Baltic Science Network

Connecting Through Science

Evaluation and Refinement of BARI mobility tool – A report

Soile Haverinen, Annina Kainu, Mari Leino and Sinikka Suomalainen

Interreg Baltic Sea Region

EU STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION FLAGSHIP

EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Further details on the publication

Name of the project	BSN_Powerhouse
Affiliation of the project	Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme funded project
Title of the publication	Evaluation and Refinement of BARI mobility tool – A report
Affiliation to the Project Work Package	WP3
Month & year of the publication	July 2021
Author of the publication	Soile Haverinen[1], Annina Kainu[2], Mari Leino[1] and Sinikka Suomalainen[2]
Institutional affiliation of the author	[1]University of Turku, [2]Åbo Akademi University

Project in brief

BSN_Powerhouse is an extension of the Baltic Science Network (BSN) project. While BSN provided relevant stakeholders (e.g., science ministries, governmental agencies and university networks) with a general platform to devise joint strategic approaches, BSN_Powerhouse went one step further to implementation.

BSN_Powerhouse provided transnational funding and support instruments to help research infrastructures to expand their cooperation in order to increase competitiveness and scientific excellence in the region.

The project focused on three thematic priority areas: Photon and Neutron Science, Life Sciences and Welfare State.

Two support instruments were implemented, tested and evaluated.

LaunchPad: RI_Connectors attempted to widen the participation of research infrastructures (RI) in the field of Photon and Neutron Science. EU13 small-scale RI were matched with large-scale RI to become dedicated partner facilities. The instrument helped to overcome the gap in research and innovation performance among the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) countries.

BARI (Baltic Science Network Mobility Programme for Research Internships) offered doctoral students the possibility to host Master's or Bachelor's level students for research internships. Working jointly on a research project fostered personal ties between nationalities as well as interest in research and scientific cooperation. In addition, the PhD students gained valuable leadership skills.

BSN_Powerhouse tested out a new decentralised and flexible funding mode that can serve as a model for multi-level governance and funding. The test run served as a proof of concept regarding the added value and impact of the new instruments and the functionality of their structure and governance, and is the basis for negotiating the long-term funding of the instruments.

The Baltic Science Network is a flagship of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region under the Education, Research and Employability Policy Area. It is also one of two cornerstones of the Science, Research and Innovation Agenda of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

This paper is based on input from stakeholders and BSN partners and does not necessarily reflect the views of all participating Member States and organizations.

Contents

1. BARI – an introduction

BARI is based on the results of the Baltic Science Network (BSN) project (March 2016–February 2019), where the "Research internship" mobility tool was chosen to be piloted in the BSN_Powerhouse extension project (Aug 2019–July 2021). In total, six mobility tools for young researchers were created by the BSN,[1] three of them were selected for more development and the Research internship was chosen among these three mobility tools. The three developed mobilities were: 1. Summer Schools with a Focus on Large Research Infrastructures, 2. Research Internships for Students within the Baltic Sea Region, 3. Short-Term Scholarships for Doctoral Students. The three other tools were: Seed Money for Networking, Baltic Sea Region Mobility Ambassadors and International Postdoctoral Research Projects within the Baltic Sea Region.

This paper concerns the evaluation and refinement of BARI.

1.1 Concept of BARI – Baltic Science Network Mobility Programme for Research Internships

BARI offers research internships with academic training for Bachelor's and Master's students within Photon & Neutron Science, Life Sciences and Welfare State. Students can apply for internships (2–12 weeks) among research projects offered by the PhD candidates who will host the interns. The **target group** includes Bachelor's and Master's **students**, and **PhD candidates** in **Life Sciences, Photon & Neutron Sciences and Welfare State** in the BSR (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Russia and Belarus). The project finances the implementation of BARI; however, the funding of scholarships has a decentralised model with different funders involved.

That is why all parties within the project agreed on a scholarship which includes:

- a monthly stipend of 800[2] euro to cover the student's everyday costs

[1] See the BSN report Mobility funding instruments, available at: https://www.baltic-science.org/bsn-publications/reports-working-papers/

[2] Since each funding institution carries a different amount of budget, a minimum stipend of 600 euros was agreed on and a stipend of 800 euros was recommended to cover a student's everyday costs.

- a travel subsidy of 300 euro for the student to travel to a foreign Baltic Sea Region country

1.2. Objectives of BARI

BARI has four objectives:

1. To provide promising students (interns) with the opportunity to gain research experience in an attractive research theme of their choice.
2. To provide doctoral candidates (hosts) with additional skills (intercultural skills, language skills, personal management competencies).
3. To raise the awareness of the next generation of researchers of the value of international cooperation within the Baltic Region.
4. To support high-quality research projects.

1.3 Application process and matchmaking

The BARI application process starts when PhD candidates upload their project offers (internship positions) on the BARI portal. Then, the students submit their applications, with the possibility to apply for up to three project offers (internship positions). The next step is the selection of potential interns: the PhD candidates rank the students who applied for an internship in their project. The final matchmaking and allocation of scholarship grants depends on the availability of funds for the matched PhD candidate and student. All applications must be submitted via the BARI portal.

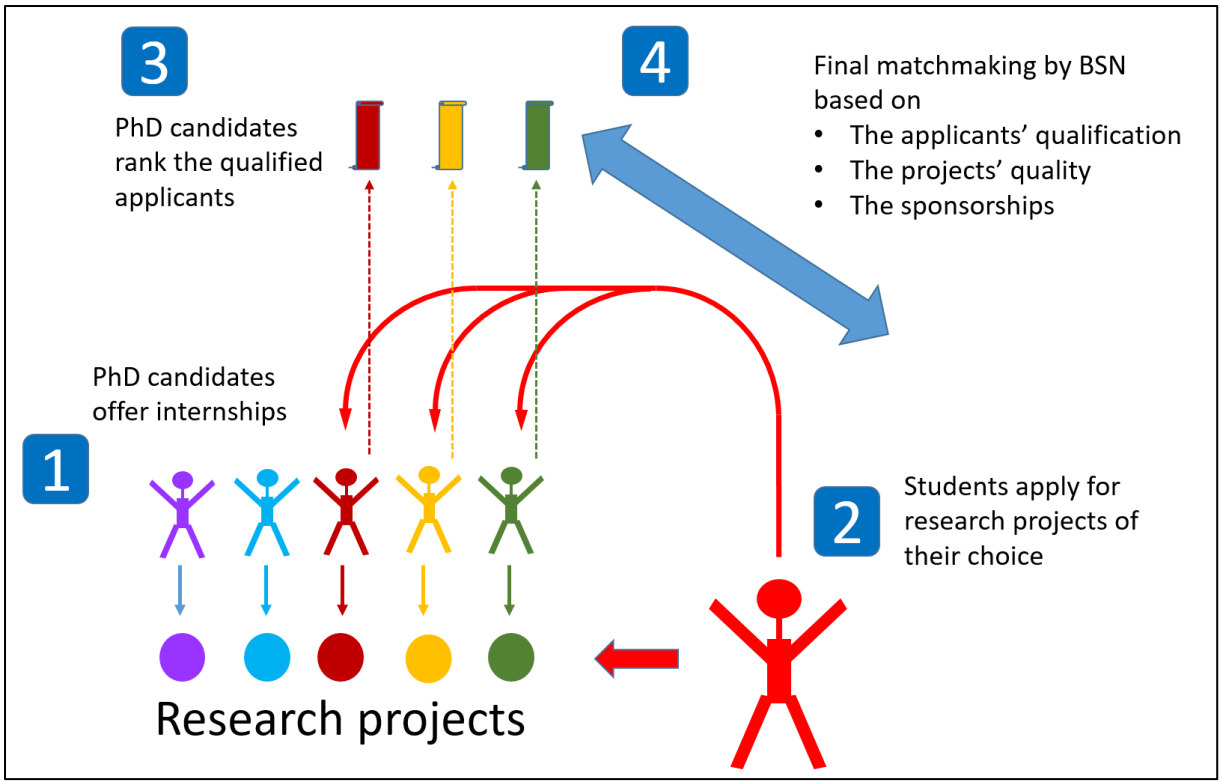

Fig 1. Steps in the BARI application process for students and PhD candidates. (Modified after C. Schäfer, DAAD, 2019)

The process guarantees an optimal outcome for the intern and the host, as only internships that both parties agree on are carried out. Beyond that, the database and the broad promotion of the programme ensure a widespread impact, which could not be achieved by an individual institution. The bottom-up structure promotes personal initiative, and the flexible structure allows for easy integration into institutional strategies. The funders' engagement can easily be adjusted to the individual objectives and resources.

1.4 BARI scheme

At the beginning of the implementation phase (end of 2019/beginning of 2020), the planned schedule for the first call for applications was as follows:

February 2020: submitting research internship offers

PhD students affiliated with an accredited academic institution or a non-profit research institution within the BSR submit research internship offers in the fields of Photon and Neutron Science, Life Sciences or Welfare State. The research internships relate to the topics of their doctoral work.

March 2020: submitting applications for research internships

Bachelor's or Master's students apply for up to three internships, corresponding to their personal interests. They should be currently enrolled at a university/college in a BSR country as a full-time student and they must prove that they will maintain their student status at their home institution during the internship.

April 2020: matchmaking and selection

After the hosting PhD candidate has ranked all received applications allocated to their project, the BARI administration reviews all matches and informs the students and PhD hosts about the outcome of the selection procedure.

June to 16 October 2020: internship

Students undertake their internships at their chosen host institutions. The exact timing is coordinated by the student and their host.

The first two rounds of applications in February and March took place according to the original plan. From March 2020, many BSR countries faced different Covid-19 regulations. This situation had a direct impact on the further development of the BARI programme.

Changes in the schedule of applications to adapt to the Covid-19 situation

Faced with the new Covid-19 reality, a new and more flexible schedule had to be developed and implemented as soon as possible. The new time frame was designed with monthly calls for applications starting from 1 July 2020 until 16 May 2021. The BARI portal was open between the 1st and 16th of each month for PhD candidates to upload their internship offers, for BA/MA students to submit their application and for professors to upload their references. Whenever a host and the prospective intern agreed on an internship and the formal requirements were fulfilled, both parties were informed, and the internship was able to take place, provided that a suitable scholarship was available.

1.5 Administration

The BARI portal (application database) was set up by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). Communication with students interested in applying to BARI was carried out by DAAD, as well as the matchmaking selection and the process of

allocating scholarships. After the final selection had been done, DAAD informed the University of Gdansk about the matched projects per country so that the University of Gdansk could connect the selected student with the funding organisation[3] in charge of the relevant scholarship.

1.6 Overview of the implementation process

The User Interface of the BARI portal for online applications was created and handled by DAAD, as was the selection process and the matchmaking of students, PhD candidates and financing organisations. All project partners in WP3 participated in the overall planning and marketing; the marketing of BARI on social media was done by UNECON. The University of Gdansk made the contacts concerning financing. The evaluation of BARI was carried out by Åbo Akademi University, and the main responsibility for the refinement of the concept was held by the University of Turku.

[3] The funding organisations were identified at the beginning of the project and each of them signed a Letter of commitment for the scholarships.

2. Evaluation of BARI – lessons learned

2.1 Methodology

The evaluation is based on the statistics provided by DAAD (based on the BARI portal) and online survey questionnaires.

Experiences of fulfilled internships during 2020 (24 internships) were studied using surveys sent to the interns and hosts. Anonymous questionnaires were sent to the interns and hosts after the internship had been completed (emails with link to questionnaire, 1 sending, 1 reminder). It included questions with response scales of 1–5 or 1–10 and open questions with the possibility to comment.

Opinions concerning BARI from the funders' perspective were studied using a questionnaire sent to funding organisations which had offered scholarships in 2020. During 2020, five funding organisations financed at least one scholarship. Questionnaires were sent on 15 March 2021 to twelve funding organisations and Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, which administrated some of the scholarships. Ten funding organisations answered the questionnaire, representing six countries: Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden and Russia.

2.2 BARI statistics

Project offers

Fig 2. Projects offered in 2020 and 2021.

The number of project proposals was highest at the beginning of the project period. The strict limitations on international mobility caused by Covid-19 during the spring of 2020 likely contributed to the low number of proposals during the late spring. The number of project proposals picked up during the summer when some mobility restrictions were relaxed, but was again low in the autumn and winter months.

The total number of project offers during 2020 was 154. In 2021, there were 28 new project offers in addition to those still available from 2020.

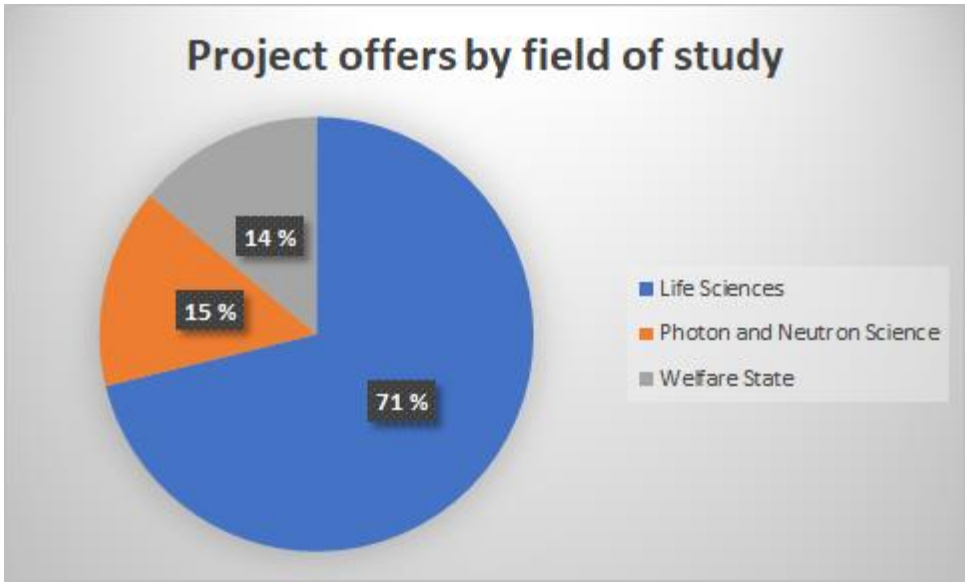

Fig 3. Projects offered by field of study (2020–2021).

The majority of project offers were in Life Sciences, at over 70%. Photon and Neutron Science and Welfare State had 15% and 14% respectively of all project offers.

Welfare State project offers were available in a wide range of locations in Poland, Germany, Finland, Russia and Sweden. Photon and Neutron Science project offers were more concentrated, with a clear majority (over 80%) in Germany, and a smaller number in Poland, Latvia and Estonia.

Profile of the students

Applications

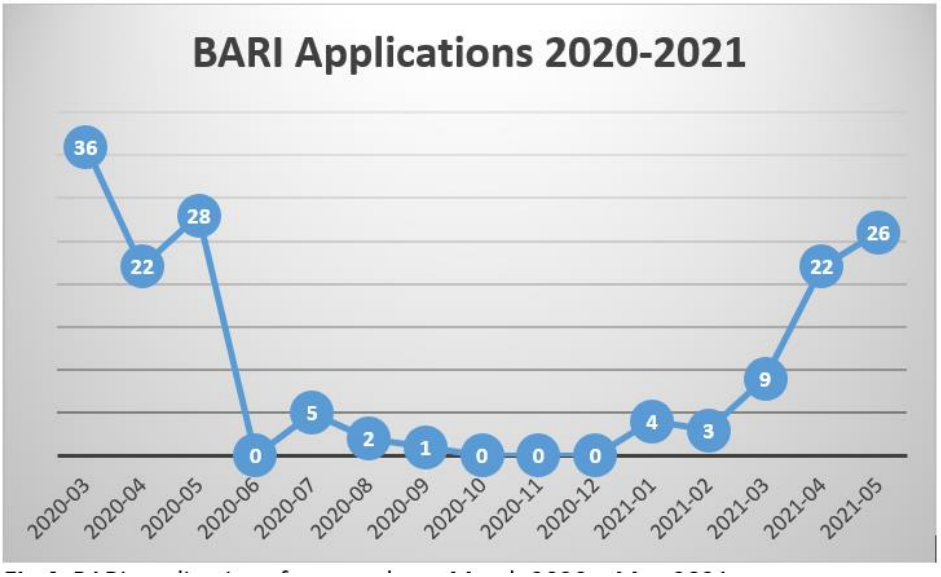

Fig 4. BARI student applications March 2020–May 2021. Please note that the portal was closed to applications from October to December 2020.

The total number of applications during 2020 was 98. The highest number of applications was received during February–May, and after the summer, the applications fell to zero in the last quarter of 2020. From January 2021 onwards, an increase in the number of applications was observed, reaching a total of 64 applications in the first half of 2021. It is worth noting that the original intention was for most internships to take place during the summer months, and thus this pattern of applications was as expected.

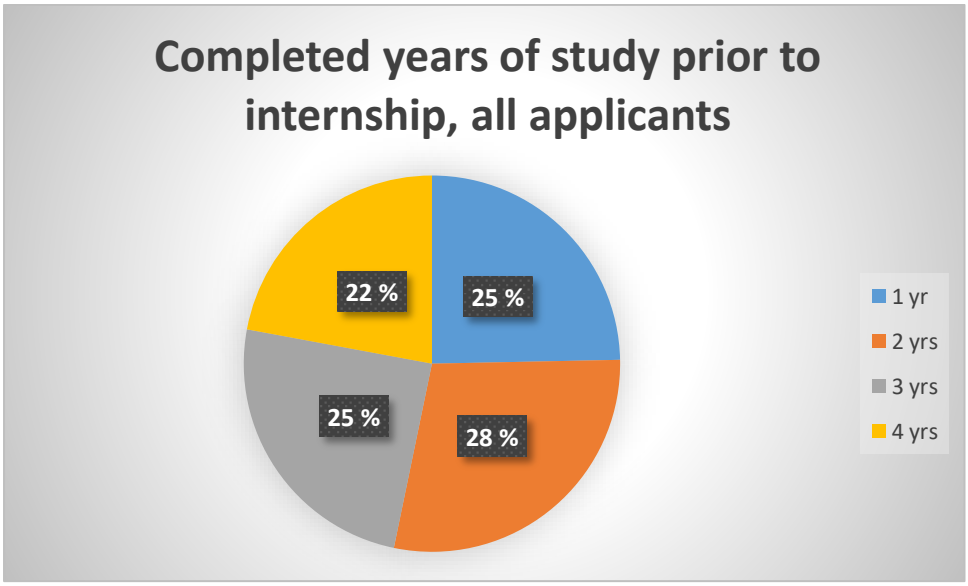

Fig 5. Completed years of study prior to applying for internship.

Prior to applying, the applicants had completed on average 2.44 years of study. The most common number of years studied was two, but as can be seen from the diagram (Fig 5.), the students' length of prior study was quite evenly distributed and ranged from one to four years.

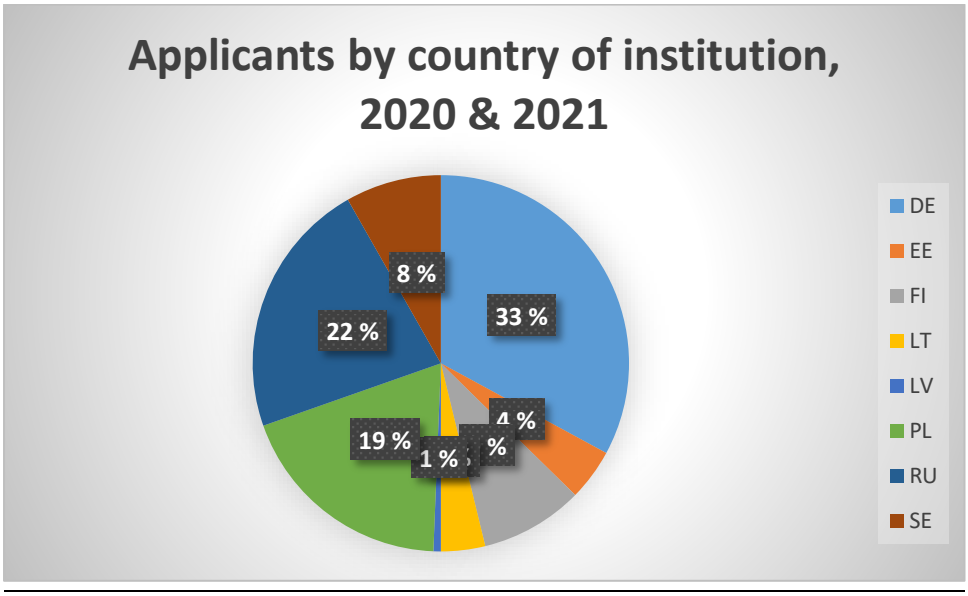

Fig 6. Applicants by country of home institution (March 2020–May 2021).

The largest number of applications, one-third of the total, came from students enrolled in German universities. Both Russian and Polish institutions were home to approximately a fifth of all applicants. Finland and Sweden both supplied a little less than 10% of applications and Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia had a few applications each.

Matched internships

A total of 28 interns were matched with projects and funding and were able to complete their internships in 2020. The length of internships was between two and twelve weeks, with an average duration of 9.5 weeks and most internships being between six and twelve weeks.

Of the internships completed in 2020, 19 were in Life Sciences, two in Photon and Neutron Science and three in Welfare State. Life Sciences was therefore clearly the most common field of study. The same pattern was observed in the first semester of 2021, in which 33 scholarships were assigned, of which 30 were in Life Sciences and three in Photon and Neutron Science.

In 2020, the largest group of participants (by university of origin) was from Germany, eleven interns. Russia, Poland and Finland each had four participants and Lithuania one.

The largest number of interns completed their internships in Sweden, a total of seven interns. Six internships took place in Germany, four in Poland, three in Estonia and two in Finland. Norway and Lithuania each received one intern during 2020.

During the first four months of 2021, 33 applicants were matched with projects and funding. Therefore, a total of 61 scholarships have been awarded and assigned for internships.

2.3 Distribution of scholarships

Funding for scholarships was available from 12 organisations representing different types of organisations on the macro-regional, regional, national and local levels, from ministries and foundations to universities. Most funding organisations were project partners (Tab. 3, page 17).

DAAD funded the largest number of internships, 13 in 2020 and 12 in 2021. Hansestadt Hamburg funded eight internships in 2020 and four in 2021, while the Universities of Gdansk and Lithuania each funded a total of three internships. CBSS Project Support Facility assigned ten internships and St.Peterburg Electrotechnical University LETI one internship in 2021. The University of Lund granted three internships in 2021 and the University of Kiel financed one internship in 2020.

The total number of available scholarships in 2020 was 140.

Funding was available in three categories: for incoming interns, for outgoing interns, and for either incoming or outgoing interns. Some of the scholarships had additional restrictions on the potential target group. The largest number of scholarships (90 in 2020) was available for outgoing interns, i.e. universities and institutions were mostly willing and able to fund their own students who wanted to undertake an internship abroad. For incoming interns, there were 25 scholarships funded by CAU Kiel and DAAD. More flexible funding for either outgoing or incoming interns was available from only three funders, CBSS, Hansestadt Hamburg and CAU Kiel.

During 2020, 27 scholarships were allocated for internships by five different funding organisations. A total of 100 scholarships were available for 2021.

Tab. 1. Availability of scholarships for 2021 per country and organisation if specified. (Referring to both BA and MA if no specification mentioned). (DAAD)

All BSN countries: 13 incoming/outgoing

Germany: 28 outgoing (10 BA, 18 Hamburg region), 8 incoming (5 BA, 3 CAU Kiel)

Finland: 6 outgoing (4 UTU, 2 ÅAU)

Lithuania: 9 outgoing

Poland: 1 outgoing

Russia: 5 outgoing (4 UNECON, 1 LETI)

Sweden 30 outgoing (LU)

2.4 Experiences of the hosts – PhD candidates

The evaluation of the experiences of the students, PhD candidates and the financing organisations is based on the results of the questionnaires.

Answers were received from 17 out of 24 PhD candidate hosts (68% answered).

Tab. 2. Answers of PhD candidates per country, country of the interns they hosted, and the theme for the project offer.

Basic data on the responders (17 PhD candidates)

Answers from six host countries:

Estonia	2
Germany	4
Norway	1
Poland	4
Sweden	5
Finland	1

total of 17 hosts

Answers from five countries of interns participating in the evaluation by the PhD candidates' experiences:

Finland	4
Germany	7
Lithuania	1
Russia	3

Poland 2
17 interns

Themes:

Photon and Neutron Science	1
Life Sciences	13
Welfare State	3

17 project offers

Most of the PhD candidates found information about BARI via emails from their university/research institute teacher or supervisor, compared with social media or the web.

Experiences of the BARI programme administration from the host perspective. The programme administration received a very good response from the host PhD candidates.

Instructions for uploading the project offer on the BARI portal were very clear ($\bar{x}$ 4.6 points from a maximum 5, range of answers 3–5; 1 not clear at all, 5 very clear). It was suggested that having a template for the internship offer might be helpful. One suggestion for improving the portal was to have one single up/download hub for all documents.

The average evaluation of the communication connected to the administration of BARI was very good, ($\bar{x}$ 4.7 from a maximum of 5 points (range of answers 3–5; including communication with BARI administration 4.6/5, with the intern $\bar{x}$ 4.6/5, with supervisor/professor at the host institute $\bar{x}$ 4.9/5; 1 not clear, difficult. 5 very clear, easy, went well)).

The administration of BARI received many positive comments; most of the PhD candidates considered that everything functioned well.

- The process was easy to handle, and everything worked smoothly.
- Clear instructions. Great management of the situation during Covid.
- The questions I asked from BARI were quickly replied to.
- Everything was very smooth.
- Good understanding and appreciation of the importance of the internship.

It would be good for the website to include some more information on organising communication and about the tasks and timing for the host. It was not clear whether

the intern might have to wait to obtain funding.

Experiences of the host related to their research project and the internship. The PhD candidates were very satisfied with the internship's value for the research project and for learning new skills. The hosts were very satisfied with the intern regarding their capacity to adapt to the environment (x̄ 2.9 of 3), their support of the project (x̄ 2.8 of 3) and knowledge related to the project field (x̄ 2.9 of 3; 1 not satisfied, 2 satisfied, 3 very much satisfied). The satisfaction was also high concerning the information about the intern before their arrival (x̄ 2.9/3), the motivation of the intern (x̄ 2.7/3) and the accomplishment of the tasks given by the host (x̄ 2.9/3; 1 not satisfied, 2 satisfied, 3 very much satisfied).

The contribution of the internship to the research project was evaluated as considerable, (mean 7.8 out of a maximum of 10 points, range of answers 5–10 (1 poor, 10 considerable)). In particular, the benefits for the PhD candidates' careers and for them personally were remarkable (x̄ 8.6 of 10).

Cooperation with new people and the possibility of the new experience of supervising a student, experience of teaching, mentoring, exchange of knowledge and cultural experience were highly appreciated. Highly motivated students with great knowledge about the research field worked independently and added much value to the research project. Learning to communicate ideas and instructions were valuable skills for the host in their future. Dealing with challenges and learning from the intern were also mentioned as benefits.

Practical duties for the host. The host´s practical arrangements for the intern concerning accommodation and travel were evaluated as being quite easy. One problem was with the payment of the scholarships coming late, after the internship. Some difficulties were connected to arranging visas. The difficulties were mainly associated with restrictions due to Covid-19.

Motivation for engaging with BARI and interest in future cooperation in the BSR for the PhD candidates. Academic purpose (x̄ 4.6/5) and improving skills for supervision (x̄ 4.9/5) were very important motivations for PhD candidates for participating in BARI as hosts. In addition, cultural experience was a motivating factor, while practising a foreign language was not so important (x̄ 3.5/5; 1 not at all, 5 very much). Possible cooperation with the intern's university and other groups or countries were also mentioned as motivations.

The BARI experience increased interest in the Baltic Sea Region. Interest in future cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region was very high (x̄ 4.9 points/max 5).

Overall satisfaction with the BARI internship was very high (x̄ 9.8 points out of a maximum of 10; 1 not at all satisfied, 10 very much satisfied).

Most hosts would absolutely recommend BARI to other PhD candidates (x̄ 4.9 of max 5; 1 not at all, 5 absolutely).

Effects of Covid-19 for the hosts. Restrictions during 2020 caused timing problems such as reducing the duration of the internship or delaying the internship to a more difficult time for the host with regard to their own working scheme. In addition, some interns resigned due to Covid-19. The internships happened mainly during periods of less restrictions when it was possible to work at the universities.

Best experiences of BARI for the hosts. The PhD hosts rated the opportunity to supervise and improve their supervision skills very highly. The 12-week-long scholarship for the internship was appreciated, as was the possibility to network with people from other regions and receive encouragement for their own research theme. The smooth application process and support from the BARI administration helped. The matching system helped to get the best match of the PhD host and student intern, which was a good opportunity for both.

The PhD hosts did not suggest recommendations for improving BARI; they were very satisfied with the programme.

2.5 Experiences of the interns – students

Answers were received from 17 out of 24 student interns (68% answered).

Tab. 3 Responding interns and the providing institution per country, and the theme for the project offer.

Basic data for the responders (17 interns)

Four home countries of the interns

Germany	6 students
Finland	4
Russia	4

Poland	3

Master's students	6
Bachelor's students	11

Total of 17 students

Seven host countries

Germany	5 providers
Sweden	4
Finland	2
Estonia	2
Poland	2
Lithuania	1
Norway	1

Project themes:

Photon and Neutron Science	3
Life Sciences	11
Welfare State	3

Most of the students got information about BARI from other sources than via emails (from their university/research institute/teacher), social media or the web. Most of them got information from various other sources such as via friends, from a lecturing teacher, on a poster, or via an internship database at their home university or similar.

Experiences of BARI administration from the students' perspective. The BARI programme administration functioned well for the students in general. Instructions for submitting an application on the BARI portal were clear for the majority ($\bar{x}$ 4.2 out of a maximum of 5, range of answers 2–5; 1 not clear at all, 5 very clear). Some problems with uploading documents were noted. Communication with the BARI administration concerning questions about the programme itself was clear ($\bar{x}$ 4.4/5). Communication with the administrative contact about funding was clear in general ($\bar{x}$ 4.4/5, range of answers 2–5), as was contact with the funder ($\bar{x}$ 4.5/5, range of answers 1–5; 1 not at all, 5 very clear). Some confusion existed concerning the funding system before filling in the application and getting emails from different persons, not

always knowing that they were from BARI. Students' communication with the host was very clear (x̄ 4.8/5, range of answers 3–5).

The programme administration received mainly very positive feedback concerning answering the students' questions: being helpful, quick, with clear and comprehensive replies.

Students' experiences related to the research project. Students' expectations of the host institution were well met regarding equipment (x̄ 4.4/5, range of answers 3–5; 1 not at all, 5 very well) and professional contacts (4.3/5, range of answers 3–5). The skilled support of the supervisor met expectations very well (x̄ 4.5/5, range of answers 3–5). Some of the internships were carried out in a long-distance mode without being in place at the host institution.

Students' experiences concerning practicalities. The students were satisfied with the help looking for accommodation (x̄ 2.6/3; 1 not satisfied, 3 very much satisfied). Some problems were mentioned with student dorms, which were offered only for a period of time (6 months) longer than the internship. Satisfaction with the living conditions and accommodation when found was very high (x̄ 2.9/3). Travelling during Covid-19 times was partially problematic and complicated because of closed borders and restrictions, including quarantine requirements. Most of the students were satisfied with the travel arrangements (x̄ 2.3/5).

The process of receiving the scholarship payment was rated as mainly easy (x̄ 4/5, range 1–5; 1 difficult, 5 easy/went well) and also the method of receiving the payment (x̄ 4.4/5; range 1–5).

Some problems existed with communication with the administration of the students' home university because of vacation time in the summer, causing delays in scholarship payment.

The amount of scholarship (800 euro/month) was suitable. The amount varied to some extent. The students evaluated whether the scholarship was sufficient to cover their costs at 4.4/5 (range of answers 3–5; 1 no, 5 yes). The travel subsidy of 300 euros was evaluated as being sufficient during "normal" times, while during Covid-19, travelling could be very expensive. Transfer of money to a non-EU country took a long time.

Motivation for and interest in participation in BARI and future cooperation. The main motivation for the interns was academic purpose (x̄ 4.8/5, range of answers 3–5; 1 not at all, 5 very much). Cultural experience was also motivating for many of the interns (x̄ 4.0/5; range of answers 1–5). Practising a foreign language was on average

not so important as a motivating factor, however, this depended on the home country of the intern ($\bar{x}$ 2.8/5, range of answers 1–5). Academic motivations that were mentioned were getting experience in research and working experience in the chosen topic and improving one's CV. Interest in learning the local language was also mentioned.

The overall satisfaction in the BARI internships was high ($\bar{x}$ 8.8 of a maximum of 10 points, range of answers 7–10; 1 not at all satisfied, 10 very much satisfied). BARI increased interest in the Baltic Sea Region ($\bar{x}$ 4.1/5, range of answers 2–5; 1 not at all, 5 absolutely). Most of the students were interested in future cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region ($\bar{x}$ 4.6/5, range of answers 3–5; 1 not at all, 5 absolutely). Most interns were interested in studying/working at the host institution in the future ($\bar{x}$ 3.9/5; range of answers 1–5; 1 not at all, 5 absolutely).

The interns would strongly recommend BARI to other students ($\bar{x}$ 4.8/5, range of answers 1–5; 1 not, 5 absolutely).

Effects of Covid-19 on the internships from the student perspective. The Covid-19 situation affected the students' travel possibilities to different extents ($\bar{x}$ 3.4/5, range of answers 1–5). The ability of the PhD to function as the host for an intern was affected only slightly ($\bar{x}$ 2.2/5, range of answers 1–5; 1 no effect, 5 affected very much). In one case, the corona restrictions made it impossible to use the equipment infrastructure.

Best experiences of BARI for the interns. The interns were grateful for having participated in BARI and were satisfied with many aspects, for example:

- International work, academic communication and experience, improving scientific skills, networking, lab experience.
- Matchmaking process, matching the interests perfectly.
- Unique opportunity.
- Offering research experience to Bachelor's students.
- Possibility for internships during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Gave experience according to one's own choice and a chance to expand knowledge in a field that was not available at the home university.
- The scholarship covered the living costs.
- BARI encouraged them to apply for a Master's programme at the host university Very helpful with a ready list of project offers, usually looking for internship is quite time-consuming.
- Exploring the local culture and the cultural exchange of the many foreign students.

- Well-organised and went smoothly, very helpful with a ready list of project offers.

2.6 Experiences of the funding organisations

There were different types of funding organisations, consisting mainly of project partners.

Tab. 4. List of funding organisations for BARI scholarships (PP = BSN_Powerhouse project partner).

Country	Organisation
DE	Ministry of Science, Research, Equalities and Districts, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (Lead Partner)
	German Academic Exchange Service DAAD (PP9)
	Ministry of Education, Science and Cultural Affairs, Land of Schleswig-Holstein (associated organisation)
	Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel
FI	University of Turku (PP6)
	Åbo Akademi University (PP8)
RU	St. Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON) (PP10)
	Saint-Petersburg Electrotechnical University (LETI) (PP12)
LT	The State Study Foundation (PP11)
PL	University of Gdansk (PP5)
SE	University of Lund
Regional	Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) (PP7)

Motivation for funding BARI. The motivation for funding BARI internships was mainly to support international research cooperation and student mobility in the BSR. Most of the funders were motivated to support the mobility of outgoing students from their own research institute/university, compared with mobility of incoming students. However incoming mobility was also motivating for some funders, but funding opportunities were more limited because of the internal funding models.

Interest in promoting the internationalisation of local RI/universities was mentioned, and the importance of BARI for fulfilling the objectives of the EUSBSR (PA Education) – importance of avoiding brain drain in the BSR, support widening participation, and importance of inspiring students for research activities.

Interest and possibilities for funding BARI in the future. The majority of funders were interested in funding BARI in the future, while it was unclear what the possibilities for this would be due to budget-related issues. Interest included mobility for both BA and MA students. Some were not able to answer at this moment regarding their interest or possibilities for financing, and one informed that it was not possible to commit to financing BARI.

Specific preferences for mobility. All funder organisations prefer to finance student mobility from their home country/region to any BSR country. In addition, mobility from any BSR country to the home country/region was preferred by some organisations. Mobility from home country to a specific BSR country, and preference concerning the discipline/theme were among the mentioned preferences.

All funders would finance a hybrid model of internship, a model including a **distance** and on-site internship portion. However, some requirements on the length of the on-site part would be a precondition for some financing sources. For the majority (4 out of 6), it would not be possible to finance a distance internship with no on-site component, based on the survey of March 2021.

For the majority of organisations, **the length of the internship** seemed to be suitable. However according to some universities, an internship period of 2–3 weeks is too short; it should be in line with Erasmus scholarships, or 2–6 months would be most suitable depending on the research project.

The **amount of the scholarship** was mostly regarded as suitable (BARI recommendation 800 euro/month, min. 600 euro/month, travel 300 euro). On the other hand, the amount should depend on the destination country. It was also mentioned that the amount should be in line with Erasmus scholarships.

Benefits of BARI from the funders' perspective:

- Learning new research methods and tools.
- Excellent opportunity to inspire students to become interested in research.
- A great way for students to get in touch with international research collaboration.

- Getting to know new research areas, gaining insight into an attractive research area.
- Possibilities for students to make contacts, acquire new skills.
- Great new opportunity for PhD candidates and BA/MA students.
- PhD candidates gain valuable support for their research work and soft skills as supervisors.
- Establishing and strengthening international scientific cooperation in the BSR.
- Great possibility for universities to advertise themselves and attract more international students. Strengthening of research skills and of intercultural work experiences/competences and providing opportunities for international teamwork and research cooperation.
- Supports internationalisation at the host institution, opening international perspectives to their students. Leads to better networks among the participating institutions.
- Opens possibilities for new cross-border research collaborations.

Opinions on the new **decentralised funding model**:

- It is in line with our policy, suitable for our country.
- Good idea with a decentralised funding model allowing different local models to be used.
- The idea of a decentralised funding model is good, as it allows us as a funder to participate and follow our national, regional and institutional regulations.
- Confusing for scholars if no financing available for the matched PhD host-student.
- Confusing to deal with various contact persons. In the long run, it would be better to have only one organisation to deal with the matching process and later on the respective funder.

Common pot financing would be very difficult or impossible for the funding organisations. Common pot funding should come from national or macro-level regional funders. Public money can be spent on activities that directly benefit the institution in question. A suggestion for a possible model: a model where one organisation administrated funds from all funding institutions; it could be possible for funding institutions to pay for that kind of administration. Regional scholarships supporting mobility in the whole BSR region without specifications on countries, institutions, incoming/outgoing students would be very difficult or impossible for these funding institutions.

Recommendations for improvement and development of BARI from the funder perspective:

- Centralised administration and funding instrument.
- Rules in line with the Erasmus programme.
- For a long-term perspective, either a common pot, regionally flexible scholarships or many more funding organisations so that the BSR is well-covered. Classical, mostly national, funding organisations are quite restricted in what they can fund. One possibility for BARI could be functioning as a matching platform for funders, and scholarships are awarded according to the funders' own rules. At universities BARI could function as a matching tool, the scholarships could be linked with Erasmus scholarships.

Experiences of completing BARI scholarship financing:
The communication with the BARI administration was evaluated to be clear ($\bar{x}$ 4.0 out of a maximum of 5, range of answers 3-5; 1 not clear at all, 5 very clear). At the beginning, there was some confusion on the roles of different actors such as DAAD, the University of Gdansk and Ministry of Science, Research, Equalities and Districts, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, but this was clarified later.

Funders' communication with the student was clear ($\bar{x}$ 4.6/5; range of answers 4-5, 1 not clear at all, 5 very clear).

The payment of the scholarship to the student was easy ($\bar{x}$ 4.4/5, range of answers 4-5; 1 very difficult, 5 very easy).

The report from the student to the funder was useful ($\bar{x}$ 4.0/5; range of answers 3-5; 1 not at all, 5 very useful).

The report gave a good idea of the benefits and challenges of the BARI programme.

The funding organisations would recommend BARI as a model for fostering research internships in the BSR to another institution/organisation providing funding.

2.7. Summary – lessons learned

The BARI concept was very much appreciated by the users, the PhD candidates as hosts, and the BA/MA students as interns. The matchmaking between host and student was seen as particularly beneficial. The overall satisfaction with the BARI mobility programme was very high; for PhD candidates, $\bar{x}$ 9.8, for students, $\bar{x}$ 8.8 out of a maximum of 10 points (1 not at all satisfied, 10 very much satisfied). Some

confusion was experienced due to the many actors involved in communication during the process.

Interest in future cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region was very high among the hosts ($\bar{x}$ 4.9/5), also the majority of students were interested in future cooperation ($\bar{x}$ 4.6/5; 1 not at all, 5 absolutely).

One challenge is the financing of scholarships for all possible matched projects and interns. The decentralised model allows for simultaneously following national, regional and institutional regulations. The common pot would be a solution if it were a realistic alternative. If funding for scholarships can be found one way or another, BARI could function as a matchmaking platform for internships. Maintaining and running the application and matching process needs financing even in the future.

3. Refined concept of BARI

3.1 Conclusions from the evaluation

The goal of BSN_Powerhouse was to pilot a mobility tool intended for research internships in the Baltic Sea Region. The concept was originally created during the Baltic Science Network project, which was funded by Interreg Baltic Sea Region, and took place in 2016–2019.

Baltic Science Network Mobility Programme for Research Internships (BARI) is a mobility programme for young researchers that matches Bachelor's and Master's students looking for a research internship with internship positions offered by PhD candidates. The length of the internship is 2–12 weeks, and eligible applicants are students and PhD candidates based at a research institution in the Baltic Sea Region.

The concept of BARI was built based on DAAD RISE – Research Internships in Science and Engineering.[4] RISE Germany offers summer internships in Germany for North American, British and Irish undergraduate students at German universities and research institutes. RISE Worldwide offers summer internships for German students in research groups all over the world.

The aim of the pilot was to test the BARI mobility programme in practice. This was done in order to try out a decentralised model for transnational science cooperation, to convince ministries, research councils, funding agencies, research infrastructures and universities in the Baltic Sea Region to invest in mobility within the BSR, and to build new cooperation networks for young researchers in the Baltic Sea Region.

3.2 SWOT analysis

The evaluation of the BARI mobility tool is found in Chapter 2 of this report. The evaluation includes feedback from Bachelor's and Master's students, PhD candidates and scholarship funders.

To give a thorough view of the implementation of the BARI mobility tool, BSN_Powerhouse completed a SWOT analysis on the experience of implementing the

[4] https://www.daad.de/rise/en/

tool. The first draft of the SWOT analysis was made by the BSN_Powerhouse work package responsible for the BARI pilot. Later, it was discussed and refined in a Partner Meeting with all BSN_Powerhouse partners and associates. The SWOT analysis also considers the experiences of implementing decentralised mobility management and decentralised funding.

In general, based on the feedback from the students and PhD candidates and on the experiences of Work Package 3, the BARI concept seems to work and seems to be relevant for the target group. Interest was particularly high from the PhD candidates, which is essential to ensure enough positions in the database.

BSN_Powerhouse is funded by Interreg Baltic Sea Region, and BARI was implemented within the Work Package 3 of the project. The WP3 had seven partners. While the division of tasks was rather clear and communication within the WP was active, the mobility management between the organisations was complicated. In future, a better solution would be to have one administering body for the mobility tool. In an ideal situation, the administering body should take care of the application portal, mobility management, scholarship distribution, marketing of the tool and advising the students, PhD candidates and scholarship providers.

The BARI mobility tool offered research internships in three thematic fields. These fields were Photon/Neutron Science, Life Sciences and Welfare State, identified as strategic fields of excellence by the Baltic Science Network project.[5] In the implementation of BARI, these fields were not further defined by BSN to allow them to be interpreted in a wide sense. In BARI, the vast majority of internships were realised in the field of Life Sciences. There can be many reasons for this. Life Sciences is a large field, and internships in research projects can be more common practice in Life Sciences than in the other fields. The field of Welfare State was the least popular, and this might be due to the fact that it was difficult to interpret what fields could be included in the Welfare State theme. Also, during the time of pandemic, Welfare State research could be more easily conducted from home, and PhD candidates might not therefore offer an internship period.

The scholarships for BARI were funded by several organisations. Scholarship funders gave a commitment letter to BSN_Powerhouse, detailing the conditions for the scholarships they were committed to fund. The scholarship funders were able to

[5] Kazimierz Musiał and Tom Schumacher: Scientific Excellence: Joint Potentials in the Baltic Sea Region – An Explorative Study. Available at: https://www.baltic-science.org/bsn-publications/reports-working-papers/

define whether the scholarship was available for either incoming or outgoing mobility or for both directions. In many cases, the scholarship funders, especially universities, were able to fund only outgoing mobility from their organisation. This limited the number of possible internships. However, for example, the Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg was able to fund scholarships for both incoming and outgoing interns.

The scholarship funders were mostly from within the Baltic Science Network, and the CBSS Project Support Facility was also utilised for scholarships. The CBSS Project Support Facility scholarships (a total of 10 scholarships) could be used for internships throughout the Baltic Sea Region, and this was very beneficial for BARI. However, most of the available scholarships were funded by German organisations. The challenge with decentralised funding of the scholarships is that it can leave good candidates without an internship if there is no suitable funder for the scholarship.

Threats as identified by BSN_Powerhouse members include the funding of the BARI portal and administration. If the funding of BARI is built on projects, it is not sustainable in the long term. In addition, as the Baltic Sea Region includes both EU and non-EU countries, it is not easy to find a funding solution to cover the whole region. Another threat is that the BARI portal is strongly linked to DAAD. The BARI portal is built based on the DAAD RISE portal, and it may be difficult to extract the portal from DAAD if DAAD does not continue with BARI.

Despite the challenges encountered during the piloting phase of BARI, the BSR partners concluded that BARI deserves to be tested in circumstances without a global pandemic and strict travel restrictions in place. BARI is a flexible model for mobility, which is based on individual connections between young researchers. Therefore it could be a very useful tool for mobility, when mobility starts again after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on the pilot, the concept works and students and PhD candidates are interested in it. The coordination of BARI could be more efficient if it was done by one organisation instead of the decentralised model in the pilot. Widening the range of topics, developing possibilities for virtual mobility and seeking connections with Erasmus+ funding are important opportunities to consider.

BARI is very flexible and can be implemented in different fields of research, as long as the researchers in the field offer research internship positions. The thematic

expansion of BARI is therefore easy, and BARI can be adjusted to suit, for example, the funders' thematic focus. Another expansion opportunity to explore is including postdoc researchers as internship hosts. During BARI there were some enquiries by postdocs who were willing to host an intern. An internship hosted by a postdoc could give the Bachelor's/Master's student a different perspective on research.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Good feedback from participants • Concept seems to work and tool is generally relevant for target group • Interest particularly high from PhD candidates, ensures enough positions	• Mobility management between organisations is complicated • Regional imbalance: Germany overrepresented • Thematic imbalance: Life Science overrepresented • Financial imbalance: Germany overrepresented • No common pot funding → good candidates can be left without mobility if no suitable funding • Regional restriction to BSR difficult
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• BARI deserves to be tested in ”normal circumstances” • Having one coordinating organisation would be a good model for mobility • BARI is a flexible mobility model, and it could be the first tool for mobility after the Covid-19 pandemic • Developing various models of virtual mobility, e.g. combining physical and virtual mobility • Widening available topics • Combining BARI with Erasmus+ funding	• Funding is not sustainable if on a project basis • Challenge to find a funding solution to cover the whole BSR region • A single coordinating organisation has not yet been identified • BARI portal is strongly linked to DAAD

Fig.7. SWOT analysis of BARI

3.3 Refined concept

The pilot period showed that the BARI model is a good and flexible tool for mobility within the Baltic Sea Region. In the proposal of the refined concept, the core idea of the refined BARI mobility tool would remain the same:

1) PhD candidates offer research internship periods for Bachelor's andMaster's level students in their research projects.
2) Mobility takes place within the Baltic Sea Region countries.
3) A digital application portal is used for posting internship positions and applying for internship periods.

The concept of BARI 2.0 is presented in the next section. The concept is a short summary of the benefits, structure and practical recommendations for BARI.

3.4 BARI 2.0

BARI is a mobility tool in which Bachelor's and Master's students travel to another country in the Baltic Sea Region to participate in an internship offered by a PhD candidate.

Benefits of participation in the BARI tool

- **Bachelor's and Master's students** gain hands-on experience and theoretical insight into an attractive research area – as an intern in a research project of their choice
- **PhD candidates** – by acting as their hosts – gain valuable support for their research work and a "sparring partner" for scientific discussions
- **Institutions** profit from the internationalisation which is triggered by opening international perspectives to their students and by hosting international students
- International contacts are formed which enhance mutual understanding and motivate subsequent **international research cooperation** – an investment for the future

Internship offers and applications are submitted to the BARI portal, which is a crucial element in the successful implementation of BARI. It is also important to reserve enough workforce to support the platform and BARI administration.

The selection process has four stages:

1. PhD candidates post internship offers to the BARI portal
2. Bachelor's and Master's students view the offers and apply for the internship positions they find most interesting
3. Qualified applicants are ranked by the PhD candidates
4. The BARI administration does the final matchmaking by evaluating the project's attractiveness and the student's qualification

The students should receive an allowance for their participation in BARI internships. The allowance ensures that the student can afford to participate in the internship.

BARI can be implemented as a thematic mobility tool, or it can be implemented in all fields. BARI is a very flexible tool, and the thematic focus can be adapted to the requirements of the funder. Cross-disciplinary themes such as sustainability are also good alternatives.

BARI is a network and matching platform for research internships. It seems unrealistic to find a funding opportunity that would fund both the BARI administration, portal and marketing and the student scholarships. As was shown in the pilot, the funding for the BARI portal, administration and marketing can come from a different source than that for the scholarships for the students.

BARI mobility tool was piloted in 2019–2021. The results of the pilot show that BARI is relevant for the target group and that both the Bachelor's and Master's students and the PhD candidates are overall very satisfied with their BARI mobility.

4. Recommendations for long-term establishment

4.1 Funding opportunities

The positive results of the BARI pilot indicate that it may indeed represent a novel and needed niche among mobility instruments. A continuation of BARI would allow for further exploration of its possibilities and gathering evidence of its impact on both science education and establishing networks for future research cooperation. If the gathered evidence indicates that BARI has a strategic role and fills an acknowledged gap, it will be easier to argument for its establishment and application on a wider basis. Ultimately, this could pave the way to the integration of BARI as a strategic science policy tool into the funding landscape on a national, macro-regional or European level.

BSN_Powerhouse conducted a vision process to gather ideas and perspectives of different stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region. The vision process brought up perspectives that can also be applied to BARI.

When applying for funding, BARI could be aligned not only with the funders' priorities but also with, for example, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. This would give BARI additional ways of dissemination and support in implementing the activities. Another perspective that emerged in the vision process was that practical bottom-up projects and concrete mechanisms and activities may be easier to fund than top-down projects. BARI can be seen as a bottom-up project, and it also supports the emerge of bottom-up cooperation between young researchers.

BARI can be implemented without a thematic focus, but it can also be used to boost cooperation in a specific field. The vision process brought many suggestions for thematic focus: the themes from the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region or from the Nordic Council of Ministers. Alternatively, the themes could be challenge-based and could focus on sustainability, digitalisation or Covid-19 recovery. Or the focus could be on sea and maritime themes, as the Baltic Sea is what connects the countries.

All in all, BARI is a very flexible tool for young researchers' mobility in the region. At the core of BARI lies the individual contact between a Bachelor's or Master's student and a PhD candidate, and the online portal where the two are matched. The rest can be adapted to the broader goals or challenges.

When considering funding opportunities, one of the main challenges is that many funding opportunities are directed to participants in the EU, which would leave Russia out of the question. Horizon Europe funding for Widening participation and spreading excellence does not support activities like BARI.[6] Interreg Baltic Sea Region is currently preparing a new programme for 2021–2027, and the current draft framework includes themes that do not easily include activities like BARI.[7] Suitable funding for the next period of BARI could be Erasmus+. Erasmus+ funding could be combined with collecting scholarships for Bachelor's/Master's students from other sources.

Erasmus+ funding opportunities

Erasmus+ has a new programme in place for 2021–2027. The budget for the programme is €26.2 billion, which is nearly double the funding compared to its predecessor programme (2014–2020). The 2021–2027 programme places a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.[8]

The available funding mechanisms in the 2021–2027 programme are different from the previous programme. For example, the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships are no longer available.[9] This means that the most relevant Erasmus+ funding for the BARI administration, portal and marketing would be Erasmus+ Partnerships for Cooperation.

Erasmus+ Partnerships for Cooperation enables participating organisations to gain experience in international cooperation and to strengthen their capacities, but also to produce high-quality innovative deliverables. Partnerships for Cooperation offers two types of partnerships: cooperation partnerships and small-scale partnerships.[10]

The primary goal of Cooperation Partnerships is to allow organisations to increase the quality and relevance of their activities, to develop and reinforce their networks of partners, to increase their capacity to operate jointly at the transnational level,

[6] https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/widening-participation-and-spreading-excellence_en
[7] https://www.interreg-baltic.eu/post2020.html
[8] https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en
[9] Erasmus+ Programme Guide (Version 3 (2021): 12-05-2021), p. 169, available at https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2021_en
[10] https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/partnerships-cooperation_en

boosting the internationalisation of their activities and through exchanging or developing new practices and methods as well as sharing and confronting ideas. They aim to support the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative practices as well as the implementation of joint initiatives promoting cooperation, peer learning and exchanges of experience at the European level. Results should be re-usable, transferable, up-scalable and, if possible, have a strong transdisciplinary dimension. Selected projects will be expected to share the results of their activities at the local, regional, national and transnational level.[11]

Projects may last 12–36 months and applications in the field of education are submitted to the National Agency of the applicant's country. At the moment, the next deadline for the Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership projects has not yet been announced, at least by the Finnish National Agency.[12]

The Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnerships aim to improve the quality of the higher education. The activities that can be included in the project are versatile. The Cooperation Partnerships have a sector-specific priority of promoting inter-connected higher education systems. This includes strengthening the strategic and structured cooperation between higher education institutions through, for example, support for developing and testing various types of cooperation models, including virtual and blended cooperation and the use of different digital tools and online platforms.[13]

Other funding mechanisms

It seems that Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnerships funding cannot be utilised for student scholarships. As stated earlier in this report, it would be a good idea to think of the funding for the BARI portal, administration and marketing and the funding of student scholarships as two different categories.

The pilot of BARI showed that while the decentralised model for funding the student scholarships required some work from the administration, it was possible. The pilot period of BARI reached as many as 61 scholarships, which showed that the organisations in the region were interested in financing mobility. It is worth noting

[11] https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/partnerships-cooperation/cooperation-partnerships_en
[12] https://www.oph.fi/en/programmes/cooperation-partnerships-higher-education
[13] Erasmus+ Programme Guide (Version 3 (2021): 12-05-2021), p. 169, available at https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2021_en

that the organisations were very different from each other. There were not only universities, but also a ministry, a funding organisation, a foundation and even a CBSS Project Support Facility that were utilised. This shows that the BARI model is flexible enough for different organisations to participate.

The **CBSS Project Support Facility** funding for 10 scholarships was very important for the implementation of BARI, since these scholarships could be utilised throughout the Baltic Sea Region. Most of the other scholarships had limitations to either the departure or arrival country, but the CBSS Project Support Facility funds were used throughout the region. If possible, this funding opportunity should be applied for in the future as well.

4.2 Follow-up activities of BARI

At the close of the pilot phase of the BARI programme, some offers were still available. As a follow-up activity after BARI, a "light version" of BARI could be set up on the BARI website. This would mean posting the internship offers on the BARI website (with the consent of the PhD candidates). Bachelor's and Master's students could then view the internship offers and contact the PhD candidate directly. Some of the BARI funders could even allocate a scholarship for the internship. In other cases, the Bachelor's and Master's students are advised to ask for Erasmus+ Internship funding from their home institution for the internship period.

With "BARI-lite" the BARI idea can be maintained for a while, even without the BARI portal and BSN_Powerhouse project.

Hanseatic League of Science (HALOS) Interreg-Project[14] is highly interested in the BARI concept and aims to set-up a Mobility Programme in their project region. BSN and HALOS management are currently elaborating a concept that builds on BARI experience and will be adapted to the HALOS concept.

Next steps for establishing BARI:

1) Set up "BARI-lite" by including the available internship offers on the BARI website.
2) Explore the opportunity of implementing the BARI concept with HALOS.

[14] https://www.halos.lu.se/

3) Funding for BARI portal, administration and marketing: Explore available funding opportunities, such as Erasmus+ Partnerships for Cooperation and build the consortium.
4) Funding for student scholarships: Discuss with universities, university networks, research institutions and other relevant institutions and ask them to fund student scholarships.

5. Conclusions

The pilot of the Baltic Science Network Mobility Programme for Research Internships (BARI) was successful. The mobility tool worked and the participants were very satisfied with BARI. It is a unique mobility instrument in the region, which fills a gap in mobility opportunities.

Continuing the implementation of BARI would bring more experience of the benefits of the tool. The Covid-19 pandemic took place during the implementation of the BARI pilot, and a continuation of BARI after the pandemic would bring very valuable feedback.

BARI can be divided into two elements, which can be funded from separate sources: the BARI administration, portal and marketing can be considered as one element, and scholarships for the students can be considered as another element.

ANNEX 1: Project partners and associated organisations of the BSN_Powerhouse

Project Partners

Germany
Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg – Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Estonia
Ministry of Education and Research of Republic of Estonia

Latvia
Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia

Lithuania
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania
The State Studies Foundation

Poland
University of Gdansk

Finland
University of Turku
Åbo Akademi University

Sweden
The International Permanent Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

Russia
St. Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON)
Saint-Petersburg Electrotechnical University "LETI"

Associate Organisations

NordForsk
Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland
BONUS – Baltic Organisations' Network for Funding Science EEIG
Baltic Sea Region University Network (BSRUN)
Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of the Land of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Ministry of Education, Science and Cultural Affairs of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein

Swedish Research Council
Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA)
Region Skane
DESY
European X-Ray Free-Electron Laser Facility GmbH (European XFEL)
MAXIVLaboratory
Archimedes Foundation
Estonian Research Council

ANNEX 2: List of abbreviations

BA	Bachelor's
BARI	Baltic Science Network Mobility Programme for Research Internships
BSN	Baltic Science Network
BSR	Baltic Sea Region
CAU Kiel	Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
ERASMUS	European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
EU	European Union
EU13	Countries that joined the European Union in 2004 or later
LETI	Saint-Petersburg Electrotechnical University
MA	Master's
ULund	Lund University
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RI	Research Infrastructure
RISE	Research Internships in Science and Engineering
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UNECON	St. Petersburg State University of Economics
UTurku	University of Turku
WP	Work Package
ÅAU	Åbo Akademi University