

RESEARCH REVIEW
INSTITUTE FOR HISTORY
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
2012–2017

ONDERZOEKERIJ

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Preface

This report contains the assessment by the external review committee of the Institute for History at Leiden University. On behalf of the committee, I would like to express my gratitude for the hospitality which we received, and for the open and constructive attitude in which interviews took place. We appreciate the time and effort spent on the self-assessment report and site visit by the management team and members of the Institute. The committee wishes to thank all interviewed persons for their willingness to share their insights and opinions with the assessment committee. In the many interviews, we were informed extensively and without hesitations or reluctance. We hope the Institute can profit from this assessment.

Olivier Hekster, chair of the committee



1. Introduction

1.1 Terms of reference for the assessment

The quality assessment of research of the Institute for History is carried out in the context of the assessment system as specified in the Standard Evaluation Protocol For Public Research Organisations by the Association of Universities in The Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

The review committee was asked to assess the scientific quality and the relevance and utility to society of the research conducted by the Institute for History of the Leiden University in the reference period 2012-2017, as well as its strategic targets and the extent to which it is equipped to achieve them.

Accordingly, three main criteria are considered in the assessment: research quality, relevance to society, and viability. In addition, the assessment considers three further aspects: the PhD training programme, research integrity and diversity.

This report describes findings, conclusions and recommendations of this external assessment of the Institute for History.

1.2 The review committee

The Board of Leiden University appointed the following members of the committee for the research review:

- Prof. Olivier Hekster
- Prof. Marc Lazar
- Prof. Regina Grafe
- Prof. Jürgen Osterhammel
- Prof. Hilde De Ridder-Symoens

More detailed information about the members of the committee can be found in Appendix A. The Board of Leiden University appointed dr. Annemarie Venemans of De Onderzoekerij as the committee secretary. All members of the committee signed a declaration and disclosure form to ensure that the committee members made their judgements without bias, personal preference or personal interest, and that the judgment was made without undue influence from the Institute for History or stakeholders.

1.3 Procedures followed by the committee

Prior to the site visit, the committee received detailed documentation comprising: The Self-assessment report of the Institute for History, including appendices and the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2015-2021. In addition, the committee studied the midterm review report, information with regard to language of publication of monographs, positions of alumni PhD students and the percentage of temporary positions of junior staff that was provided during the site visit.

The committee proceeded according to the SEP. The assessment was based on the documentation provided by the institute and the interviews with the management, a selection of researchers of the institute, and PhD students. The interviews took place on 11 and 12 October 2018 (see Appendix B).

The committee discussed its assessment at its final session during the site visit. The members of the committee commented by email on the draft report. The draft version was then presented to the Institute for factual corrections and comments. Subsequently, the text was finalised and presented to the Board of the Leiden University.



2. Organisation of the Institute

The Institute for History is one of the seven institutes of the Leiden Faculty of Humanities. The Institute is headed by a Management Team (MT) consisting of an Academic Director (head of the Institute bearing overall responsibility, a Director of Research (responsible for coordinating the Institute's PhD programme and research funding), a Director of Studies (responsible for the staffing of the Institute's teaching programmes) and an Institute Manager for the Institute's operational affairs, particularly finances, personnel and internal organisation. The Management Team receives policy input from the Institute's Advisory Council, which is composed of a cross-section of the Institute's staff and meets twice a year.

The Institute includes six research programmes:

- The Unification of the Mediterranean World 400 BC - 400 AD
- Europe 1000-1800: Collective Identities and Transnational Networks
- Political Culture and National Identities 1750-present
- Colonial and Global History 1200-present
- Cities, Migration and Global Interdependence 1350-2000
- History and International Studies 1900-present

The committee spent a lot of time trying to come to grips with the different horizontal and vertical organisation structures within the Institute and talking to different groups suggested that for some people in the institute the structures were equally unclear. It noted the enormous amount of trust and intuitive understanding of the functioning of the structures, but a lack of awareness from the part of several members of the Institute of how different organisational strata interacted and what the role of the Institute was at different levels. The committee believes that the governance would be strengthened if the transparency of the structures was improved. This would benefit the internal and external interactions in the Institute.

The committee understands the choice to divide the Institute in manageable research programmes. However, there is a risk of less horizontal communication and strategic collaborations with other programmes. Manageable scale seems to come at some cost of actual research interaction. Tellingly, questions about interaction beyond the programmes were often answered by referring to joint teaching, which falls beyond the research institute's remit. The committee is of the opinion that a more explicit vision, focus and strategy on Institute level are required, and choices about the appropriate themes and interdisciplinary research need to be made.

When looking at the content of the research programmes on the website of the Institute and at the publications of the staff, the division of the programmes seems somewhat artificial and overlapping. For instance, judging by the programme titles one gets the impression that little or no research is done about cultural history (in all its aspects), which is not correct in practice. It seems that research programmes on the whole are still strongly linked with chair groups. They run with the structure, but there has not been systematic thought about updating the programmes. The committee was pleased to note that the research programmes 'Cities, Migrations and Global Interdependence' and 'International Studies' have evaluated their own positioning in the Institute. It encourages other programmes to do the same, and to share these results among the programmes.

One place in which the committee thinks that evaluation of interaction between the research programmes, and strategic choices in general can be made, is the 'Advisory Council', consisting of programme leaders and the MT. The committee was somewhat surprised about the limited awareness among programme leaders about this council and suggests that the role of this council is made more explicit and that it meets more regularly.



3. Assessment of the research

3.1 Quantitative assessment

The committee assessed the Institute both quantitatively and qualitatively. For the quantitative assessment a four-point scale is used, according to the standard evaluation protocol 2015–2021. The explanation of the criteria underlying the scores can be found in appendix D. The qualitative assessment of the institute can be found in the next sections.

According to the SEP scoring system, the committee has awarded the following scores to the Institute:

Research quality:	1
Relevance to society:	1
Viability:	2

3.2 Research quality

The Institute for History is an internationally renowned institute. The historical fields covered by the Institute are both chronologically and spatially very broad. It does well to protect and continually enhance this traditional comparative advantage.

The Institute's research strategy aims for broad chronological and geographical coverage, enabling a profound understanding of the globalised and interconnected world in both past and present. The overarching theme of all programmes is: 'Global Questions, Local Sources'. Within Leiden University, the Institute participates in two cross-faculty 'research profiles': Global Interactions of People, Culture and Power through the Ages, and Political Legitimacy: Institutions and Identities. The committee thinks that the research strategy is relevant and fitting for the Institute. However, it did not recognise the central focus 'Global Questions, Local Sources' as overarching research theme. According to the committee there is world leading research in global history, but it is not articulated and guided in a way to optimise this as the unique selling point and a quality of the Institute. It suggests that there should be discussion in the Institute as to how the two research profiles can be explicitly linked to the overarching theme. If that is undesirable, it might be better to explicitly focus on the two central themes.

The Institute describes in its self-assessment document its open and supportive scholarly environment that encourages exchange and collaboration, but also respects scholarly autonomy. The committee endorses this. It is positive about the way the Institute is managed: problems and solutions are discussed in an open dialogue. Not so much in the self-evaluation report, but certainly during the interviews, the committee learned about the specific culture of high solidarity, joining efforts and communication among staff members especially at the level of research programmes and during joint research-led teaching activities. Academic staff at the Institute evidently greatly enjoy the liberty they are being afforded in terms of their research. The committee acknowledges and commends this as a major factor contributing to their job satisfaction. Yet, it also notes that this should not be seen as an adequate compensation for excessive workloads and scant research time.

The international visibility of the Institute is clear from the fact that the Institute ranks very high in the QS by subject ranking for history (#15). During the evaluation period 2012–2017, several members of the Institute received prestigious awards for their research work and had high-level appointments in scientific committees. Furthermore, several institute members received best paper awards and other prizes. These illustrate academic and societal recognition of the work by individual institute members.



In the review period, the Institute has been very successful by acquiring personal research grants of NWO (six VENI grants, five VIDI grants and two VICI grants) and Horizon2020 personal grants (one ERC Advanced, one Consolidator, one Starting grant and two Marie-Curie). The committee congratulates the Institute on its success in acquiring external funding.

Such an increase in external funding requires a major investment of the staff for proposal writing, reporting and project administration. The committee noted that there is only a small support staff on Institute level. Although the Institute manages to deal with low support, and members of the Institute seem, on the whole, to prefer appointments of scientific staff over appointments of support staff, there is demand for more low-level support to make administrative and material tasks lighter. The committee believes that at least some increase of support staff to take over organisational tasks will increase the efficiency of the research.

The quantitative data provided in the self-assessment report give a good picture of the research activities at the Institute for History and of the productivity of its researchers during the reference period. The data show that the scientific output of the Institute increased from 66 refereed articles and 16 books in 2012 to 72 articles and 24 books in 2017, concomitant with an increase in research capacity.

The committee noted that the publication record of the Institute has been outstanding in both quantity and quality for many years and continues to be so, particularly considering that members commit significant time to teaching. It appreciates the Institute's choice to continue to publish books alongside articles and chapters, but would advise the further exploration of co-authored books and articles over 'default' collaborations in edited volumes. This may take more time, but leads to a more systematic interdisciplinary approach, thus addressing one of the weaknesses in the self-assessment.

Moreover, in terms of refereed journals (and to an extent monographs) more international visibility would be desirable, especially in languages other than English. Internationalisation is not the same as inserting research into the Anglophone sphere only and in historical research it is vital that specialists publish in the relevant languages. For an Institute whose reputation is crucially built around its global approaches visibility beyond the Dutch/Anglophone sphere is of great importance. We would recommend that the institute keeps track of the languages in which articles are published, and actively encourages publications in French, German, Spanish or any other language that would seem appropriate for dissemination in a specific field.

The self-assessment report states that in their average of 0.2 FTE research time, staff are expected to produce two scholarly articles per annum. The committee was surprised with this rule, because in its opinion it does not fit well with their statement that the Institute prefers quality over quantity. Also, according to the committee it is hard to write two scholarly articles per year in one day a week. During the site visit the committee noted that in practice this productivity goal is much more flexible. It was pleased that this goal is tailored to the need of the individual researcher, but notes that this leaves much responsibility with chairs and programme leaders and creates the possibility of unequal treatment of members of the Institute. It recommends that the Institute defines output indicators that adhere to the reality in the Institute.

3.3 Societal relevance

A part of the Institute's ambition is to produce professional publications, publications aimed at the general public and a variety of forms of 'other output'. The Institute used the following indicators of societal relevance to pursue its work that could lead to important societal impact:

- Research products for societal target groups such as professional publications, mainly intended for teachers, archivists, curators, librarians and policy makers, and publications for the general public such as blogs;
- Use of research products by societal groups, illustrated through five case studies;
- Marks of recognition by societal groups, such as special prizes, public lectures, membership of civil society boards, councils and advisory bodies and special chairs.



The committee was impressed by these products including the demonstrated case studies. It established that the Institute is visible and supporting researchers in their attempts to make their research available in accessible formats for the public.

Although not explicitly mentioned in the self-assessment document, according to the committee, the Institute's largest contribution to society is through education. Besides the training in the bachelor and master programmes and integrated programmes aimed at the study and conservation of colonial Dutch-Asian heritage, the committee noted the development of training on public engagement by Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), YouTube lecture series for *De Universiteit van Nederland* and lecture series for the University's Studium Generale programme.

According to the international members of the committee, there is an undue pressure and a too narrowly defined definition of societal relevance in the Netherlands. Compared to international standards, the Institute performs excellent on societal relevance through the many projects.

However, and in the context of what is expected of a Dutch institute, the committee discussed to what extent the distribution of ownership of societal relevance is at the lower levels or through a more strategic vision of the management team. It got the impression that valorisation of research seems to be very decentralised and project-dependent. Societal relevance, it seems, is appreciated through the many projects, but not integrated into the policies of the Institute. This makes it harder for the Institute to make full use of the upcoming opportunities offered by more society-driven research (e.g. the NWA). Moreover, it means that individual projects have to repeatedly develop forms of societal relevance for which there are already many good practices available in the Institute. Finally, there are possibilities not employed by the Institute in bringing together activities of individual projects. The committee, for instance, was struck by the many ways in which research by the Institute was linked to national policy making. This could be made much more explicit and help other researchers to reach the relevant stakeholders there.

The committee recommends that best practices exchange more systematically and that there is more exchange between the different programmes and between the institutes. It can imagine that the Faculty can also play a systematic role here, for instance in keeping track of stakeholders with whom members of the Institute interact more regularly.

3.4 Viability

During the site visit, the committee engaged in discussions on the strategy of the Institute to address its weaknesses and possible threats, and to optimally make use of strengths and opportunities. The issues most prominently impacting the Institute's viability and the Institute's strategy to address these are discussed below.

According to the SWOT analysis in the self-assessment report, strengths of the Institute are breadth of scope, good international mix of scholars, high number of funded PhD candidates, high level of collegiality and well-integrated teaching and research. The committee in general endorsed these strengths. It was especially impressed by the research-led teaching, which, in its opinion, is the most effective factor in the Institute to foster new collaborations and think horizontally about shared missions and goals. It urges the Institute to better convey this as a unique selling point.

While the Institute very well identified possible threats and weaknesses, it is much less clear about how to address these. For example, the SWOT analysis of the self-evaluation report mentions as a threat the decreasing success rates of grant applications. In the self-evaluation report, a response to this threat was absent. During the site visit, the committee noted that on individual level the staff is looking for possibilities, but an overarching strategy is as yet lacking. In interviews, there were suggestions by Faculty and the MT about explorations of reallocating funding to put less emphasis on large projects but this remains very tentative. The committee is impressed by how successful the Institute has been in attaining grants in the past six years. However, dropping (inter)national success rates are likely to have an influence on the Institute's earning capacity. Moreover, new regulations may be problematic for continuing the status quo.



NWO now makes it impossible for researchers to apply for a new grant while a project is still underway, whereas at the moment some of the more successful researchers at Leiden combine projects. The committee appreciates that the Institute is aware of these risks, and that if necessary it can choose to discontinue the position of some of its temporary (replacement) staff to compensate for a drop in earning power. Still, the committee seriously suggests that the Institute starts contingency planning, for instance by exploring possibilities of cross-faculty collaborations. In brief, the committee recommends that the Institute systematically explores how it can make use of the opportunities defined in the SWOT to address the defined threats. Considering the strong sense of collaboration between Faculty and Institute, and the preliminary ideas about rethinking grant-strategies, the committee is convinced that the institute can remain a robust autonomous unit in the next years.

The self-assessment report states that structural funding and teaching budgets allow for about one day of research time per week for every full-time member of teaching staff. Additional research time has to come from grant income. The committee appreciates that the Institute has to operate within the constraints of current modes of funding, but finds it unfortunate that as a result, researchers have to continuously contribute to fundraising to find sufficient time for their scientific tasks. As a result, many members of the institute have an enormous teaching load that is only compensated by the enthusiasm of the staff. The committee notes that the high number of research-led courses, in which research topics are discussed with students, allows staff members to combine teaching with research. This also applies for the societal impact part of research, for instance through staff using students to explore the set-up of a new exhibition. There is a noticeable expectation that extra research (e.g. the writing of grant proposals) is done outside working hours. Though there seems to be no unhappiness about this, there is worry in the committee about whether this is a sustainable form of conducting research.

Little time left for research is a reason for concern because staff members should be given the opportunity to establish themselves as internationally leading researchers in their field. Different levels in the Institute are aware of the problems of the need to look for solutions to guarantee research time. The committee suggests that the management team of the Institute together with the Faculty Board puts this issue high on their strategy agenda and makes use of the good climate and positive attitude that exists at staff level in finding the rightly balanced solution. The committee also strongly encourages the University Board to recognise the excellent results of the Institute and its sustained earning capacity by adding structural funding to the Institute's research budget. The committee would also like to raise as a side-point that current funding schemes, with emphasis on projects that include PhD places, disadvantages scholars in the last years of their career, who might still want to have extra research time, but will not be able to supervise PhD project to fruition within their appointment. This makes it more difficult for them to apply for additional funding, which consequently means that they cannot expand on their one day of research time per week. The committee suggests that the Institute thinks about ways in which to make optimal use of the experience and capacities of its older members and, indeed of its retired staff.

One way in which the Institute already allows researchers to gain additional research time is through a much-appreciated sabbatical system, in which researchers may apply for time for writing a grant proposal or a publication. In accordance with the midterm review committee, the committee believes that this system is supportive and effective. It is understood that the success rate of applications for getting sabbaticals is at the moment fairly good (about 80%). However, according to staff members, there seemed to be a lack of transparency in the procedure. It was sometimes unclear who was allowed to (re)apply, and who was on the committee deciding about sabbaticals. Since the sabbatical system is at the moment the most effective way to counter the negative effects of limited regular research time maximum care should be taken to further regularise it and if necessary expand the funds to continue the high success rates.

One of the recommendations of the midterm assessment of 2013 was that the Institute should develop clearer policies to encourage interdisciplinary and methodological innovation. The current self-assessment report states in the SWOT analysis under weaknesses that there is no systematic approach to expanding interdisciplinary research collaborations. Although the committee received a couple of examples of great interdisciplinary work, it agrees with the Institute that more effort can be put in systematising it. The vertical organisation in research programmes does not encourage multi- or



interdisciplinary research. Moreover, much can be gained by cross-faculty explorations, such as the 'humanity approach to medicine' or the 'humanity approach to environmental studies', which came up during the interviews.

In 2017, the research programme 'History and International Studies 1900–present' was set up to foster research and collaboration among the new staff members who teach in the bachelor programme International Studies and master programme International Relations. During the site visit, the committee received signs that there were still pull and push factors in fully integrating the research programme in the Institute. The committee finds that there is a need to decide the position of the research programme. In its view there is definitely an added value for the programme 'History and International Studies 1900–present' to remain in the Institute and for the Institute to keep the programme incorporated.

Good, successful institutes always have the risk of being self-referential. The committee noted this risk also in this Institute. It got some sort of sense that the Institute might be at risk of becoming too inward looking. There seemed, for example, to be surprise that the committee questioned existing structures and internal forms of cooperation; important qualities of the Institute (e.g. its global reach) are not made apparent to groups outside the Institute; and there seems to be room for more interdisciplinary research by systematic collaborating outside the Institute. It therefore suggests to regularly inviting external people to counter this danger, perhaps by instituting an external advisory board for (informal) consultation.

3.5 PhD programme

In the period 2009 – 2013 a total of 73 PhD students enrolled in the Institute for History (employed PhD students and contract PhD students). Of 73 started projects, 6 projects (8%) were completed in 4 years, 28 projects (38%) were completed by the end of 2013, while 8 projects (11%) were stopped. Another 37 projects (51%) were still pending by the end of 2013. At an international level the dropout rate looks on the higher side and faster completion would be desirable. The committee also notes that only 1/3 of the graduating PhDs find job placements outside Leiden.

The Institute for History does not host its own Graduate school but is associated with the Faculty's Graduate School of Humanities. Together with other Faculty institutes, the Graduate School of Humanities provides the organisational infrastructure within which PhD candidates participate in advanced training and supervised research. It offers a range of courses which are also open to external PhD candidates. Most of the discipline-specific training takes place within the relevant national research schools. Depending on their sub-disciplinary affiliation, PhD candidates in the Institute take courses in the Huizinga Institute, N.W. Posthumus Institute, OIKOS, the Research School Political History or the Research School for Medieval Studies.

The committee interviewed current and former PhD students in various stages of development of their PhD research about their supervision, research facilities, the role of the Graduate school, career-planning, and possible constraints of their research.

The committee has spoken to a very enthusiastic group of PhD students. There was clear differentiation in where PhD students appeared to be embedded; some functioned clearly in their project, others positioned themselves into their chair groups or the relevant research programmes. The committee found out that there was a good supervising structure both intellectually and procedurally (e.g. meetings with supervisors and the training and supervision plan), though on the whole first supervisors seemed to have a very dominant position over second supervisors, certainly if the second supervisor was added to the project after its incubation. There was some differentiation between those PhD students who had started before the Graduate school was implemented, and those who had started later. This indicates positive awareness and institutionalisation of supervisory structures in the past years. The committee did not speak to contract PhD candidates, and though it recognises the institutional differences between employed and contract PhD candidates, it emphasises the importance of incorporating both groups in the Graduate school.



The PhD students appreciated the flexible, informal atmosphere. They also enjoyed both formal and informal discussion groups and meetings in the research programmes with people sharing similar research interests. However, the committee noted that the interaction with scholars from other research programmes is less apparent. The committee believes that it is very important for PhD students to be integrated beyond their own topic to broaden their academic capabilities.

The students the committee spoke with during the site visit were content with the courses they could attend. They appreciated the amount of freedom in choosing the courses that fit into their research field. However, they were not yet fully satisfied with the way the Graduate school functioned. According to the students, there is room for better communication between the Graduate school and the Institute. In addition, the number of courses offered by the Graduate school could be extended. The committee suggests that the Institute reconsiders the type of courses it wants its PhD candidates to follow: if the Institute places importance on training PhD candidates in global history and wants to stimulate interdisciplinary, the PhD curriculum should reflect this much more than is currently the case.

Based upon numbers in the self-evaluation report the time for completing a PhD thesis appears to be too long. According to the self-assessment report, many candidates take longer to finish their dissertation because they wish to undertake additional tasks to strengthen their CV. The committee is of the opinion that an increasing time for completion might be a risk for an (international) career. It recommends to keep monitoring the success rate and, if necessary, to take further measures that lead to a substantial increase.

According to the PhD students, job placement could be improved. Although students can take career development courses, and are engaged in networking at conferences, they are concerned about their future possibilities. The committee recommends a stronger career development programme for PhD candidates with both academic and non-academic ambitions. PhD students should, furthermore, be made aware that first appointments outside Leiden are likely to improve their career prospects because they reflect an outside assessment of their potential. More systematic approaches are needed to prepare this group to non-academic career options.

3.6 Research integrity

Faculty and staff of the Institute are subject to the Leiden University rules regarding academic integrity. The research staff must adhere to the "Code of conduct for academic practice" as formulated by the VSNU in 2004 and revised in 2012 and 2014.

The committee was satisfied with the formal processes in place for ensuring research integrity. It appreciated the establishment of an ethics committee. However, the committee recommends that the Institute develops its own research integrity strategy along the general lines issued by the university, but with a focus on particular concerns connected to its own research and application areas.

The existence of formal procedures can be checked easily, but it is much more difficult to assess the extent to which integrity is part of the lived reality. The committee was not convinced that attention to research integrity is an integral part of the culture of the Institute yet. It recommends research integrity as well as ethical aspects of research in History to be an integral part of the culture of the Institute; this could be achieved not only by procedures and compulsory courses for PhD students, but especially by discussing these aspects in the context of everyday life at a research programme. The management of the Institute is clearly aware of these needs and is exploring possibilities for this: A good example presented during the site visit was an MA course in which students had to interview staff members about ethical dilemmas. The committee encourages the Institute to come up with more of these initiatives.

According to the self-assessment report, of 93 peer-reviewed journal articles appearing in 2017, 34 were published in open access. During the site visit, the Institute explained that recently the University stated that staff peer-reviewed publications should be open access, in line with national developments. The committee appreciates this goal and encourages clearer overviews of the possibilities that are already in



place for researchers, and expansions of financial support for this where necessary. In interviews, the idea arose that there was little university support for this, but the university website suggests otherwise. The committee is pleased that the Institute is currently preparing a data management protocol containing guidelines with respect to the storage and retention of research data. In this, the Institute adheres to current national guidelines. The committee recommends that the Institute also considers ways to safeguard continued hosting and updating of databases, websites etc which are now funded by and linked to specific projects. The institute needs to consider whether it will do so by strategic alliances with other national players (DANS, other research institutes) or whether it wants to take a leading role in this process. This is linked to considerations about digital humanities at the Institute: further steps in all these matters take substantial funding.

3.7 Diversity

The self-assessment report states that about a third of the permanent teaching positions are filled by women; six of fifteen full professors are women. The female-male ratio is well-balanced at the PhD level, but women remain underrepresented at the postdoc level. The committee noted that clear efforts are being made, but there is still a notable gender imbalance at both professorial and university lecturer level. In fact, the gap at the junior lecturer and post doc level has increased over time. The committee strongly recommends the Institute to take further action to promote a more gender-balanced environment, and further to raise the awareness and improve the knowledge of discriminatory mechanisms in academic environments and how to consciously counteract these. Absence of diversity, after all, is a tell-tale sign that selection practices may not result in the hiring of the best candidate, and has a direct bearing on research quality.

The Institute has a very international composition, with more than one third of total research staff being non-Dutch and almost half of the PhD candidates having a foreign nationality. The committee praises its ability to successfully attract and combine such a diverse range of backgrounds within the research programmes and it appreciates the measures to integrate this group in the Institute by for instance a 'welcome dinner' for new international staff. One small point of criticism is the transparency of learning Dutch when considering a career in the Netherlands. Most international PhD students were not aware that for teaching in Bachelor programmes it is necessary to speak Dutch, since there is little English lecturing at the BA level. Similar, but at staff level, it turns out that the required Dutch level for teaching is higher than can be reached by the standard provided Dutch courses. Moreover, the necessary time for learning Dutch is not compensated at all in teaching stint, putting a substantial burden on beginning non-Dutch staff.

At a different level, it is worth taking into consideration that there are forms of diversity as well. Social diversity has been discussed, and it is clear that the Institute is aware of the advantages of differentiated social backgrounds of its staff. Again, the important point is that imbalance may be a result of imperfect selection practices. Some sort of central awareness of hiring practice at the PhD level might be one way forward, though the Dutch system does not easily allow for central admission of PhD students. The Institute is, however, to be commended for making sure that there is some continuity in PhD-appointment committees through the figure of the Director of Research.



4. Summary and recommendations

The committee's overall impression is of an excellent Institute in which there is a strong sense of professionalism, impressive commitment and very high levels of performance in terms of publications in clearly identified, leading journals and books appearing with leading academic publishers.

The number of professional publications and publications aimed for the general public as well as the active participation in training programmes and especially the interaction with various stakeholders in the many externally funded research projects in the institute yield clear evidence that the scientific work of the institute also has a very high societal relevance and impact.

The Institute is very well equipped for the future. In the opinion of the committee, after a period of impressive grant income, it is now extremely important to define a clear research strategy. Growth may end for reasons outside the Institute's control, so serious thought must be given to contingency planning. Future challenges include improving the time for research, rates of PhD completion, attracting female researchers at the more senior levels and more collaboration within the Institute and beyond.

The most important recommendations, as substantiated by the foregoing, are the following:

- Review and clarify the management structure of the Institute;
- Optimise global history as a unique selling point of the Institute;
- Let go of 2 scholarly articles per year as output indicators for 0.2 FTE research time;
- Create more embeddedness of societal relevance;
- Develop a strategy/plan to cope with possible stagnation in the number of research grants;
- Increase time for research;
- Further regularise the sabbatical system, and if possible introduce structural sabbaticals for all tenured staff members;
- Develop more cooperation, collaboration and interaction between the different programmes of research;
- Systematise and create more opportunities for interdisciplinary research;
- Create more international visibility in refereed journals especially in languages other than English and Dutch, which in practice means creating facilities for translation and correction of academic work;
- Be more transparent in the communication inside the Institute;
- The time for finishing the PhD thesis appears to be too long. It is recommended to carefully analyse the corresponding reasons and to take measures that lead to a substantial shortening;
- The committee is of the opinion that it is worthwhile to think about some organised way of making the exposure to research integrity and ethics more embedded in the culture of the entire Institute.



Appendix A – Curriculum Vitae

Olivier Hekster is professor of Ancient History at the Radboud University. Since 2015 he has been director of the institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies and managing director of the Graduate School Humanities. He has been Humboldt Fellow at the Kommission Für Alte Geschichte und Epigrafik, München, Fellow for Ancient History at Merton College, Oxford and Lecturer in Ancient History at Wadham College, Oxford. From 2010–2015 he was member of the Expert committee of the Sirius program for Excellence in Dutch Higher Education. His research focuses on imperial Roman history.

Regina Grafe is professor of Early Modern History and Head of the Department of History and Civilisation at the European University Institute in Florence. Her field of interest is global economic history with particular attention to the Hispanic World. She has published three monographs including *Distant Tyranny. Markets, power and backwardness in Spain, 1650–1800* (Princeton University Press 2012), and authored numerous articles on the political economy of state and empire formation as well as the role of economic institutions in the Spanish Empire either side of the Atlantic in journals such as the *Economic History Review*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* and the *Hispanic American Historical Review*.

Marc Lazar, Professor of Political History and Sociology, is director of the Center for History at Sciences Po (Paris) and President of the Advisory Board of this University. He is also President of the School of Government at Luiss University in Rome. His main research is dedicated on the Left and Far Left in Europe, Politics in Italy, Politics in France, Comparative Politics in France, Italy and European Union, Populism, Violence in Politics, Relations between History and Political Science. He published 26 books and more than 200 articles in French, Italian, English, German, Romanian in academical journals.

Hilde de Ridder-Symoens is emeritus professor in Medieval History at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and in Early Modern History at the Universiteit Gent. Fields of research are the History of European Universities and mainly the mobility of students and teachers (13th–18th c.), Intellectual and cultural life during the Renaissance (15th–18th centuries) in its educational and social context. Former secretary-general, president and vice-president of the International Commission for the History of Universities (ICHU). Fellow at i.a., MPI Frankfurt am Main, Merton College Oxford, UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles. Member of the Kuratorium of and contributor in the Repertorium Academicum Germanicum at Bern; member of the Advisory Committee of Heloise. European Network on Digital Academic History.

Jürgen Osterhammel, until his retirement in March 2018 Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Konstanz, is a Permanent Fellow at the Freiburg Institute of Advanced Study (FRIAS). His publications in English include *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2014); *Decolonization: A Short History* (co-authored with Jan C. Jansen, Princeton University Press, 2017); and *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenment's Encounter with Asia* (Princeton University Press, 2018). He is a member of the German National Academy (Leopoldina), a corresponding fellow of the British Academy, a member of the Order Pour le Mérite and a recipient of several awards including the Leibniz-Preis (2010) and Balzan Prize (2018).



Appendix B – Programme of the site visit

Thursday 11 October

Time	Part	Collocutors
09.00 – 10.30	Site visit preparation	committee
10.30 – 12.00	Delegation management team	Manon van der Heijden, Judith Pollmann, Peter Meel, Mark Rutgers
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch	committee
13.00 – 14.00	Delegation 'The Unification of the Mediterranean World 400 BC - 400 AD'/Europe 1000-1800: Collective Identities and Transnational Networks'	Luuk de Ligt, Frits Naerebout, Kim Beerden, Peter Hoppenbrouwers, Jeroen Duindam, Felicia Roşu, Bart Noordervliet
14.00 – 14.30	Evaluation	committee
14.30 – 15.30	Delegation 'Political Culture and National Identities 1750-present'/History and International Studies 1900-present'	Henk te Velde, Monika Baár, Bernhard Rieger, André Gerrits, Isabelle Duyvesteyn, Anne-Isabelle Richard
15.30 – 16.15	Evaluation and break	committee
16.15 – 17.15	Delegation 'Colonial and Global History 1200-present'/Cities, Migration and Global Interdependence 1350-2000'	Jos Gommans, Mirjam de Bruijn, Michiel van Groesen, Marlou Schrover, Manon van der Heijden, Damian Pargas
17.15 – 18.00	feedback committee day 1	committee



Friday 12 October

Time	Part	Collectors
08.30 – 09.00	Preparatory meeting	committee
09.00 – 10.00	Delegation Phd Students	Christiaan Engberts, Leonor Alvarez, Viola Müller, Girija Joshi, Quinten Somsen, Bente de Leede
10.00 – 11.00	Delegation University Lecturers/Postdocs	Miko Flohr, Karwan Fatah-Black, Claire Weeda, Karen Smith, Sanne Ravensbergen, Paul van Trigt
11.00 – 11.30	Evaluation	committee
11.30 – 12.15	Delegation integrity/diversity	Herman Paul, Adriaan van Veldhuizen, Ariadne Schmidt, Maartje Janse, Marion Pluskota, Diederik Smit
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch and evaluation	committee
13.30 – 14.00	Delegation management team	Manon van der Heijden, Judith Pollmann, Peter Meel
14.00 – 16.00	Evaluation committee, writing conclusions	committee
16.00	Presentation first results	plenary



Appendix C – Tables

Table 1 Number of staff and research FTE

	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE
Scientific staff	48.7	10.3	54.0	12.8	59.0	13.7	63.5	14.5	77.5	18.6	94.2	21.0
Post-docs	8.5	8.9	10.7	10.9	12.0	14.5	16.1	16.3	17.3	14.9	13.4	9.9
PhD students - employed	36.4	27.2	41.2	31.2	46.2	34.5	48.6	37.0	50.5	38.2	41.6	31.5
PhD students - contract	9.8	-	11.2	-	19.5	-	18.5	-	16.1	-	11.8	-
Total research staff	103.5	46.5	117.1	55.0	136.6	62.7	146.7	67.8	161.4	71.7	161.0	62.3
Support staff	3.8	1.8	4.8	1.5	5.1	1.6	8.1	2.2	8.4	2.5	8.5	2.6
Visiting fellows	21.0	-	18.0	-	14.0	-	23.0	-	15.0	-	13.0	-
Total	128.3		139.9	56.5	155.7	64.3	177.8	70.0	184.8	74.2	182.5	64.9

Table 2 Main categories of research output

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Refereed articles	66	81	82	75	90	72
Non-refereed articles	15	17	13	13	10	13
Books	16	18	26	23	21	24
Book chapters	87	95	91	89	65	80
PhD dissertations	21	22	14	24	18	18
Conference papers	210	243	309	298	297	292
Professional publications	34	33	26	29	19	35
Publications aimed at the general public	38	45	45	50	61	53
Other research output	332	342	375	408	460	376
Total	819	896	981	1009	1041	963



Table 3 Funding

	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%
Direct funding	16.2	34	14.2	25	19.7	31	24.1	34	22.4	30	22.2	34
Research grants	30.5	63	36.1	64	30.8	48	28.3	40	31.8	43	24.5	37
Contract research	1.5	3	6.1	11	13.7	21	17.6	25	20.1	27	18.3	28
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total funding	48.2	100	56.4	100	64.2	100	70	100	74.2	100	64.9	100

Table 4 PhD candidates

Enrollment				Success rates													
Starting year	M	F	M+F	Graduated in year 4 or earlier		Graduated in year 5 or earlier		Graduated in year 6 or earlier		Graduated in year 7 or earlier		Graduated in year 7 or earlier		Not yet finished		Discontinued	
				#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2009	5	5	10	1	10	2	20	6	60	6	60	8	80	0	0	2	20
2010	6	8	14	1	7	2	14	7	50	10	71	10	71	4	29	0	0
2011	5	7	12	1	8	3	25	6	21	6	50			4	33	2	17
2012	8	6	14	2	14	3	21	3						10	71	1	7
2013	12	11	23	1	4	1	4							19	83	3	13
Total	36	37	73	6	8									37	51	8	11



Appendix D – Meaning of the scores

Category	Meaning	Research quality	Relevance to society	Viability
1	World leading/ excellent	The research unit has been shown to be one of the few most influential research groups in the world in its particular field	The research unit makes an outstanding contribution to society	The research unit is excellently equipped for the future
2	Very good	The research unit conducts very good. internationally recognised research	The research unit makes a very good contribution to society	The research unit is very well equipped for the future
3	Good	The research unit conducts good research	The research unit makes a good contribution to society	The research unit makes responsible strategic decisions and is therefore well equipped for the future
4	Unsatisfactory	The research unit does not achieve satisfactory results in its field	The research unit does not make a satisfactory contribution to society	The research unit is not adequately equipped for the future

