



BALTECH ANNUAL REPORT

Academic year 2007-2008

1. Summary and highlights

BALTECH is undergoing a constant change and is adapting itself to the needs of the member universities.

Highlights in 2007/2008:

- Rectors' meeting, June 7, 2007
- Board meeting in Riga, October 26, 2007
- IRO meeting in Tallinn, January 22 – 23, 2008
- Conference in Kaunas on mechatronics, March 5 – 6, 2008.
- Annual conference in Riga, March 13 – 14, 2008.
- Baltic rectors' meeting in Riga, March 13, 2008-03-06
- Rectors' meeting in Riga, March 14, 2008
- Participation at the Nordtek annual conference on Svalbard, June 28 – 30, 2008
- Emphasis on mobility through scholarships
- Focus on student activities
- Inventory on topics of common interest
- Set up of collaboration between administrative units
- Implementation on mobility scholarship in 2007
- Implementation of the ÅF-Grant, spring 2008
- Nordplus application, spring 2008.

BALTECH is competing on the academic market with numerous very attractive university consortiums, thus it is not always very easy to attract the interest from the universities. One of the main objectives has been to focus on topics with a common interest for all member universities involved.

The contacts between Sweden and Finland on the one side and the Baltic republics on the other side are given highest priority by governments and politicians. Also business contacts are extremely intense. In light of this, BALTECH is an important forum of exchange of information and ideas on what is going on within the technological field between the member universities in the region.

2. Collaboration in research

The Baltech research projects are jointly called Task Forces. The aim of the Task forces has been to identify research areas of common interest. The Task Forces have come alive after rather dormant period. Nevertheless, it is time to look into the usefulness and outcome of the task-forces

The task force in operation are:

1. Integrated management systems for sustainability
2. Eco Systems Management (to be closed down)
3. Nanotechnologies
4. Clean Energy.

A Task Force meeting was held in Helsingborg in June 2007.

3. Collaboration in education

3.1 Erasmus Mundus

BALTECH has applied for funding of two Erasmus Mundus, since a number of years. Both projects „Environmental management and Cleaner Production” and “Industrial Engineering and Management” were again rejected in 2007.

3.2 Leonardo

A joint project on mechatronics has been launched.

3.3 Nordplus

Nordplus is again open for the Baltic region. A joint application asking for funding within the *Nordplus Higher Education* program was handed in, in April 2008. The application covers more or less the areas within which BALTECH is working. A reply from Nordplus is expected in September.

4. Conference

The 2008 spring topic was “Attractiveness of Science and Technology Education - Problems and Solution with student enrolment in Science and Technology”. The conference took place in Riga on March 13 – 14, 2008. The target group was academic and administrative staff at universities working with questions related to the conference topic. Last year’s conference topics are available www.baltech.info website.

5. Student activities

A BALTECH Student Union was set up in 2006. The aim of the union is to enhance cooperation between student unions at the BALTECH universities. The students have been given free hands from the BALTECH board to come up with ideas and suggestions on common topics of interest and how work should be organized and. The students worked out statutes and an activity plan. A summer camp was held in Lithuania in July 2007.

There is a general consent among board members that Baltech should encourage student activities and a considerable amount out of the total BALTECH budget has been allocated to student activities. The list of last year’s scholars is available on www.baltech.info website news section.

6. Scholarships

6.1 BALTECH mobility scholarship

The BALTECH mobility scholarships were announced first in January 2007. The scholarship is open for short term (maximum eight weeks) study tours, field trips and conferences.

Enclosure

6.2 ÅF-Grant

ÅF Consult, one of the leading technical consulting companies in Sweden has set aside 300.000 SEK for master students at the Baltic BALTECH universities. The scholarship is administered by BALTECH, who is also being compensated for work done by a service fee.

Funds have been available as from January 2008. The statutes are available on www.baltech.info website scholarship section

7. Rectors' meeting

7.1 BALTECH rectors' meeting

A rectors' meeting was scheduled for the spring 2007. Since the rector could not convene, a video conference was held on June 7, 2007. Participants were either rectors or their deputies.

Another rectors' meeting took place in Riga on March 14, 2008. Rectors were mainly represented by pro-rectors and other academic staff.

Difficulties to arrange a joint rectors' meeting is a recurring problem, thus it would be advisable to look into the BALTECH meeting forms. Last year's rector's meeting protocol is available on www.baltech.info website networking-documents section.

7.2 BALTECH Baltic rectors' meeting

A local BALTECH Baltic rectors' meeting was held in Riga on March 13, 2008. The main aim was to discuss rotation of the BALTECH Secretariat and problems of a local Baltic character.

8. Board meetings

Two board meetings have been arranged, in Stockholm on March 1, 2007 and in Riga on October 26, 2007. The board meetings have not only dealt with the operational issues of BALTECH but also reported on latest developments at each and every university and to identify issues of joint interest for future projects and conferences. The protocols are available on www.baltech.info website networking-documents section.

9. Management

9.1 Management

The Secretariat of BALTECH meets once a week during the spring and fall semesters. Practical issues are dealt with. The following persons participate:

The Chairman of the Board (prof Jakob Kübarsepp), the Secretary (Toomas Käbin), the web administrator (Hedvi Valgemäe) and a representative of the IRO (Maret Hein). Students attend the meetings when needed.

The Secretariat is responsible for the management of BALTECH.

Pertinent information on all Baltech activities is constantly provided to the board members, who in turn are requested to carry the information on in their respective university.

9.2 Agreements

BALTECH has signed the following agreements:

- Lennart Nilsson/KTH as a coordinator of the Task Forces.
- Käbin Consulting OÜ/Toomas Käbin as secretary of BALTECH.

10. Finances

BALTECH is financed by members. The annual membership fee in the calendar year 2007 was 3.000 Euro for each member. At the BALTECH rectors' conference on June 7, 2007, it was decided to again increase the membership fee to 5.000 Euro, as from the calendar year 2008.

All BALTECH funds are administered by the university hosting the secretariat, which at present is TTU.

11. Web page

The web-page www.baltech.info, is constantly being adapted to the needs of BALTECH and it is being used more and more. In 2007 emphasis has been given user-friendliness based on functionality and topics rather than university specific information.

12. Problems

From the Secretariat we feel that the response and feedback to our ideas and suggestions is rather weak, this also goes for implementation of issues that have jointly been agreed upon. In order to make the everyday work and implementation of board decisions more efficient, the work-load should be shifted from the board members to the staff of the IRO offices.

Jakob Kübarsepp
Vice rector

Toomas Käbin
Secretary