

# Celebrating the 30th anniversary of Research Vessel Belgica: How big is Belgica? #HBIB

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In 2014, it was 30 years ago that the Belgian oceanographic research vessel “RV A962 Belgica” was launched. To celebrate this event, to present RV Belgica to the general public and to communicate the necessity of a new research vessel, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences launched a promotion campaign: How Big Is Belgica? #HBIB

The research vessel Belgica watches closely over the Belgian part of the North Sea both day and night. It is in the interest of all Belgians that the deep blue motor of the North Sea keeps on humming. Just think about durable fishery, wind energy, sand mining, and tourism. There is simply a need for a new research ship, to continue protecting the North Sea. A ship for more scientists, more high-precision instruments and remotely operated underwater vehicles. But how big should this vessel be? So “How Big is Belgica”? #HBIB

This campaign was a joint collaboration of different teams within the institute: the manager of the research vessel, the science communicator, the multimedia team, the webmaster, the social media expert... We wanted to combine as many ideas and communication channels as possible to pass the message.

We made a 5 minute movie with very few footage of the sea itself and with focus on animated graphics. We created a website, Facebook page, Twitter account, QR code, temporary tattoos, postcards, so we could reach different segments of “the general public”. The production covered different languages, Dutch, French and English.

The celebration events concentrated on a long weekend in May 2014 with a sailing trip from the coast to Antwerp with VIP's, a fantastic trip from Antwerp to Brussels, a scientific symposium for scientists, stakeholders and policy makers and Open doors for the general public in Brussels.

Let me show you the results of this work that we still keep alive two years later (because there still is no new ship but the realisation of the so called New RV is coming closer...).

## References: links

- [www.howbigisbelgica.be](http://www.howbigisbelgica.be)
- [odnature.naturalsciences.be/belgica](http://odnature.naturalsciences.be/belgica)