

“An SBI student is the ideal combination of an entrepreneurial person with feeling for both science and business. SBI students know what the technical risks and challenges are of innovations and what needs to be done to make them commercially successful” – René Savelsberg, Chrysalix SET

Research internships at Science, Business & Innovation (SBI) in a nutshell

SBI is an interdisciplinary programme executed by the Faculty of Sciences that combines natural sciences, e.g. physics and biochemistry, with business and innovation management studies. The student will finish his/her bachelor degree with a research thesis, conducted at an institution/company/etc. The research is based on a **literature study** often combined with a **case study** or **conducting interviews**.

SBI Student Ahmed Abo Seada investigated how an innovative Energy startup company could introduce an off grid solar system to developing markets in rural Cambodia.

Every student finishes the SBI program with an internship assignment

The study load for the research internship & thesis is 24 EC (4 months) for bachelor students and 36 EC (6 months) for master students. There should be a clear assignment. The student should work at least 80% of his/her time on this research assignment. The research and related activities should be in three areas; **science (natural science either in the field of energy & sustainability or life & health), business and innovation**. The student discusses and applies both theory from the natural sciences as well as from the business/social sciences. The way in which the research is carried out must be in accordance with the methodological requirements for **scientific research**.

SBI student Merel Leeuw conducted a research on the factors contributing to the commercialization of the multispectral camera technology.

The central issue in the field of SBI is to study how scientific knowledge develops into economically, socially, ecologically, and societally viable solutions, products, services, processes, methods, and approaches, i.e. the conversion processes from science to business, which in itself can be modeled as an innovation process (See Figure 1).

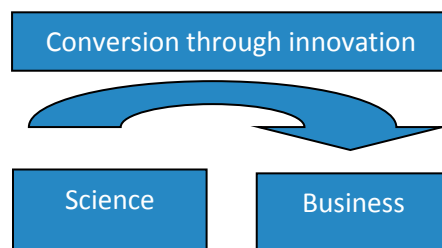


Figure 1. From Science to Business

Start dates bachelor students: 1 March and 1 September

Start dates master students: 1 January, 1 February and 1 September

Roles people involved

Internship coordinator

The internship coordinator is responsible for monitoring the process across the Bachelor project from start to finish, and ensures that the entire course process is organized properly. She is the contact person for internship coaches and VU assessors.

1st VU coach/assessor

The first coach/assessor is the primary contact for the student for all aspects concerning the content of the research assignment and guides the student mainly in the field of content-related and process-related questions.

VU 2nd assessor

The 2nd assessor has a knowledge base that is complementary to the knowledge base of the 1st VU coach/assessor. (S)he gives input on the plan of action, provides input on the draft of the students' thesis and reads and assesses the final report (together with the VU coach/assessor).

The student

The student will work at a relatively high level of independence, from start to finish. The student:

- schedules meetings with the internship coordinator, internship coach and VU coach/assessor and 2nd assessor;
- gets to an approved plan of action in collaboration with the VU coach/assessor, 2nd assessor and internship coach;
- manages the planning of the project;
- keeps the VU coach/assessor informed about the research, planning and results on a bi-weekly basis;

SBI student Rens Spierings investigated the opportunities for pharmaceutical companies in the battle against Neglected Tropical Diseases.

Internship coach (day-to-day supervisor at the company)

For support and guidance during the internship, students mainly rely on the internship coach in the organization where they perform their project. The internship coach, employed by the company, is responsible for the daily supervision. (S)he or another colleague that is involved in the research/domain should have at least an academic Bachelor degree relevant to the student's research.

SBI student Tony Nader conducted a research on the best market opportunities that are associated with CO₂ that is produced by fermentation of organic waste.

The internship coach will be the one who provides:

- daily supervision and guidance: consultations on the progress can vary from once a day to once a week or every two weeks, depending on the level of self-reliance of the student. A thorough introduction in the first weeks will generally lead to more independence, so the guidance can be limited to a weekly or biweekly meeting;
- support to develop a plan of action;
- a workplace within the company where the student can work on his/her research at least 3 days a week (the student can work a maximum of 2 days a week at home);
- provides input on the student's 'work execution' to the 1st supervisor who will take this into account when compiling the final assessment.

Offering an internship assignment/placement

Do you have a research question that is suitable for our SBI students?

Please contact internship office SBI: sbi-internships@vu.nl.