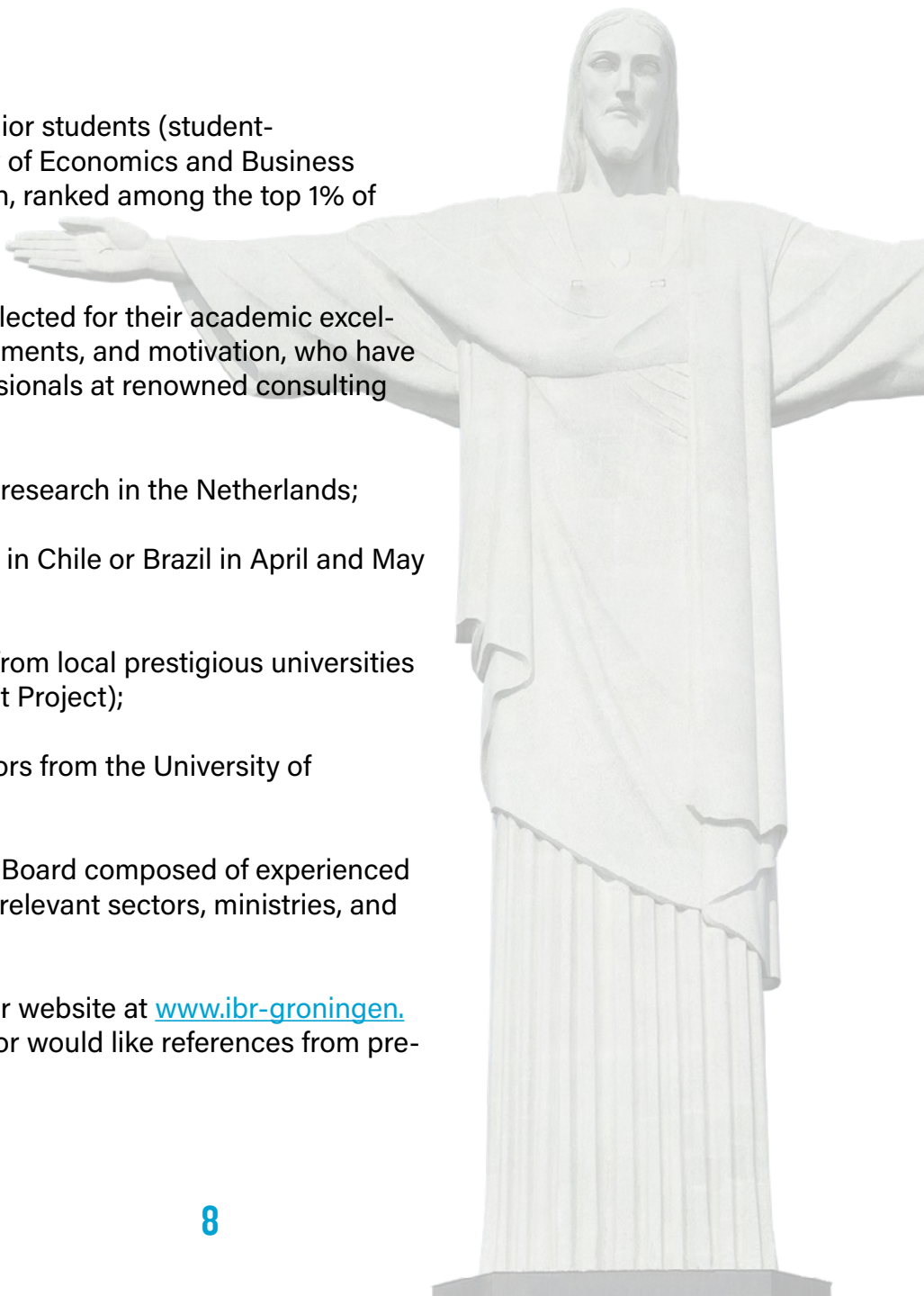
OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR COMPANY

IBR Groningen offers companies tailor-made research solutions, conducted by highly motivated student consultants from the University of Groningen. Whether your organization is looking to address specific business challenges or explore new market opportunities, IBR delivers in-depth, practical insights to support informed decision-making. Our research services cover a broad spectrum, including competitor analysis, consumer behavior studies, distribution and partner evaluations, sector-specific research, import/export assessments, and feasibility studies.

In short, we offer:

- Research conducted by senior students (student-consultants) from the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen, ranked among the top 1% of global business schools;
- Two student consultants, selected for their academic excellence, extracurricular achievements, and motivation, who have received training from professionals at renowned consulting firms.
- Up to three months of desk research in the Netherlands;
- Five weeks of field research in Chile or Brazil in April and May of 2026;
- Cooperation with students from local prestigious universities (the Local Student Consultant Project);
- Supervision by two professors from the University of Groningen;
- Guidance from an Advisory Board composed of experienced managers and advisors from relevant sectors, ministries, and embassies.

For more information, visit our website at www.ibr-groningen.nl. If you have any questions or would like references from pre-



REFERENCES

"It was a big pleasure to receive the IBR students to Versuni Brazil. They demonstrated strong commitment, and we conducted weekly meetings on the progress of our Circular Economy project. The students were very bold in choosing a country where the language is not understood, but with their creativity and strategy of partnering with local students, they were able to not only achieve their goal but also add value to our project by bringing relevant consumer insights."

S. Tamai – Head of Marketing Latin America Versuni

"We are very pleased with the cooperation, research and final report with conclusions and recommendations provided by IBR. Throughout the project, the team had been very thorough, dedicated and pro-active. They dealt with our local clients and network in a very respectful and open manner. The outcome of the project will for sure help is in our strategic thinking towards future expansion."

Robert Stelling, Director Interclean at RAI Amsterdam

"Over the past four years, IBR research students have successfully undertaken projects for Big Dutchman in Vietnam, Thailand, India, and Indonesia. Their thorough preparation prior to field research, combined with determination and motivation while exploring the dynamics of Asian markets, has resulted in highly valuable reports for our local management teams. At Big Dutchman, we value the opportunity to collaborate with such talented students, offering them and us insights into the vibrant opportunities and unique beauty that Asia has to offer."

J. Hofstede – Head of Region Asia & India

"Heineken has always had two distinct objectives. Firstly, Heineken believes that international companies should enable students to get a first-hand look at international business by being involved in actual business projects in foreign countries. By cooperating with IBR from the beginning, Heineken has given students this opportunity. Secondly, Heineken has used the IBR project as a way to conduct research. This has occurred in countries like China, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam. We have always been impressed by the professional and dedicated way these research projects were executed at such a reasonable cost. The results were useful for local management to better understand their business activities."

M. H. Rijkens – Former Director Asia Pacific and Central & Eastern Europe Heineken N.V.

ADVISORY BOARD

The students will be advised by experts from different industries as well as countryspecific experts. This year's Advisory Board consists of

Bente Spikker- Simon-Kucher- Senior Consultant

Dirk Aleven - FoodVentures - CEO

Emmeline Urlus - IBR Board 2023 Brazil & Colombia

Erik Schroevers- EASTWINGATE - Founder

Esmee Wesselink- Sustainable Business Coordinator - Arcadis Chile

Evgenia Bodaar-Molotova - KPMG - Partner

Frans Eusman - Heineken International BV - Executive Director Global Audit

Frans Jan Willemen - WSP Nederland B.V. - Commercial Director

Frans Janssen - Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chile - Sr. trade advisor

Frank de Meijer - Laranja Mecânica Consulting - CEO and Founder

Freek Keppels - Foreign Affairs - Financial Director

Gabriela Schulten - Connecting Cultures - Director and owner

Gerrit Jan Steenbergen - AS Watson Group - Group Retail Technology Director

Greetje Frankena - Atradius Trade Credit Insurance - Deputy Head of Economic Research Department

Hans Blankenburgh - NBSO Brazil - Chief Representative

Huib-Jan de Ruijter - FMO- Co-Chief Investment Officer

Jan Jaap Folmer - UPP! UpCycling Plastic B.V. - Chief & Founder

Jan Willem Kijlstra - Hapam - Commercial Director

Johannes Andriessen - Gasunie New Energy - Business Developer

Marcello Wachtel - Holland House Chile - General Manager

Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen - MN, Siemens, Erasmus Centre for Data Analytics - Commissaris, Non Executive Director, Advisory Board

Marjolein Warburg - WARBURG Consultancy - Business Plan Consultant

Marloes ter Horst - ConnectaVerse - Business Development Representative & IBR Board 2023 Brazil & Colombia

Nic Hoes - KPMG - Partner

Nicole van Spronsen- Marin - Project Manager

Numi Onorbe Genovesi - IBR Board 2024 India & Vietnam

Nynke Schaap- Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)- Business Developer Brazil and Surinam

Paul Verlinden - Koninklijke Metaalunie - Policy Secretary for International Business

Pieter Swart - Sealeopard Engineering - Director

Remco Gaanderse - R.G. Interim Management, Training, Advisory - Owner

Robbert Birkhoff - Meyn Food Processing Technology - Director Sales & Projects

Rosemieke Smit - IBR Board 2024 India & Vietnam

Thijmen Pronk - IBR Board 2025 Malaysia & Indonesia

Thomas de Leeuw - IBR Board 2025 Malaysia & Indonesia

Thomas van den Boogerd- Psp's Business Abroad - Business Manager

Tiago Krommendijk - LEF Brazil - Founding Partner

Tjibbe Beckers Novartis - Customer Engagement Manager

Tim van Gameren - IBR Board 2024 India & Vietnam

Vincent Deliege- IBR Board 2023 Brazil & Colombia

Yomi Winter - Directeur ZXK trading Bv

CSR AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

At IBR, we take responsibility for both our environmental and social impact. To offset the emissions from international travel, we invest in certified CO₂ compensation. We also engage in volunteer work each year to give back to the communities we connect with. In 2025, our team partnered with EmpoweringIndonesia, a grassroots initiative focused on youth empowerment. The 2026 IBR team will continue this tradition by launching a new volunteer initiative and raising funds for charities in Chile and Brazil, further expanding our social contribution.

Furthermore, sustainability is increasingly embedded in the research we conduct. In recent years, several IBR teams have focused on topics such as sustainable supply chains, circular packaging solutions, and ESG risk assessment. By helping Dutch companies identify opportunities to reduce environmental impact or improve social outcomes, we aim to deliver research that supports both business success and long-term responsibility.

Finally, through the Local Student Consultant Project, we create valuable opportunities for both our Dutch student-consultants and local students abroad. By collaborating on research, local students gain international experience and fresh perspectives that support their personal and professional development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

De Nederlandsche Bank N.V. – Prof. Dr. K.H.W. Knot – President

DHL Supply Chain – O.P.M. de Bok – CEO

EVOFENEDEX – B. Koopman – Managing Director

Heineken N.V. – Drs. M.H. Rijkens – Former Director Asia Pacific

KPN – Drs. H.C. Figuee – CFO & Member Executive Board

Randstad N.V. – Ir. A.M. van 't Noordende – CEO

Royal Boskalis Westminster N.V. – T.L. Baartmans – CEO

Royal DSM – F. Sijbesma – Honorary Chairman & Chairman of the Managing Board

Royal Wagenborg – Drs. J.Hermes – CFO

Haskoning – Drs. M.E. Hulshof – CEO

N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie – Drs. A.J. Boekelman – CFO

Shell Nederland – Drs. B.F. Everts – President Director

SHV Holdings N.V. – F.F.J. de Ryck – CEO

Siemens & NautaDutilh & Kelp Blue – Mr Dr h.c. M.G.H.A. Soeteman-Reijnen – Member of the Supervisory Board & Vice-Chair Supervisory Board & Chairman Board of Directors

University of Groningen – Prof. Dr. Ir. J.M.A. Scherpen – Rector Magnificus

VNO-NCW & MKB-Nederland – Drs. F.W. Vijselaar – General Director

CONTACT DETAILS



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