



INSTITUT
BARCELONA
ESTUDIS
INTERNACIONALS

Strategic Plan

2021

2025

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Barcelona, 2021

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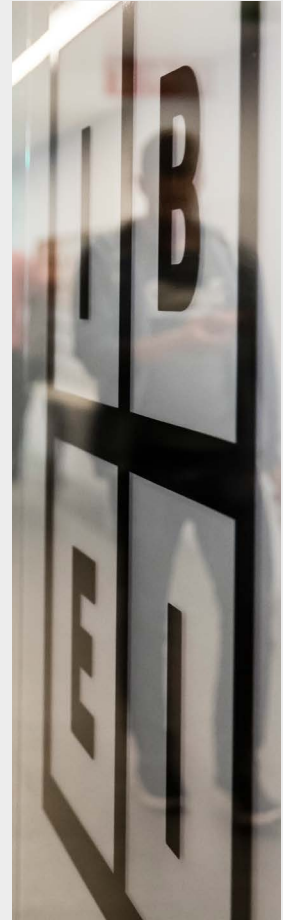
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Introduction

Over the past five years, IBEI has become both a well-established research centre and a graduate school.

A large number of initiatives pursued during these years, as defined in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020, have been implemented successfully, helping to consolidate the Institute. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 on IBEI's activities has been very relevant, forcing the Institute to go almost completely virtual, although the numerous challenges encountered did not affect the continuity of most programmes and initiatives. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that world politics, and consequently the areas of study that are central to IBEI, have changed significantly. Seen in this light, the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is also an excellent opportunity to think over the new scenarios in the aftermath of the pandemic and the new priorities to be addressed.





Concerning teaching developments, over the past five years, IBEI has been able to further strengthen its offer of graduate teaching in international studies, introducing first the Master's in International Development (2016), and thereafter the two-year Research Master's in International Studies (2018).

These two programmes, together with the foundational Master's in International Relations – renovated in 2019 – and the already established Master's in International Security (2012), make up a range of programmes, some with a more general orientation, others more specialized on particular topics, covering the broad area of international studies.

The outstanding results obtained by the accreditation of the first two masters in 2016 were confirmed by their renewal in 2020 (this time including the Master's in International Development), in all cases with a *seal of excellence*.

Nevertheless, there remains scope for further improvements to the quality of teaching delivered at IBEI, which have been identified through the accreditation process and are outlined in section 2 below.

With regard to research, funding derived from competitive research projects has almost doubled in recent years, while research output has been growing in quantity and quality over the same period. The introduction of research clusters in 2018 as a basic tool to foster collaboration and facilitate joint research initiatives has provided much coherence to the internal research organisation of the Institute. The incorporation into the Catalan government-supported CERCA network in early 2021, after a successful external evaluation, has represented the culmination of a very important phase in the consolidation of IBEI as a highly appreciated and recognized research centre in international studies.

Management has improved significantly at IBEI in these recent years, with a number of software packages introduced in different areas, including the adoption of Moodlerooms as an online learning platform and the SIGMA package for academic management.

Simultaneously, human resource management has been revised and improved, culminating in the HR Excellence in Research award from the European Commission in 2019.



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



Multiple procedures have also been defined and normalized across the different domains in which IBEI is involved, and the operating logic of the institution, with different bodies and committees focusing on specific issues and problems, has become standard practice, improving IBEI's ability to cope with its organisational needs as it has grown and become more institutionalized.

IBEI's new Strategic Plan 2021-2025 concentrates on the Institute's consolidation as a graduate school and research institute.

Despite much that has been done in recent years to make IBEI a world-class graduate school in international studies and to increase the quality and quantity of its research excellence, IBEI faces a number of major challenges to ensure its becoming a top European graduate school in its field, both in research and teaching. We identify three broad transversal challenges which will require continuous efforts and deep reflection in the coming years in order to cope with them.

Challenges

1

The **first challenge** has to do with the interdisciplinary and inter-university nature of IBEI as a research institute. Based on the model of professional graduate schools in international studies that is quite common in the academic world, usually with an autonomous status within their universities, IBEI grew supported by Barcelona's public universities, developing an experimental and innovative mode of governance that was adjusted to the constraints of the legal and institutional environment for inter-university collaboration. However, 15 years after its creation, with IBEI's activity being highly visible internationally and its research and administrative staff reaching a similar level to numerous departments at the partner universities, a review of the institutional status and recognition of the Institute is required, to increase the inter-university collaboration, on the one hand, but also to allow managerial autonomy for academic programmes, on the other. This would contribute to the Institute gaining size, attracting more excellent students and faculty, to become highly competitive in Europe and internationally.

2

The **second challenge** relates to the intellectual identity of IBEI as a place for research on and reflection about some of the major problems in international affairs, such as the relationship between democracy and governance. Because of its nature as a graduate school, IBEI covers a large range of topics and issues with its research faculty. This has multiple advantages, no doubt, including interdisciplinary confluences, and larger attraction to multiple academic audiences. However, the IBEI's dual role as both a graduate school and a research institute may also entail the risk of lacking critical mass on any particular topic, disconnection among faculty members regarding their research interests, or difficulties in projecting a coherent research agenda that is more than the sum of its individual parts. To balance the advantages of a broad academic profile with its own difficulties is not an easy task, but this strategic plan places this question at the forefront, to allow for more detailed discussion and deliberation on the diverse options in the coming years. In any case, some of the strategies and goals identified in this plan may have a direct impact on this second challenge, and exploring how to articulate and connect them is key for the success of the strategic plan.

3

Finally, the **third challenge** is about quality. Quality standards for teaching and research are already a common denominator for IBEI's day-to-day activities, but there is still room for further improvement in multiple areas of teaching, research and management. Fostering innovation and developing new methods to create exceptional learning experiences is a way to improve teaching activities, but quality and innovation can also be relevant in research management, for example. Quality of research output is doubtless a major goal in order to achieve a more permanent impact in the academic community. The introduction of online tools to teaching and research activities must be aimed at increasing the quality of the learning and research experiences, complementing or enriching the face-to-face activities already in place.

Quality is also central to improving the accountability and transparency of the policies and programme initiatives performed at IBEI, as well as being a way to obtain a greater involvement of the diverse audiences IBEI interacts with.

In sum, pursuing institutional consolidation, improving quality in teaching and research and building up a unique academic profile are the three main challenges this IBEI strategic plan aims to address in 2021-2025. They are interconnected, as each challenge depends on and influences the other two, but they also suggest different streams of innovation and change that can be identified and examined separately.

This strategic plan defines a mission and a vision that largely follow those already established in the previous 2015-2020 plan, grouping **strategies and objectives** in four different blocs:

- **First-class teaching**
- **Outstanding research**
- **Institutional development and management**
- **Dissemination and outreach**





Mission & Vision

Mission

The Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals aims to contribute to a more effective and democratic governance of international affairs through the training of new generations of professionals in international relations and political science, as well as advanced research on the governmental and social responses to global challenges.

Vision

To become a leading centre for international studies in Europe, with a strong recognition in the fields of international relations, security and development and an approach that closely integrates education and research. Rooted in Barcelona, Catalonia, and the Mediterranean, IBEI aims to develop top-class research and to offer postgraduate programmes of academic excellence that can be adapted to an ever-changing international context, integrating the shared goals and values of its patron universities and institutions.





Strategic Goals

- ✓ First-Class Teaching
- ✓ Outstanding Research
- ✓ Institutional Development and Management
- ✓ Dissemination and Outreach

First-Class teaching

IBEI has successfully consolidated its status and reputation as a leading graduate school focusing on international studies. In the past five years, the Master's in International Development has become one of the most popular programmes offered, and IBEI has also introduced a two-year, 120 ECTS master's programme with a strong focus on research methods applied to international studies. IBEI has established itself as an important partner alongside leading European and international universities in a number of consortia involved in Erasmus Mundus degree programmes.

AQU, the university quality accreditation agency of Catalunya, awarded IBEI's three one-year programmes the highest level of accreditation 'Seal of Excellence' in the Institute's evaluation in 2020. Receiving such recognition is essential in an increasingly competitive European market for English-language graduate programmes in international studies. Our next objective is to lay the foundations for continued success as rapid changes take place in university education globally.

Consolidation

In response to the growing complexity of governance issues, IBEI will work to consolidate its offer of master's programmes and develop innovative opportunities for students to have multiple options to learn about governance and international studies at a graduate level – adjusted to their interests and skills.

- a.** To establish a new interuniversity Master's in Public Policy, including specialisations in *inter alia* European politics, global policy and urban areas.
- b.** To identify and promote dual degree master's programmes with partner universities, in areas such as migration studies or global health, among others.
- c.** To develop a complementary online teaching offer able to reach distant students and to promote a broader interest in international relations and global governance.

Teaching at IBEI

As teaching returns to normality in the post-pandemic world, the strategic plan offers an opportunity to ensure that the quality of teaching, preparation for employment and overall student experience of studying in Barcelona adapt accordingly.

- a.** To continuously update and adjust the flexibility inherent in IBEI's teaching model, based on small-groups, a large number of elective courses on offer and an active tutorial action plan, and to guarantee that it remains of fundamental importance to students.
- b.** To capitalise on the attraction of the multilingual educational environment offered at IBEI including gaining communication skills in Catalan, English and Spanish.
- c.** Through consulting with specialist faculty and observing international best-practices, to continually introduce cutting edge innovative teaching methods in the master's programmes.
- d.** To maximize the impact of the exchange and internship programmes as well as the final dissertation (TFM) as part of the intellectual and professional development of students.
- e.** To improve the system of teaching performance evaluation by students in order to draw awareness to and act upon the effects of potential bias.
- f.** To continually improve the quality and transparency of student's assessment and to enhance the quality of feedback provided by the faculty to students, as well as the consistency in assessment between courses and masters' programmes.



Career development

As a response to the increasingly competitive labour market that graduates find themselves joining, over the next five years, IBEI should seek to strengthen and improve career development training among the students.

- a.** To continue to improve career development advice tailored to the diverse interests of our graduate students, to help them reach their personal and professional future goals.
- b.** To integrate career development training more centrally into all IBEI master's programmes, increasing tailor-made professional workshops, adapted content in core courses and complementary activities.
- c.** To incorporate more substantially the IBEI Alumni network in the provision of career advice and skill development programmes through new innovative initiatives.
- d.** To integrate students' participation in the IBEI ongoing research projects as part of the internship opportunities offered, to better integrate research and teaching within the Institute.



Internationalisation

As a consequence of COVID-19, the use of video conferencing platforms has gained greater acceptance in the classroom. Recognising this, in the next five years IBEI should work to increase the internationalisation of its teaching.

- a.** To pursue participation in new Erasmus Mundus joint degree programmes with other leading European and international universities.
- b.** To establish more exchange agreements facilitating the mobility of students on all master's programmes, in particular beyond Europe.
- c.** To use digital teaching platforms to attract more international faculty to teach elective courses at IBEI, while minimising carbon emissions through reducing air travel.
- d.** To widen opportunities to participate in IBEI education programmes through the consolidation of training programmes and cooperative agreements, which develop summer school offers, also making use of online learning tools.



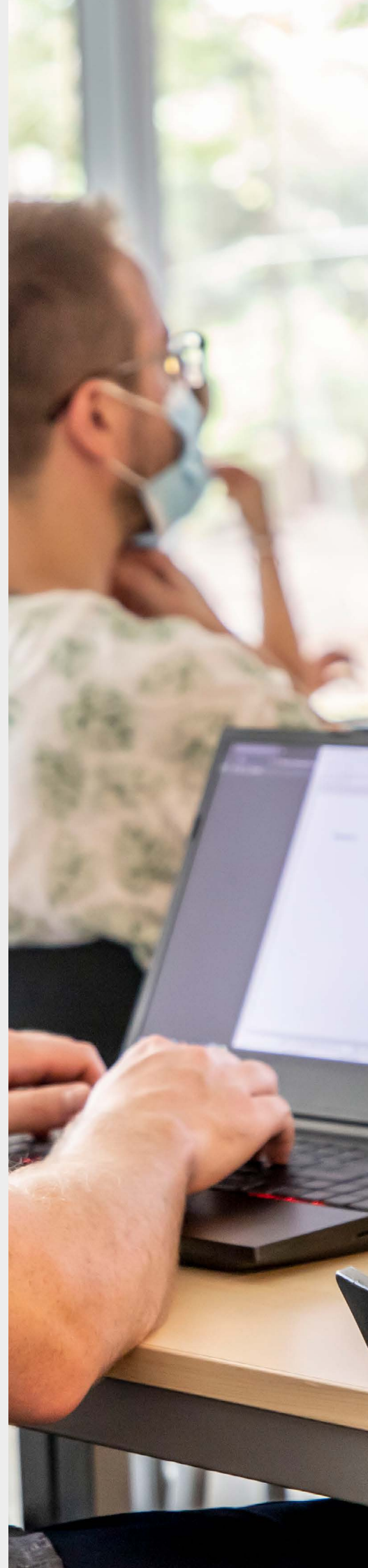


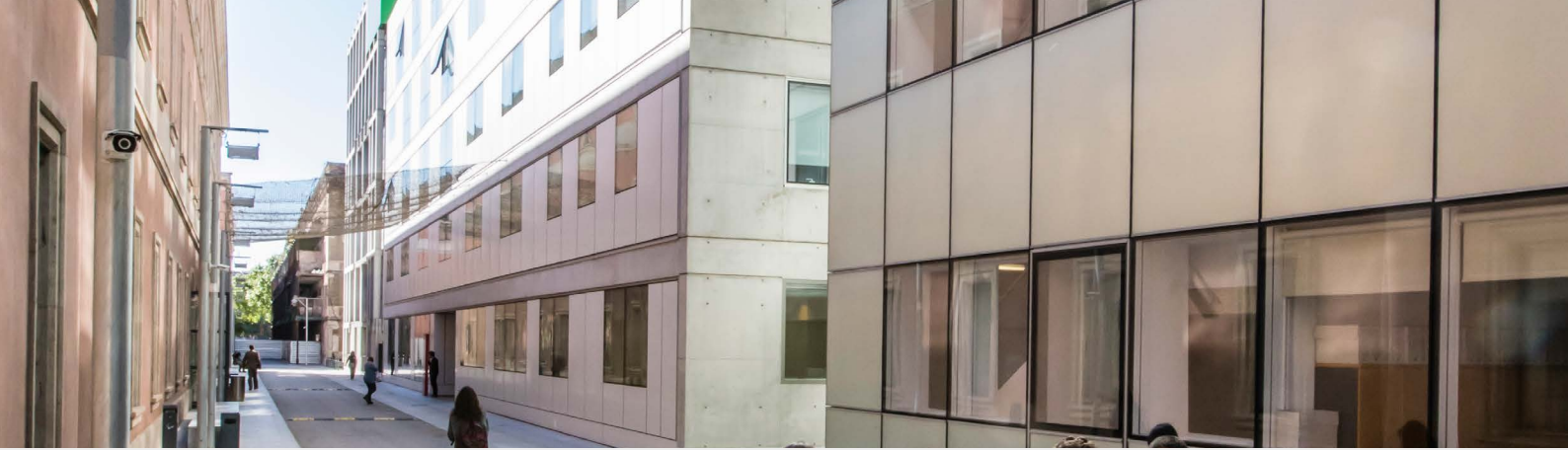
Outstanding Research

Over the past five years IBEI has further reinforced its position as the foremost research centre in international studies in Spain, despite its young age and relatively modest size and resources. The Institute's faculty and its research activities have been pivotal in this regard. IBEI researchers publish in leading international journals, participate in numerous academic conferences and contribute to the dissemination of their expertise beyond academia. They have also managed to obtain internationally competitive research grants, including an ERC Consolidator Grant and funding for various projects from the EU's Horizon 2020 framework.

Research excellence and international leadership have also been achieved through new synergies and collective initiatives. In 2018 the Institute's academic community decided to organise itself into five thematically-grouped research clusters, each of them indicative of one of the Institute's particular strengths. Recently, IBEI's advances have become recognized externally. In 2019, IBEI received the HR Excellence in Research award from the European Commission and in 2021 the Institution of Research Centres of Catalonia (CERCA) recognized IBEI as a CERCA centre.

In the upcoming years, the main goal is to further strengthen IBEI's research activities and take the necessary steps to become one of the leading international studies institutes in Europe.





Support and strengthen IBEI research institutionally

To build on IBEI's recent advances in the quality and internal organisation of research and establish the infrastructure necessary to become one of the leading international studies institutes in Europe.

- a.** To leverage the Institute's existing research strengths and recent recognition as a CERCA institute and obtain a María de Maeztu Unit of Excellence grant.
- b.** To develop a research professorship programme that would bring in top-level senior professors who are connected to international networks of excellence and have extensive experience in mentoring of more junior faculty.
- c.** To further strengthen the support structure available for early career researchers at IBEI in order to enhance their opportunities to initiate, scale-up, or complete a project and/or apply for European and worldwide research grants.
- d.** To establish a "safety net" that provides IBEI researchers without external competitive funds (e.g., because of their contractual situation or a "gap" between grants) with the possibility to apply for institutional resources in order to attend conferences.
- e.** To develop an institutional policy regarding open access publishing with the aim to avoid inequalities among IBEI researchers in opportunities to publish their work with open access.
- f.** To establish an ethics committee at IBEI, whose first goal would be the definition of an ethics regulation for teaching and research.



Building up IBEI's academic profile

To reinforce IBEI's distinctiveness and create new synergies among existing research strengths at the Institute.

- a.** To strengthen IBEI's human resource base through research professorships, new tenure-track assistant professorships and encouraging applications for competitive postdoctoral research fellowships.
- b.** To articulate a narrative about IBEI's research activities and achievements that emphasises the collective intellectual agenda beyond the sum of the work done by individual researchers.
- c.** To bring existing thematic strengths at the Institute into more systematic conversation with one another and with relevant external research groups.
- d.** To review, and if necessary, revise the existing research cluster structure in light of newly emerging research strengths at the Institute.
- e.** To establish the framework and institutional support necessary for the creation of specific IBEI research laboratories based on external support or resulting from partnership initiatives.



PhD support programme initiative

To consolidate IBEI's involvement in the training and supervision of doctoral students conducting research at IBEI, while integrated in PhD programmes of the UAB, UB and UPF.

- a.** To further strengthen the collaboration around PhD supervision between IBEI, the UAB, UB and UPF.
- b.** To institute the position of predoctoral fellow coordinator at IBEI, modelled on the master's coordinator and research coordinator positions, who is in charge of creating and then implementing and managing the IBEI PhD support programme.
- c.** To create a welcome package that gives incoming PhD students working at IBEI a basic overview over who is who at the Institute and develop a protocol that regulates the training possibilities and modalities for PhD students within the courses offered by the different IBEI Master's programmes.
- d.** To run career-training workshops specifically tailored for PhD students that cover how to publish, build a CV, network, write a cover letter, and basic socialization into academia as a potential career path.
- e.** To offer regular work in progress/methods workshops for all IBEI-affiliated PhD students as a platform to discuss and get feedback on their own work but also to learn about specific methods from a student or external researchers that specialize in a particular technique.
- f.** To establish feedback mechanisms that go beyond the individual advisor and allow PhD students to receive input from a wider range of senior researchers such as the revision of the annual report process.

Integrating teaching and research activities

To strengthen links between IBEI's research activities and various other constituencies at the Institute, fostering enriching exchanges and mutual understanding.

- a.** To better integrate the Research Master's students into projects, especially through internships and/or stays in IBEI research groups.
- b.** To encourage promising PhD students to first do the Research Master's in International Studies.
- c.** To strengthen the links between IBEI alumni and research activities, for example by encouraging researchers to attend IBEI Alumni Cafés and publish overview articles in IBEI Alumni News.
- d.** To promote an applied research and training initiative on the international relations of cities and the role of cities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Institutional Development and Management

The institutional consolidation of IBEI has been progressing in recent years. A compound organisational framework has been emerging, with a more stable staff, and multiple partnerships have been established both at the local level and internationally, while connections with stakeholders run smoothly and multiple joint initiatives have been launched. The interuniversity nature of the institution provides a unique character to IBEI, as an example of a collaborative endeavour of Barcelona universities. IBEI has found its place as a graduate school and research institute within the higher education ecosystem in Barcelona, becoming better known, much valued as an example of a high-quality academic environment.

Within the international studies community, IBEI has also become a well-known institution, participating in multiple academic networks, and attracting scholars from all parts of the world. During this period, accountability and transparency mechanisms have been expanded and improved to reach many organisational levels, and quality assurance systems have been introduced largely.





Promoting a more suitable institutional design

IBEI's growth in recent years, both in teaching activities and research programmes, has shown some constraints to its existing institutional design, suggesting the need to examine and eventually implement some adjustments and improvements.

- a.** To obtain the institutional accreditation of the school and its whole internal quality assurance system.
- b.** To expand the facilities of IBEI so as to accommodate growing space needs in teaching and research and to participate in the Ciutadella of Knowledge initiative.
- c.** To incorporate consideration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the institutional and organisational development of IBEI.
- d.** To review the institutional design of IBEI, to improve coordination with degree-awarding universities and the other board members' institutions.

Stakeholders support and sustainability to IBEI's goals

The number of partners related to IBEI's activities is quite significant, and joint initiatives with stakeholders in many different directions and purposes have been increasing over the years. However, more focus is required to concentrate efforts in mutually beneficial initiatives.

- a.** To establish an Economic Advisory Council, made up of a group of companies and professionals interested in the international sphere, and to enhance the *Associació d'Amics de l'IBEI*, both committed to promoting and supporting international studies in Barcelona.
- b.** To increase institutional support from IBEI trustees exploring new forms of collaboration and joint activities, in particular regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- c.** To introduce the possibility of establishing joint appointments in collaboration with partner universities for teaching and research faculty.
- d.** To expand fundraising activities to obtain additional forms of financing for IBEI programmes and activities.
- e.** To strengthen the relationship with alumni through the initiatives launched by the IBEI Alumni Council and the support to the ALIBEI Association.





Improving management and organisation

Managing IBEI as an academic organisation involves addressing many challenges, to make it an innovation-driven organisation through constant improvement. In particular, human resource management is of utmost importance to the institutional identity of the Institute.

- a.** To consolidate existing activity indicators in an online command system, to continue with evaluation mechanisms of main activities.
- b.** To develop and implement new performance indicators, to identify areas for improvement.
- c.** To improve human resource management and to publish the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy, on the basis of the European Commission's recognition of HR Excellence in Research award.
- d.** To define a professional development strategy for all faculty and management staff categories, necessary to guarantee career advancement.
- e.** To develop the intranet as a tool for sharing information, documentation and internal spaces for online interactions.
- f.** To improve the management of space resources at IBEI's premises, in order to maximize its possibilities given the available resources.

Fostering diversity, equity and inclusion

IBEI is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion of all members of its community in their gender, race, socio-economic, physical ability, religion, nationality, and other relevant aspects, and their intersections. This commitment will be reflected in recruitment, academic and performance evaluation, professional advancement, governance and other relevant aspects of IBEI's model.

- a.** To recruit researchers, members of the teaching faculty and management staff following IBEI's commitment to integrate diversity as much as possible.
- b.** To ensure to the greatest extent possible that a plurality of research approaches is supported.
- c.** To develop and implement an Equality Plan and a Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Policy as well as an Inclusion Plan.
- d.** To make the recruitment of students through consideration of individual circumstances by the admissions committee.
- e.** To review course content and reflect on the degree of diversity in authorship and representation of materials and literature in syllabi.
- f.** To assess student learning outcomes with attention to intersectional equality, as well as helping students maintain their mental wellbeing.

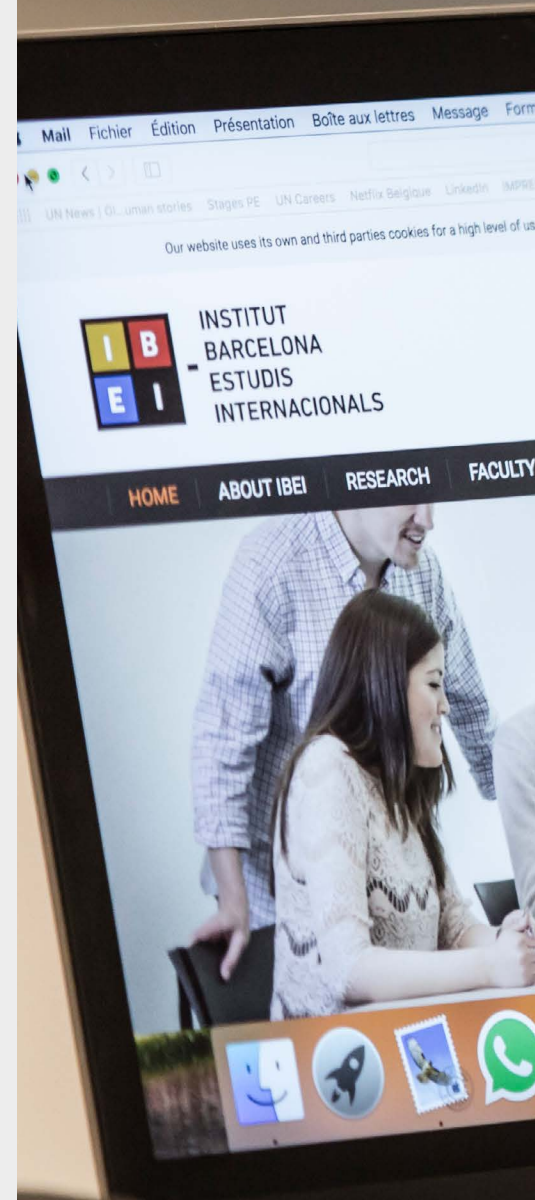


Dissemination and Outreach

Dissemination and outreach at IBEI are becoming a more relevant part of the Institute's activities, insofar as the expansion of graduate teaching offer and the increase in the number of research projects in recent years have given them more visibility and generated a critical mass with a potential for having an impact in society. Many changes are underway, and IBEI should be able to not only disseminate its work to broader audiences, but also to react and to be involved in the post-pandemic international world, transferring knowledge and providing analysis for enriched debate and discussion.

The main recipients of IBEI's dissemination activities should be students, the relevant public and practitioners interested in or working on topics related to the fields of security, development and governance, in particular from an international and comparative perspective. Media actors, public officials and politicians in general are also recipients of IBEI outputs.

IBEI transfer of knowledge goes beyond dissemination as it involves active participation in transforming scientific research outputs to particular needs. This can be based on IBEI's researchers own research outputs, aiming to provide specialized knowledge to concerned audiences, digesting and articulating it for application in real-world environments.



There is a responsibility for IBEI to disseminate the knowledge, outputs and findings of its researchers as much as possible, to transmit them beyond academia, reaching multiple audiences concerned with international politics. IBEI should contribute to a better understanding of current problems in areas such as global governance, international relations, or comparative politics, developing initiatives focused to a broader public, both local and worldwide, of concerned citizens.

Consolidate the dissemination of IBEI activities and their results

Development of IBEI core activities in teaching and research should involve a particular attention to dissemination tasks, as a fundamental challenge to advance its mission and to engage fruitfully with main political and social concerns.

- a.** To define a comprehensive communication plan, adapted to the expectations of the audiences with which IBEI wants to interact.
- b.** To widen dissemination activities related to IBEI's research agenda: public lectures, talks to schools, media interviews, etc.
- c.** To disseminate periodically information on the activities carried out, and the results obtained by IBEI community members, tailored to different audiences (trustees, academia, alumni, students, etc.)
- d.** To organise regular lectures and workshops addressed to the general public or to particular audiences beyond academia, in partnership with non-academic partners.
- e.** To prepare a MOOC for free access in collaboration with a major online courses provider, aimed at fostering IBEI's academic reputation.
- f.** To summarize main findings of research outputs by IBEI faculty and disseminate them via post, YouTube videos, podcasts, etc.
- g.** To introduce an open-access policy to incentivise easy access to IBEI research outputs.
- h.** To articulate better efforts to make the IBEI e-repository as effective and visible as possible.

Knowledge transfer

Together with dissemination, effective knowledge transfer to IBEI stakeholders and beyond is a goal that would create social value and provide multiple feedbacks.

- a.** To promote the elaboration of educational resources: short videos, teaching guides, workbooks, etc.
- b.** To join the Industrial PhD Programme, partially funded by the Catalan Government, which aims to promote the transfer of knowledge between public and/or private entities on topics of common interest related to main fields of research at IBEI.
- c.** To establish collaborative links with board partners in providing advice and support on those knowledge strengths IBEI concentrates.
- d.** To collaborate with international organisations in knowledge transfer activities, including specialized training, policy advice or applied advanced research.





Advanced teaching for practitioners and professionals

Providing teaching and learning activities to practitioners and professionals will allow them to expand their management capabilities and perspectives on global challenges.

- a.** To develop a specialized offer of tailor-made courses for professionals, based on existing master's courses and research background at IBEI.
- b.** To develop joint initiatives to launch blended learning programmes with international partners having larger visibility and a complementary profile.
- c.** To articulate and impulse training networks to promote professional courses for practitioners in collaboration with partner universities.
- d.** To promote the production of short learning programmes, designed for online and/or blended courses, addressed to professionals and practitioners to meet their updated knowledge needs.

IBEI in Figures 2021-22

Academia

58

Faculty
& Researchers

22

Nationalities of Faculty
& Researchers

14

Faculty & Research
Visitors to IBEI

39

International
Speakers

50

Training &
Scientific Events

5

Research
Clusters

23

Research
Projects

7

European Union
Projects

2

ERC
Projects

Master's Degrees

5

Master's
Degrees

68

Affiliated
Faculty

67

Elective
Courses

190

Intake
Students

307

Master's
Students

+1.500

Alumni

57

Nationalities
of Students

Corporate

19

Administrative
Staff

4,1

Budget
(in million €)

1,4

Competitive Research
Funding (in million €)



Barcelona, 2021

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