

IBR

ECONOMICS AND
BUSINESS
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Economics and Business Faculty Association INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH



IBR 2023 DESTINATIONS: COLOMBIA & ECUADOR 2022 - 2023

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International Business Research (IBR) is a research project linked to the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen. Since 2014, the faculty has been accredited as ranked among the top 1% of global business schools, which proves the quality and performance of the faculty meet high standards.

Founded in 1988, the IBR project consists of an Executive Board, 24 student-consultants, a carefully selected Advisory Board and three supervising professors of the University of Groningen. The project focuses on conducting tailor-made research in emerging markets outside of Europe. In 2023, the two selected countries are Colombia and Ecuador.

The IBR research project serves two purposes. On the one hand, we offer companies tailor-made research in growing economies at cost price, supervised by three professors from the University of Groningen. On the other hand, IBR offers 20 top quality senior students the experience of putting their theoretical knowledge into practice by conducting research for potential future employers, both at home and abroad.

Each individual research contract will be conducted by two highly motivated senior students who are selected based on their top academic and extracurricular accomplishments. Starting in January 2023, extensive desk research will be conducted until mid-April. After this preparation phase, a five-week field research trip will be organized to gather relevant data locally. After the student-consultants return to the Netherlands, the research report will be finalized and presented. It goes without saying that the research and its outcomes will be kept confidential and handled with the utmost integrity at all times.



II. SUPERVISING PROFESSORS

The research conducted by IBR Colombia & Ecuador 2023 will be supervised by Jan Riezebos, Karel-Jan Alsem and Janny Hoekstra. Based on their extensive research experience, it is ensured that the conducted research will meet high academic standards. They will advise the students throughout the different research phases and accompany them during the field research.

Jan Riezebos

Dr. Jan Riezebos is Full Professor of Educational Innovation in the Department of Operations, University of Groningen, The Netherlands and president of the Lean Management Network in The Netherlands, a platform of high tech companies that aim for continuous improvement. He has launched many initiatives to incorporate the practice of business and economics in higher education and research at the University of Groningen and has recently been appointed as a Comenius leadership fellow by the Minister of Education. Jan's current research interests involve process improvements through lean and quick response approaches and its applications in manufacturing and service, including education. Improvement of quality, responsiveness and throughput time, internationalization and innovation in relation to the market receive special attention.

Karel-Jan Alsem

Dr. Karel Jan Alsem is an Assistant Professor in Marketing at the University of Groningen and Professor of Applied Sciences ('Lector') in Marketing at Hanze University of Applied Sciences. In addition, he is a consultant in branding and health care marketing. He has published several academic marketing journals and wrote five books about marketing and branding. Among them a Dutch book titled 'Strategic Marketing Planning', widely used in business schools and better known as 'the Alsem'. Routledge also published this book as 'Applied Strategic Marketing' in 2019. Karel-Jan will join IBR for the ninth time (previously: South Africa, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brasil, China).

Janny Hoekstra

Dr. Janny Hoekstra is Associate Professor at the Marketing Department at the University of Groningen. Her expertise lies in the fields of strategic marketing, customer management and market research. She published papers in, among others, European Management Journal, European Journal of Marketing and Journal of Interactive Marketing. Dr. Hoekstra has been involved in the IBR project for over 20 years, and supervised projects in Mexico (2001), China (2005), Argentina (2009), Colombia (2013), Chile (2015) and Mozambique and South Africa (2017). Since 2015, she is also the lecturer of the course 'Research Projects in Emerging Markets', a course specifically designed for IBR students. During this course, students learn to develop a managerial research question, and how to collect the relevant data to answer this question in the most efficient and effective way. Dr. Hoekstra is very motivated to supervise the IBR project once more in 2023.



The International Business Research project consists of three phases:

THE GENERAL PREPARATION PHASE

The general preparation phase aims to improve the knowledge of the participating students regarding the countries of destination. The methodological expertise of the students will be further increased, as well as their knowledge of contract and market research. This phase also intends to provide the student-consultants with the knowledge and skills required to conduct the research successfully. Students will attend several guest lectures, lectured by country experts in relevant areas. The students will perform a sector analysis and attend workshops related to research methodology. These will be lectured by the supervising professors, who accompany the student-consultants on the research field trip.

THE COMPANY-SPECIFIC RESEARCH PHASE

During the company-specific research phase, the needs of the client will be examined and agreed upon via interactive feedback. This phase consists of the following elements:

1. Research Framework:

A research framework and the exact content of the research will be determined. The research framework will be set up according to the specific requirements of the client. The framework will be presented in a research proposal. Once the client agrees to the research proposal, a contract will be drawn up.

2. Desk Research in the Netherlands:

From January until mid-April 2023, an intensive pre-research phase will take place in the Netherlands. The progress and results of this research will be reported to the client. Additionally, a strategy for the field research will be determined and prepared.

3. Field Research in the country of Destination:

In April and May 2023, the student-consultants will spend five weeks in Colombia or Ecuador. During this period, the field research will be conducted and companies, universities, and governmental institutions will be visited. Intermediate reports will be drafted and provisional findings will be shared.

THE REPORTING PHASE

During the final phase of the research, the project will be completed. The results will be presented to the client in a final research report. All results will be treated confidentially and with utmost integrity. The deadline for the completion of the report is September 1st, 2023.



IV.

TIMELINE

GENERAL PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

NOVEMBER 2022 - JANUARY 2023

Students spend an average of ten hours per week on activities related to IBR. They will expand their knowledge of Colombia & Ecuador, and will participate in several trainings on market research. In addition, the participating students will follow a course specifically designed for IBR.

SPECIFIC PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

JANUARY - MID-APRIL 2023

Students spend twenty hours per week on their designated research project. During these months, the students develop a better understanding of their assigned company. Future meetings in Colombia & Ecuador are planned with the help of our Local Student Consultant programme, which pairs IBR research teams with students from prestigious local universities.

FIELD RESEARCH

MID-APRIL - MAY 2023

Students leave for their country of destination. During a period of five weeks, field research is conducted. Here, students will spend an average of 40 hours per week on the research project. All meetings and interviews with companies and institutions on destination are held during this period.

REPORTING PHASE

JULY - AUGUST 2023

During this final phase all results and interviews are documented in a final report. The end report includes a clear and well-founded advice. This report is confidential and will be presented to the client in August.

	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
PREPARATION	STUDENT SELECTION												
					LITERATURE STUDY								
					SPECIALIZATION COURSES ON RESEARCH								
REPORTING					RESEARCH PROPOSAL & FRAMEWORK								
					PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION								
									FIELD RESEARCH				
RESEARCH									FINAL RESEARCH REPORT				
													PRESENTATION
	START PHASE I				START PHASE II				START PHASE III				



V. REFERENCES

"The students were very competent in investigating the chances for export of used commercial vehicles to Brazil. As a result of their research, Kleyn can strengthen its leading market position as an independent vendor of used commercial vehicles."

*P. J. Overakker - Former CEO
Kleyn International*

"Effectiveness and competence; these are essential ingredients to a successful research in a foreign environment. In this case, a research conducted in South-Africa in 2017. These characteristics combined with a solid amount of academic knowledge yielded a valuable market research including potential customers in the field of research. Our business, De Nederlandse Plastic Industrie, is very pleased with the enjoyable- and dynamic way in which IBR participants have laid a solid foundation for the development of a customer base in South-Africa."

*H. Aal - Director
Nederlandse Plastic Industrie B.V.*

"The research, conducted in 2010 in Vietnam, has provided FMO with useful advice that we will use to increase FMO's influence in the banking sector in Vietnam. The students were very professional, committed, and well prepared which all aided to a pleasant cooperation."

*B. Rekvelt - Manager Financial Institutions Africa
FMO*

"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*



IBR offers companies tailor-made research conducted by motivated student-consultants from the University of Groningen. When companies face a specific problem, IBR can contribute towards finding a solution. IBR offers various research possibilities, such as: competitor analyses, consumer research, distribution analyses, partner analyses, sector analyses, import analyses, export analyses, and feasibility research.

In short, at a cost of €9800,- (excl. VAT) 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 who have been selected based on academic and extracurricular achievements and motivation;
- Three months of desk research in the Netherlands;
- Five weeks of field research in Colombia or Ecuador in April and May of 2023;
- Cooperation with students from local prestigious universities (the Local Student Consultant Project);
- Supervision from three professors from the University of Groningen;
- Support from an Advisory Board, consisting of experienced managers and advisors from various relevant sectors, ministries, and embassies.

For additional information please consult our website: www.ibr-groningen.nl. For any questions or references of companies for which we have conducted research in the past, feel free to contact us. Our contact details can be found on Page 10 below.



VII. RESPONSIBILITY & RECOMMENDATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY

Since this year IBR will focus more on sustainability. The IBR project is sold at cost price, which means we are non-profit. However, we as IBR think it is important to be socially responsible. As IBR our biggest negative externality is the flight to Colombia & Ecuador, this is why we will invest in CO2 neutralization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the credibility of our project and our experiences, the quality of IBR is endorsed by the board of recommendations. Our board of recommendation (BoR) consist of the following people:

- Capgemini - Drs. R. Wolberink - Vice President
- De Nederlandsche Bank N.V. - K.H.W. Knot - President
- Friesland Campina - H.M.A. Schumacher - CEO
- GasTerra B.V. - Drs. A. Krist - CEO
- Heineken N.V. - Drs. H.F. Böhm - Managing Director & Drs. M.H. Rijkens - Former Director Asia Pacific
- N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie - J.J. Fennema - Board of Directors
- Port of Rotterdam N.V. - Drs. A.S. Castelein - CEO
- Rabobank - B.J. Marttin - Managing Board Member Wholesale & Rural
- Restaurant Brands International - Drs. J. Cil- Chief Executive Officer
- Royal Boskalis Westminster N.V. - Dr. P.A.M. Berdowski - CEO
- Royal DSM - F. Sijbesma - Honorary Chairman & Chairman of the Managing Board
- Royal Haskoning DHV - Ir. E. Oostwegel - CEO
- Royal Philips N.V. - Mr. F.A. van Houten - CEO
- Shell - Ir. M. van Loon - President and Director
- University of Groningen- Prof. Dr. T.N. Wijmenga - Rector Magnificus



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