Evaluation report

Evaluated point	Grade	Comments
Scientific impact of research	Very good	Cybernetica operates an R&D unit that conducts basic and applied research in information security, from work in cryptography to applications such as internet voting. The research activity is at the cutting edge internationally. There are many excellent achievements, such as winning of DARPA contracts and participation at very significant levels in EU collaborative grants. There is a great sense of confidence and vibrancy in the research environment. The research is very agile and able to respond to challenges. One example is Internet voting, where Cybernetica has played a pioneering role in the past, but is also able to respond to emerging needs toward verification. Another example is the creation of a new group to focus on privacy-preserving computational applications which are of great relevance to many fields. The research output of Cybernetica is excellent. It is important to note that research in information security, as in many areas of computer science, is primarily published through proceedings of highly selective conferences while journals tend to have lesser relevance for impact in the field. Cybernetica has a strong visibility in leading conferences. Cybernetica collaborates closely in particular with Tartu University to provide doctoral training, and PhD graduates move on to significant positions in the field.
Sustainability and potential of research	Very good	Cybernetica has been successful in securing funding from a variety of sources including the EU, various Centres of Excellence, Estonian state programmes and industrial contractors and this seems likely to continue. Cybernetica is also part of several significant networks including the European Cyber Security Organisation (ECSO), and the European Cybersecurity Industry Leaders (ECIL). There are several significant ongoing research programmes in the areas of tax assessment, customs control, radio surveillance and software development. Sustainability is also enhanced by close relationships with the University of Tartu. In view of the growing need for information security, Cybernetica is excellently positioned to sustain and grow its research.
Societal importance of research	Very good	The research unit plays a key role for Estonian society. It advises the government in information security, conducts research that underpins eGovernment, and is a leading light as a commercial R&D unit that successfully translates basic science into real-world impact on a national and international level.

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Scientific basis in the field is sufficient to conduct doctoral studies. (This question should be answered only if: a) institution being evaluated is conducting doctoral studies and; b) The field being evaluated is proposed to grant positive evaluation. If these conditions are met then: a) If the level of scientific basis is sufficient for conducting doctoral studies in every structural unit being evaluated, then the answer should be „yes“; b) If the scientific basis is not sufficient in some structural units, then those units should be listed.)		Yes. The evaluation committee has met PhD students that were present in the Institute. They have excellent conditions for work. One of them was previously a software developer and found with Cybernetica the research environment he wanted. All their time is devoted to their PhD work. The PhD students were especially happy with the research environment and working conditions within Cybernetica. They are clearly well supervised and mentored, and have good opportunities for career development, attendance at conferences and visits to other institutions.

Summary assessment

Evaluated point	Grade	Comments
Areas of special note as appropriate (Where necessary indicate sub-fields, assessment criteria, and/or structural units which, in the committee's opinion, were of a notably high level.)		Across the board Cybernetica appears to be a very well-functioning research and development unit with a wide portfolio of expertise and significant achievements. Cybernetica provides a very positive research environment for up-and-coming researchers. It is a distinct strength that basic research has a direct connection to real-world applications, with researchers talking directly to developers, and with basic research questions emerging from in depth understanding of challenges towards application.
Areas in need of improvement as appropriate (Where necessary indicate sub-fields of the field being evaluated, assessment criteria, and/or structural units which, in the committee's opinion, revealed significant shortcomings.)		Recruitment of international research staff is an area worthy of encouragement. Close relations with other universities should be maintained and perhaps developed further by some additional staff teaching duties which will enhance exposure to students and aid recruitment of PhD students.
Assessment proposal to the Minister of Education and Research	To grant positive evaluation	A very successful institution, which is orientated in a strategic position of the digital society. Cybernetica is highly competent in this field, both for basic research and applications for development. Cybernetica provides an outstanding example of a commercial R&D unit.

Feedback

Evaluated point	Comments
Feedback for institution (This question should be answered only if the institution asked for feedback from the evaluation committee in the self-report (about up to three specific areas of R&D which it finds to be currently important, e.g., related to its development plan).)	NA
Suggestions for unit, institution, state etc (As appropriate, committee can give additional feedback for the structural unit, the institution, or the State (please specify whom feedback is directed to) according to the directive assessment criteria for regular evaluation (article 7).	NA