

Evaluation report

Evaluated point	Grade	Comments
Scientific impact of research	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the R&D outcomes are of a good international standard. • There is evidence that research publications are of both domestic and international interest in the field of language studies, with a particular strength in applied research. • Research has been disseminated in a range of publications of an appropriate international quality. • There is evidence of disparity both in the volume and quality of high-level publications per researcher and across research areas. <p>The Institute is aware of its particular research strengths and shows evidence of sensible planning. It has an appropriate set of regional partners and network of scholarly associations, both of which have contributed to its grant success. The Institute could usefully implement more robust structures for enhancing the awareness of quality more evenly across all of its research activities.</p>
Sustainability and potential of research	Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization and management of R&D are clear and effective for the sustainability of the Institute and take into account the specifics of the field. • The Institute has a clear and focused vision in relation to the development of the field, which strengthens its sustainability and will help to realize its potential. • The Institute's infrastructure is good and provides conducive conditions for R&D in the field. • The Institute offers good potential for PhD students and doctoral study.
Societal importance of research	Good	<p>R&D at the Institute has a number of important national functions. These include the compiling of dictionaries of the Estonian language, linguistic advice for the public, coordination of terminology work across Estonia, service for people with special language needs, including speech technology and sign language, an e-service for language learning including language learner dictionaries, and custodians of collections of archival collections that by default have both a social role and societal impact.</p> <p>It is important to distinguish between the duties, role and responsibilities the Institute has as a national centre in the development of the national language and its strategic research imperatives. In determining its strategic direction the Institute should take account of societal developments that are part of a wider intellectual dialogue concerning the development of the national language.</p>

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		<p>Public benefit is evidenced by the 7.8 million user queries and by the increase in public awareness and satisfaction in the quality of public services. Bilingual dictionaries and speech/text synthesis technologies that provide open access materials for audio book generation also have the potential for considerable societal impact.</p> <p>The evaluators recognised the significant public service provided, but equally the constraints of the current balance of baseline and project funding. Equally they recognised the capacity limitations to undertake new projects, and to generate new research and innovations that have to some degree been limited by the balance of national duties.</p> <p>The evaluators noted the Institute’s understandable concerns about potential mergers with a university system. In order to deal with this concern effectively, the evaluators advise the Institute to act more pro-actively, in particular by entering into an innovative dialogue concerning potential creative or more entrepreneurial collaborations and innovations, either in partnership with other University language clusters, or with Research & Development Centres (for example, Estonian Literary Centre, the Under and Tuglas Literature Centre and the Estonian Academy of Arts). Such partnerships could serve to expand audiences, users and beneficiaries as well as the global and societal reach and significance of the Institute’s core research.</p>
<p>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</p>		<p>N/A</p>

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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.)		

Summary assessment

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<p>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.)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-prepared and comprehensive self-evaluation document which clearly articulates the Institute's approach to forward planning. • The range and quality of electronic resources and databases was particularly impressive. • The involvement in digital humanities is particularly noteworthy.
<p>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.)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more robust framework for the intellectual and professional development of early career researchers would be beneficial for sustaining the research base. • The Institute could develop a more ambitious strategy for international dissemination.
<p>Assessment proposal to the Minister of Education and Research</p>	<p>To grant positive evaluation</p>	<p>no special comments</p>

Feedback

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<p>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).)</p>	<p>The Institute requested feedback on activities that might give them better prospects regarding international visibility.</p> <p>Given the strong focus on Estonian language, the international visibility of the Institute will inevitably remain limited. Yet, by undertaking research in a number of meta-questions – for example, the theory of composing various kinds of dictionaries, opportunities of language technology, language standardization in a pluralistic society – the Institute can become an attractive international partner.</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>Self-Evaluation: The self-evaluation report should be redesigned in order to prioritise analysis over description. The employment of descriptors such as ‘add facts’ is counterproductive and tends to lead to an emphasis on product over process throughout. The inclusion of a final section on strategic forward planning would be a more coherent summation of the self-evaluation exercise, while also providing continuity from one evaluation exercise to another.</p> <p>Evaluation of Scientific Impact: The panel has encountered wide-spread problems concerning the evaluation of publications in the humanities. The academic community of arts and humanities clearly lacks confidence in the criteria for scientific impact as presently formulated. What is needed for a more equitable and effective evaluation is: (i) Appropriate credit should be given for research undertaken in the production of monographs, the editing of and contributions to multi-authored work. (ii) The evaluation system should take account of the scientific quality of a publication irrespective of the language in which it is written. A multi-lingual system of evaluation is a matter of balancing three variables: (1) the scope (2) the subject and (3) audience. (iii) The current system fails to capture the range of research and the various modes in which it is produced. This is particularly evident in the absence of criteria for non-text based research [‘artistic’, ‘practice-based’]. A bench-marking exercise against other European models would be useful.</p> <p>Societal Impact: The academic community requires a more lucid definition of what is understood by societal impact; this should be substantiated by exemplars drawn from a much broader range of domains than the</p>

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	<p>impact of research on the economy. It is clear that enterprise and entrepreneurial approaches do not appear to be at the forefront of most institutions visited. There is also a need to outline the relationship between scientific and societal impact for research in these fields such that the criteria may provide an appropriate and effective framework for quality assessment of the research.</p> <p>Doctoral Programmes: While the research base for doctoral programmes is generally satisfactory, there are widespread issues around completion rates that are linked to extremely low funding levels. The current provision in Estonian is out of line with other European countries. Many students are by necessity in full-time employment, and carrying out their doctoral research part-time.</p> <p>Academic leadership: There is a lack of strategic leadership in (almost) all institutions. In many cases, the dean of the faculty or the director of a non-university research institute have a clear vision about the future of their unit, but are not successful in conveying it to the heads of department and the (senior) researchers. Therefore appropriate professional training and development in strategic management for researchers at various stages of their career is necessary.</p>