

**RESEARCH REVIEW**

**GRONINGEN RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF  
CULTURE**

**2010-2015**

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# REPORT ON THE RESEARCH REVIEW OF THE GRONINGEN RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURE

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## **1. FOREWORD COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Across Europe university researchers and teachers, particularly those in the humanities, have been working in a rapidly changing environment. Funding has become relatively constricted. Expectations of extensive societal engagement have become more formal and explicit than hitherto; these are combined with ever greater expectations that scholars will publish research that commands an international, even a global, readership. More than ever, scholars are invited to connect their individual or collective research with wider institutional and national priorities and themes. All of this frequently incorporates at the very least a reordering of scholarly strategies, but also (in some cases) profound changes in scholarly cultures.

In common with their counterparts across the Netherlands, and indeed much of the rest of Europe, colleagues at the Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG) have been adapting to these changing institutional and societal expectations. It has been part of the task of the Review Committee to consider the extent to which these adaptations have been successful. In pursuing this end, the Committee has reviewed a very large array of printed and published evidence, and visited Groningen in December 2016, when we spoke at length with many staff and students affiliated with ICOG. Our clear impression, formed on the basis of this combination of extensive reading and discussion, was of a well-led and vibrant research community, which was responding well to changing research environments. At their best, ICOG academics have been producing work of clear international significance, and have taken seriously the need to communicate their expertise to a range of local and national audiences.

Reviews of this kind necessarily involve much preparation, close attention to complex materials, and highly intensive discussions. I should like to thank my colleagues - Jo Bardoel (Radboud University), André Gerrits (Leiden University), Marielle Hendriks (Boekman Foundation), Rosamond McKitterick (University of Cambridge) – for their great dedication and professionalism in pursuing the work of the Review Committee. Our work depended very greatly upon the expertise, wisdom and guidance of Floor Meijer, representing Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QANU). We were also ably supported by Erwin van Rijswoud (QANU) and by Maarten Schunselaar (Faculty of Arts, Groningen).

Alvin Jackson

Sir Richard Lodge Professor of History, University of Edinburgh, and Chair Research Review Committee, Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture

March 2017



## 2. THE REVIEW COMMITTEE AND THE PROCEDURES

### SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The review committee was asked to perform a review of research at the Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG) at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen. While ICOG has been singled out as the research unit under review, the committee was asked also to consider the quality of the five underlying Research Centres in its assessment. To this end, each Centre provided a selection of key publications and a narrative for the self-evaluation report.

The review of ICOG is part of a wider review that encompasses all research activities of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen. Four separate committees have been appointed to assess the Groningen Institute of Archaeology (GIA), the Centre for Language and Cognition (CLCG), the Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG) and the Netherlands Research School for Medieval Studies (NRSMS) that is administered by the Faculty of Arts. Because of the thematic overlap between ICOG and NRSMS, the chair of the NRSMS review, Prof. Rosamond McKitterick, also joined the assessment committee for ICOG.

In accordance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2015-2021 (SEP) for research reviews in the Netherlands, the committee's tasks were to assess the quality, the relevance to society and the viability of the scientific research at the research unit as well as the strategic targets and the extent to which the unit is equipped to achieve these targets. Furthermore, a qualitative review of the PhD training programme, research integrity policy and diversity is part of the committee's assignment. The Board of the University of Groningen asked the committee in the Terms of Reference (ToR) to pay special attention to the chosen research focus, which seeks a balance between the following aims:

- a) to foster high quality theory-based research on culture, and by creating a nurturing and stimulating research environment;
- b) to strengthen the societal impact of that academic research and increase its visibility.

### COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The composition of the committee was as follows:

- Prof. A. (Alvin) Jackson (chair), Sir Richard Lodge Professor of History at the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom;
- Prof. J.L.H. (Johannes) Bardoel, Professor Emeritus of Journalism and Media at Radboud University Nijmegen and Honorary Research Fellow of the Amsterdam School of Communications Research (ASCoR) at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands;
- Prof. A.W.M. (André) Gerrits, Professor of International Studies and Global Politics at Leiden University, the Netherlands;
- Drs. M. (Marielle) Hendriks, Director of the Boekman Foundation, the Netherlands;
- Prof. R.D. (Rosamond) McKitterick, Professor Emerita of Medieval History at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom;

The Curricula Vitae of the committee members are included in Appendix 2. The committee was supported by Dr Floor Meijer, who acted as secretary on behalf of QANU.

## INDEPENDENCE

All members of the committee signed a statement of independence affirming that they would assess the quality of ICOG in an unbiased and independent way. Any existing personal or professional relationships between committee members and the research unit under review were reported and discussed in the first committee meeting. The committee concluded that there were no unacceptable relations or dependencies and that there was no specific risk in terms of bias or undue influence.

## DATA PROVIDED TO THE COMMITTEE

The committee has received the self-evaluation report of the unit under review, including the information required by the SEP. The committee also received the following documents:

- Terms of reference SEP assessment Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG);
- Self-evaluation report of the Graduate School of Humanities (GSH) 2010-2015;
- SEP assessment report ICOG 2004-2009;
- Midterm report ICOG 2010-2012;
- Assessment report NRSMS 2016;
- SEP 2015-2021;
- Key publications for ICOG as a whole (10) and for the five underlying research centres (5 per centre).

Prior to and during the site visit the committee requested and received additional information on staff-student ratios for the five research centres (2014-2015) and PhD graduations (2016-2018). The committee also requested and received detailed and aggregated lists of publications for the five centres of ICOG for the second half of the review period (2013-2015).

## PROCEDURES FOLLOWED BY THE COMMITTEE

The committee proceeded according to the SEP. Before the site visit, all committee members independently formulated a preliminary assessment of the unit under review based on the written information that was provided. Each committee member was primarily responsible for one of ICOG's five underlying research centres. In their preliminary assessments, the committee members paid specific attention to the quality, relevance and viability of the centre allotted to them.

The final review is based not only on documentation provided by the research unit, but also includes information gathered during the interviews with management and representatives of the research unit and the five underlying research centres. The interviews took place on 13 and 14 December 2016 (see the schedule in Appendix 3) in Groningen.

Preceding the interviews, the committee was briefed by QANU about research reviews as defined by SEP. The committee also discussed the preliminary assessments, identified a number of key questions and agreed upon procedural matters and other aspects of the review. After the interviews, the committee discussed its findings and comments in order to allow the chair to present the preliminary findings.

After the site visit, chair and secretary drafted a first version of the review report, which was then discussed and revised by all committee members. The draft report was then presented to the research unit for factual corrections and comments. In close consultation with the chair and other committee members, these comments were used in drafting the final report. The final report was presented to the Board of the University and to the management of the research unit.



The committee used the criteria and categories of the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2015-2021 (SEP). For more information see Appendix 1.



## 3. RESEARCH REVIEW ICOG

### 3.1 Organisation, Strategy and Targets

The Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (*Instituut voor Cultuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek Groningen*, ICOG) is the largest and most diverse of the three research institutes at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen. Over the period of the review its research staff has grown from 65.7 FTE in 2010 to 104 FTE in 2015, mostly as a result of increasing numbers of assistant professors and PhD students. The number of full professors decreased from 37 in 2010 to 31 in 2015.

ICOG's research stretches across a wide range of disciplines, focusing on Europe, the Americas, the Middle East, and, as of 2015, China and South-East Asia. Until January 2013, ICOG was subdivided into three multidisciplinary research groups: (1) Politics, Media and Nation building, (2) Cultures and Identity and (3) Society and the Arts.

These three groups were generally perceived by the people involved as too large and diverse to foster a sense of belonging amongst staff members. As a result of a recommendation by the 2010 peer review committee they were replaced by four, later five, research centres with more thematic coherence:

- Centre for Historical Studies (CHS, 28.5 FTE);
- Centre for Research on Arts in Society (AiS, 17.9 FTE);
- Centre for International Relations Research (CIRR, 9.9 FTE);
- Centre for Media and Journalism Studies (CMJS, 5.3 FTE);
- Centre for Research on the Americas (CRA, created in 2015, 2.8 FTE).

These five recently established research centres coincide largely with the teaching structure of BA and MA programmes, thereby increasing the connection between teaching and research. Furthermore, they are reported to provide 'structure, stimulus and accountability', as well as promoting disciplinary and interdisciplinary cooperation, for example by hosting 'theme groups' that operate across different centres, institutes or even faculties.

ICOG emphasizes that its research adheres to the three University-wide research priorities of 'Energy', 'Healthy Ageing' and – especially – 'Sustainable Society' that were created to bridge the gap between academia and society. As well as highlighting the societal relevance of ICOG's research, projects in the realm of these research priorities bring in extra funding from the central university level.

The governance structure of ICOG comprises a Director (0.2 FTE), who is appointed by the Faculty Board, a Deputy Director (0.05 FTE, as of 2014) and an Advisory Council. After the creation of the centres in early 2013, five Centre Coordinators (0.03 FTE each) were appointed on the basis of research reputation and leadership capacities. Together with the Director and Deputy Director they form ICOG's executive board, which meets every six weeks to discuss and decide upon research related matters. Centre coordinators implement ICOG policy and targets and are responsible for making sure research activities get organised and registered and funding initiatives are taken.

Overall responsibility for all research efforts within the Faculty of Arts lies with the Faculty Board, in which the Dean has been assigned the research portfolio. The faculty has a number of consultation bodies, including the Director's Platform, made up of the Directors of the three research institutes and the Dean, and the Faculty Advisory Committee for Research (AOO). The Graduate School for the Humanities (GSH) is responsible for implementing faculty policies aiming at the improvement of

the quality of supervision and the success of PhD research. Its Director is appointed by the Faculty Board. The faculty also hosts 20 Centres of Expertise, which formalise interdisciplinary cooperation across the Humanities (but also with other faculties, mainly of Social Sciences) and function as a platform for initiating projects with societal stakeholders.

ICOG's threefold research mission is (1) to provide (and help protect) the conditions for high-quality theoretical, interpretative and reflective research, (2) to offer a stimulating environment for its staff and students and (3) to foster knowledge transfer and research in cooperation with public institutions, societal partners and the general public and thus to contribute to a sustainable society. This research mission has yielded a number of strategies, aimed at creating more focus in ICOG's broad range of research topics, improving the research quality and visibility, acquiring more external research funding, increasing the societal impact of research, improving PhD numbers and completion rates and building a more effective organisational structure. The paragraphs on the SEP categories of 'quality', 'relevance' and 'viability' will deal with these strategies in more detail.

### **3.2 Research quality**

#### *General*

The committee reflected at length on the organisational structures associated with research in ICOG and the Faculty of Arts at Groningen, and concluded that – though complex – they appeared to work well. This view was confirmed through interviews with the Dean, the leadership of ICOG, as well as of its Advisory Board. Each of the five coordinators of the research centres was clear that ICOG successfully fulfilled its stated objectives in providing the conditions for high quality research, developing a stimulating environment for staff and students, and facilitating knowledge transfer and communication with a range of partners beyond the university. The committee considered ICOG's relationship with the three stated university research themes, and concluded that it was contributing well to 'Sustainable Society' and had the further capacity to contribute (through the future development of the medical humanities) to 'Healthy Ageing' and (through historical and political perspectives on landscape and climate change) to 'Energy'.

The committee was impressed by the evidence of responsive and dynamic leadership provided by ICOG's director, assisted by her deputy. They noted that the role of deputy director had been created in the light of the mid-term review of ICOG. The committee considered the small FTE allocations for each of these roles – 0.2 and 0.05 respectively – and felt that these did not adequately reflect the extent and complexity of the work involved. They also noted that, while the administrative support (now standing at 0.9 FTE) had increased since previous reviews, including the mid-term review, this did not seem excessive given the size, diversity and ambition of ICOG. ICOG colleagues agreed that these FTE allocations were markedly limited, but made no claims for increased allowance on their own behalf.

#### *Output*

With respect to ICOG's scientific quality, the previous committee concluded that an increase in the level of ambition was desirable, in particular for those disciplines with a predominantly international orientation. As a result, an important objective for ICOG's research strategy for the 2010-2015 period was to improve further the quality of its output. By increasing the number of peer-reviewed and international publications ICOG aimed to raise its international visibility. On the basis of the detailed evidence supplied in the self-evaluation report, the number of academic articles has increased compared to the 2004-10 period, and – more importantly – most articles are now peer-reviewed, with 70% of the publications appearing in international outlets.

The committee accepted the arguments by ICOG and the university in the self-evaluation report concerning the absence of comparative citation index data, given the still controversial nature of such data within the Humanities. Members of the committee examined a range of publications from ICOG and its component centres, and also scrutinised detailed listings of publications covering the review period. On this range of evidence, the committee was happy to commend the clearly serious and mostly successful effort which has been made to raise the overall quality of ICOG publications.

The Faculty's current publication requirement prescribes that staff members publish at least four academic articles in three years. A recent development is that 'extraordinary output' (e.g. outreach efforts) can compensate for academic publications. During annual appraisals research output is discussed, but staff assessment is not purely based on numerical measurement. Even so, there have been cases in which temporary contracts were not renewed because of insufficient research output.

In total, ICOG's research staff produced 523 peer-reviewed articles, which equates to an annual average of 2.7 per scientific FTE (excluding PhD students and postdocs). Staff also continued to publish books (an annual average of 0.4 per scientific FTE) and book chapters (an annual average of 4.4 per scientific FTE), which remain important in most of ICOG's disciplines. Research productivity has fallen somewhat in 2013 and 2014, but 2015 witnessed a recovery of the annual publication averages.

The committee accepts that, with both reorganisation as well as the intensified emphasis upon improved quality, there is likely to be some variation in the overall quantity of publication. However, the committee is also aware that there are isolated areas within the ICOG community which have been less productive than others. It notes that there are ongoing conversations within both ICOG and the Faculty about distinguishing more and less productive researchers in terms of the existing uniform 40 per cent time allocation. The committee did not consider it appropriate to take a view on this.

#### *Academic reputation*

Various academic staff members have received awards and prizes for their research achievements and/or were awarded competitive ERC or NWO grants. ICOG researchers were also invited to deliver keynote lectures and serve on international PhD committees. Some staff members are part of advisory boards and editorial boards of prestigious journals. A comprehensive list of indicators of academic esteem is, however, not available as these activities are not systematically registered in the PURE system. The ICOG and Faculty administration might look to improving the systematic collection and analysis of this 'indicators of esteem' data.

#### *Research focus*

An objective of ICOG's research strategy for the 2010-2015 period was to create 'focus in diversity'. The University-wide research priority of 'Sustainable Society' has inspired a shared focus on Cultural factors in the making of sustainable societies, to which the five research centres have committed themselves. Over the review period, this research focus has been articulated in theme groups, research projects, winter and summer schools.

As part of its research strategy for the coming period, ICOG will continue to encourage staff members to engage in interdisciplinary research on sustainable societies as well as on the other two university-wide research priorities. This will entail further cooperation with external stakeholders, other Faculties and specialised

institutes at the University of Groningen (Institute for Sustainable Society, Groningen Energy and Sustainability Programme).

The committee in general endorsed the research goals and focuses of ICOG. It discussed with the ICOG director the definition of 'theory-based research' (highlighted in the Institute's aims). From this dialogue it understood that the director was seeking to encourage evidence-based research which took due account of modern theoretical positions in advancing original ideas and hypotheses. The committee was keen to endorse this wider definition of ICOG's aims. In addition, while it believed that much good work was being undertaken in the context of the university's overarching research themes, the committee wished to underline the importance of protecting time and space for independent 'blue skies' research.

#### *Grant capture*

Income from competitive funding sources (NWO, ERC, EU) could be seen as an indicator for the scientific quality of the research. Improving grant capture success is an explicit objective of ICOG. Part of its HR strategy is to actively scout talented researchers with the capacity to acquire external funding.

Like other Humanities research institutes, ICOG relies heavily on direct university funding (covering 83% of its academic staff costs in 2015) and research grants account for a modest portion of the annual budget (13% in 2015). In absolute terms, however, external funding has increased since the previous review period. In 2010-2015, a total of € M15 was acquired, of which roughly two-thirds from funding agencies (mainly NWO) and one-third from contracts with public or private parties. There is some unevenness in the distribution of grant capture across research centres, with the Centre for Historical Studies, which represents 44% of ICOG's FTEs, bringing in 57.6% of the grant funding.

Specific targets for the upcoming period are to secure more grants from NWO, Horizon 2020, ERC and Topsector Creative Industry programmes. Success in these applications would serve to level out the remaining differences in funding success across the centres, to increase the number of funded projects focused on the three University-wide research priorities, and to acquire a higher number of small grants, which are seen as helpful stepping stones towards more substantial applications.

#### *The centres and research quality*

##### Centre for Historical Studies (CHS)

CHS comprises a large group of scholars who span a notably long chronological period, from Ancient Greece to the modern era, with a particular concentration on the history and culture of Europe. Such study is necessarily multi- and interdisciplinary, embracing social, economic and cultural history, the history of science and medicine, literary studies, visual culture and archaeology, and the philosophy of history. Three 'theme groups' and a related series of Research Seminars facilitate research and conceptual connections within the centre: 'Sustainable societies: past and present' coincides with, and reinforces, one of the University of Groningen's strategic research priorities; 'Regions, networks and mobility', relates the centre's work on western societies to that on eastern Europe, South Africa and southeast Asia; 'Thinking about History and historical culture' provides a forum for reflection on common methods, approaches and interpretations. These 'Themes' are a demonstration of the energy and commitment within the centre, both from its Director but also from the leaders of its many funded research groups. Themes and Seminars alike help to create a sense of common cause and belonging within the CHS. Within the wide range of expertise represented in CHS nevertheless there is concentrated activity and pockets of excellence in the study of antiquity and late antiquity/the early middle ages on the one hand, and on the later middle ages and early modern Europe on the other, with

such common interests as urban history and identity, literacy, and the culture of reading and the history of science. There is a promising and growing strength in the history of medicine. There is some risk that the CHS may be spreading itself too thin (though this may be in response to the demands of the teaching programme) and there would be some advantage in building up the areas of existing strength still further. The publications are for the most part very well placed in terms of leading journals and international academic publishers. There are areas of less productivity which will need attention in the future. The CHS has been immensely successful in winning grants from NWO, the EU, the Rosalind Franklin Fonds and other funding bodies as well as International Fellowships.

#### Centre for Research on Arts in Society (AiS)

The research centre 'Arts in Society' brings together a wide array of Arts and Humanities disciplines as well as a broad spectrum of methodologies and approaches. One expression of this ambition is the seven theme groups which the centre has hosted since 2013. Members of the committee were impressed by the diversity of the centre, but also initially queried its complexity and practicability. However, a combination of substantiated argument from the centre leadership with the evidence of clear achievement in a range of areas persuaded the committee of the strength and vitality of the centre. The committee was impressed by the evidence of the representative publications which were presented, and which included monographs from leading university presses – and indeed two works which had won a significant disciplinary prize. There was evidence here, as elsewhere in ICOG, that earlier encouragement to publish in high quality and international locations was being taken seriously. The number of refereed articles had risen from 26 in 2010 to 32 in 2015 (162 for the period 2010-15), while non-refereed articles and other publications were in decline. A total of 32 books had been produced in the period 2010-15, many with international publishing houses. Other evidence confirmed this picture of research quality and vitality. AiS colleagues had been successful in winning significant levels of grant monies, totaling nearly €3.33M during the review period. Approximately one third of this total came from prestigious NWO funding (nearly €1M), while much of the remainder came from third stream sources. There are some challenges. Much of the grant capture, for example, was achieved by a relatively small group of staff. The self-review document also conceded that 'up to 2015 a number of staff members of this centre had not yet been integrated'. However, the committee was persuaded that the centre's goal to connect 'cutting-edge' research scholarship with applied research was being achieved. Moreover, it is clear that a wide range of the research within AiS addresses in important ways the University of Groningen's strategic emphasis on 'sustainable societies'.

#### Centre for International Relations Research (CIRR)

CIRR seems particularly prominent in the theory of International Relations and in critical Security Studies. It has made ten new appointments in the past eight years, and is working hard to consolidate the centre as a coherent group. It has an impressive range both chronologically and geographically, from collaboration on a project on Ancient Greek cities and sixteenth-century Europe to modern global politics and economic development. It has special links with South-East Asia. There is a productive overlap with the interests of the Centre for Historical Studies in particular, but also with colleagues in the other centres of ICOG. Publications, as far as the committee could judge from the submitted key publications and the full publication lists for 2013, 2014 and 2015, are quantitatively and qualitatively competitive, although rather unevenly distributed among the faculty. Grant acquisition is relatively limited and declined during the review period. The CIRR leadership is aware of this, and is focusing on improving its record, not least in seeking ERC funding. It expects more grant applications and hopes for greater success despite an ever more competitive environment in the near future.

### Centre for Media and Journalism Studies (CMJS)

Despite its short tradition and small size, CMJS is an excellent research unit that combines a strong national presence with a high international visibility. The staff is young, international, interdisciplinary, diverse in gender and background, and works on cutting edge research in the field of journalism and media studies. There is a clear focus on the current challenges for professional journalism and media. CMJS is very successful in acquiring external funding at a national level (especially NWO) and is working seriously on grant acquisition at an international level. The number of publications has dropped slightly over the last five years, but is higher than average in the faculty, without having any weak pockets. The quality and impact of publications have risen considerably: the number of refereed articles has doubled, and the number of book chapters has tripled, mainly at the expense of popularising publications. These publications have appeared in the best journals and within the most prominent publishers within the discipline. PhD completion rates are well above average for the faculty, due to intensive co-supervision, favouring articles over monographs and a clear evaluation procedure. A large number of PhDs, all but one financed by external research funding, are full members of the staff. The overall quality and relevance of dissertations is very high. CMJS has excellent leadership by a prominent young professor and there is a deliberate staff hiring policy in place, favouring future promise over past performance. The centre is related to a successful MA programme in journalism, in which academic researchers and journalistic professionals work together. A new international BA programme has been launched recently, and with the expansion of these programmes also the (research) staff grows steadily.

### Centre for Research on the Americas (RCA)

The publication record of RCA staff is quantitatively and qualitatively competitive. Grant capture is limited, even for the RCA's small-scale staff, but improvements are foreseen. Multiple staff members are working on grant applications, partly also on the basis of teaching time reallocation. RCA does 'inter-American studies'. It covers the whole of the Americas. Inevitably, given its very recent (2015) establishment, RCA has no clear research profile yet. In their self-study the RCA mentions as many research themes as there are staff members. During the conversation, cultural theory, participatory democracy and interdisciplinarity were highlighted as distinguishing features of the centre's research.

### *Overview of Quality*

The committee accepted that, while there was some variation between different centres, ICOG was successful in improving its research quality since the last review in 2010. The effort to improve the quality and visibility of publications was reflected in an increasing number of books and articles with prestigious international presses and journals. In some centres (for example CMJS) it was clear that there was a conscious strategy to redirect effort from large numbers of relatively low quality publication towards somewhat smaller numbers of high quality, research-intensive publication. Grant income across much of ICOG was excellent, though the committee identified some areas of weakness, and recognised that grant capture was likely to become ever more competitive. In sum, the committee accepted that ICOG was currently successful in fostering high quality, international research.

## **3.3 Relevance to society**

### *Societal relevance policies*

An explicit part of ICOG's mission is to foster knowledge transfer and research in cooperation with public institutions, societal partners and the general public and thus to contribute to a sustainable society. The self-evaluation report describes ICOG's 'valorisation' strategy as encouraging outreach activities, which include applied and contract research, and helping to make these more visible. A new development is that



valorisation efforts (such as monographs for non-academic professionals, projects carried out in collaboration with external parties) are now recognised as an essential part of the output of research staff, which means that they are also discussed during annual appraisals.

The midterm committee of 2013 concluded that joining in with the university-wide research priority of 'Sustainable Society', which was created to bridge the gap between academia and society, could help to promote the visibility of the institute outside academia. While the current committee had some initial doubts about this, the evidence that was presented, particularly by some of ICOG's centres (e.g. AiS), suggested that this gap was being narrowed.

The self-evaluation report describes ICOG's objective for the coming period as to increase further cooperation with third parties in new projects, especially on 'Sustainable Society', to offer educational courses tailored to third parties or broad audiences, and to secure NWO-grants for teachers who wish to complete a PhD, thereby contributing to the standard of knowledge within secondary education.

#### *Support structure*

In 2014, a valorisation officer was appointed at the Faculty level to support staff in their efforts to share insights and results from their research with targeted or broader audiences or draw these into their research. The Faculty's Centres of Expertise, 20 in total, some of which are interfaculty centres, play a special role in facilitating cooperation with private and public organisations. Over the review period, ICOG researchers have participated in 16 of these Centres of Expertise.

#### *Publications and other activity*

Over the review period, ICOG has produced 401 publications for professional audiences (an annual average of 2.1 per scientific FTE), which include books, reports and articles for secondary school teachers, politicians and policy makers. Furthermore, there were 232 publications aimed at the general public (an annual average of 1.2 per scientific FTE), such as articles in national and international newspapers and magazines. Other outreach activities included exhibitions, lecture series, media appearances and trainings for targeted audiences. Finally, ICOG members were involved in advisory committees, juries etc. on the regional, national and international levels.

#### *Contract funding*

Funding acquired from third parties, either public or private, can be seen as an indicator for societal relevance. Over the review period, the amount of contract funding secured by ICOG has been increasing, from a modest sum of € 55.666 in 2010 to € 683.836 in 2015. In total, ICOG captured almost M€ 2.5 in contract funding over the review period. These contracts included a grant from the Topsector Creative Industries programme, five NWO Alfa meerwaarde projects and two NWO Kiem projects. Over the review period, 39 PhD students were (co)funded by societal partners.

#### *The Centres and societal relevance*

##### Centre for Historical Studies (CHS).

CHS has made admirable and effective efforts to enhance the societal impact of its work, not least in public lectures and exhibitions, with notable collaborations with the academic members of CHS and community organisations beyond the university, as well as in publications in a variety of media specifically designed to reach a wider public. The contributions made by many members of the group to the study of the history and culture of the Netherlands, and also of local and regional history and societies in the late middle ages and early modern period as well as the later

twentieth and twenty-first centuries are of obvious importance in extending the knowledge gained from research to a wider public. It was particularly pleasing to see how many of the ReMA and PhD students have been involved in the outreach activities and that some of the work of CHS has attracted wide media interest as well. It makes sense in a part of the country so rich in historical resources that there should also be such a strong strand of local and regional history in Groningen.

#### Centre for Research on Arts in Society (AiS)

Societal relevance is a major area of achievement for this research centre. Members of the centre have been distinguished, not only by high quality research publications aimed for a scholarly readership, but also sustained levels of publishing aimed at the general public (53 outputs in the review period). AiS centre members have also been very successful in attracting significant levels of third stream research income – totalling nearly €2.1M in the review period). The review committee also considered an array of narrative evidence relating to the issue of 'societal relevance'. The origins of the research centre were as a 'centre of expertise', and this has meant that AiS has a deeply embedded culture of outward engagement. It currently hosts the Centre for Landscape Studies, one of the largest and most successful centres of expertise in ICOG. This interdisciplinary body does contract research on (for example) colonisation, reclamation and water management, as well as 'landscape biographies' and historical ecology. Its success is partly defined by its major contribution to the research centre's external grant totals. AiS also hosted the nationally-funded research project, 'culture in the mirror: towards a continuous curriculum for cultural education' (2010-14). This was the first large-scale study of the cultural education curriculum in the Netherlands, and posited a range of ambitious and important societal goals. The project has connected the research of AiS and ICOG with the schools sector and other external partners in sustained and exciting ways. The importance of 'societal relevance' for ICOG and (equally) the importance of AiS for ICOG and the wider faculty in terms of societal engagement are clear.

#### Centre for International Relations Research (CIRR).

International relations offers multiple opportunities for societally relevant activities. Although the link with 'Sustainable Society', one of the university's three research priorities, is emphasised in the self-evaluation report, output in terms of projects or publications has remained limited. Generally, the most prolific researchers among the CIRR staff seem to be more focused on academic ('blue sky thinking') research 'theoretically and intellectually driven', than on societally relevant projects and publications. 'Humanitarian Studies' is an evident exception, although many of its policy-driven activities take place within the Centre of Expertise Globalisation Studies Groningen.

#### Centre for Media and Journalism Studies (CMJS).

Due to its strong research profile and high visibility CMJS has greatly improved its societal impact, with a clear research focus on the relevant challenges to the media sector and the journalism profession. Societal engagement is both very strong, and also thorough based on research evidence. Societal relevance has developed as an integral part of planning new research projects, and also involves media companies, start-ups, cultural heritage institutions and governments. The combination of a strong research culture with an open eye for society has resulted in very successful grant capturing at a national level and interesting collaborative work with the sector in the Centre of Expertise on entrepreneurial journalism.

#### Centre for Research on the Americas (RCA).

RCA has some problems with societally-relevant activities. One of the major reasons is the mostly non-Dutch composition of the staff, which makes media performances in the Netherlands difficult. The members of RCA that the committee spoke with during the site visit recognise the issue, and have already been working on a more

structured and future-oriented outreach strategy. Contacts have been established with the valorisation officer to intensify societally-relevant activities. The centre is highly successful in attracting students, which contributes to the university's internationalisation strategy.

#### *Overview of societal relevance*

The committee was impressed by the ways in which ICOG engaged with a wide range of societal partners. It was clear that the issue of 'societal relevance' was generally well embedded in ICOG's strategic thinking, and that it was working closely with the faculty and wider university on this issue (for example, through the faculty's valorisation officer and through numerous Centres of Expertise). It was also clear that ICOG took seriously the challenge of producing publications and other forms of research output which addressed audiences beyond the academic community. The committee was impressed by the evidence embodied within the four narratives documenting societal relevance, and presented in the ICOG self-evaluation document: these were 'culture in the mirror: towards a continuous curriculum for cultural education' (the first major study of the cultural education curriculum in the Netherlands), 'governance and sustainable society in Indonesia' (the SInGA programme of doctoral training in the areas of bureaucratic reform, good governance, regional development), 'entrepreneurial journalism' (on the wider resonance of shifts within journalism towards the independent sale and distribution of news items) and 'my region: the history of landscape for locals' (bringing the cultural history of landscape to the public through YouTube and other websites).

### **3.4 Viability**

#### *Funding*

The self-evaluation report describes grant capture as essential for realising ICOG's research objectives. Securing more external funding is an important part of the institute's strategy for the future, but at the same time the institute signals a number of external threats that may jeopardise these efforts, such as the restriction of national funding for the Humanities by transfer of money to so-called 'TopSector' research, and the upcoming (2017) merger of Humanities and Social Sciences in NWO.

The support structure at the Faculty level includes a funding officer, who informs researchers about external funding for research projects and encourages and facilitates them in securing such funding. A faculty budget of K €110 is available to encourage successful research applications. At the level of the central university trainings are offered for those who are in the process of applying.

#### *HR policies*

An important feature of the Faculty's HR policy is to appoint a high percentage of staff in permanent positions. Career perspectives, however, are described in the self-evaluation report as 'limited'. The Faculty offers a Tenure Track system (for promotion of assistant professors to full professor in four steps), and a new associate professor policy was introduced in 2015, but the number of available positions remains very small. Appointments are primarily based on the needs of the teaching programmes.

Standard practice is that staff appointments at the level of assistant professor or higher up include 40% research time and 60% teaching time. During the review period, research time has been under pressure, partly as a consequence of the 2012-2014 reorganisation, in which the number of staff FTE was reduced and the teaching burden of remaining staff increased. Also, it was mentioned during the site visit that administrative duties, which are formally part of the 60% teaching time, put considerable pressure on staff members. At faculty-level, the introduction of flexible

research time is currently being discussed as a means to further research productivity. During the site visit ICOG's management stated that it is in favour of establishing some flexibility in research time allotment, as long as this is done constructively.

#### *PhD completions*

The committee subscribes to the concerns voiced by the 2013 midterm committee on the low number of dissertations and the completion rates of PhD students. In the review period, a total of 76 theses were defended at ICOG, which is slightly lower total than the 2004-2009 total of 78 theses. Increasing the number of PhDs is pinpointed in the self-evaluation report as a vital objective for ICOG. During the site visit the director of the GSH stressed that bonuses for completed PhDs are an essential part of the faculty's first stream funding and that at least thirty completions per year are needed to keep up the faculty's budget. The committee learned that in the coming period, ICOG aims to increase PhD numbers through offering newly constructed bursary positions (cf. below, 'PhD programme') and by grant capture, including from NWO-funded programmes for teacher-PhDs and for PhDs combining academic research with research through the arts.

Virtually none of the internal PhD students managed to complete their projects within the four years of their appointment, and even after five and six years the completion rate is low. ICOG PhD students take on average 6 years and ten months to complete their projects, which is considerably longer than the national average and also longer than the completion rate for the other two research institutes of the Faculty of Arts. The self-evaluation report indicates that 23 of 60 PhD students that started their projects between 2007 and 2010 had not yet completed within 6 to 9 years. The institute is now in the process of mapping individual cases, as it suspects that some projects must have been discontinued. Lead times for external PhD students are even higher and the number of dropouts is considerable. But, according to the self-evaluation report, self-funded PhD students cannot be assessed according to the same standards as internal PhD students, as they often combine their research with another job. During the site visit it was noted that the current completion times are not just a problem for ICOG or the Faculty, but also for the PhD students themselves, who reported that their careers may suffer from failing to complete in time.

The committee notes that the introduction of the 2-year research master's programme has had no noticeable impact on PhD completion rates. However, during the site visit, ICOG's management and representatives of the Graduate School for the Humanities expressed the belief that lead times will reduce now that there is more 'structure' to the thesis process. In the selection stage more attention is paid to feasibility, focus and accountability, also for external projects which were previously frequently discontinued. Once projects have started they are monitored more closely than before (cf. below, 'PhD programme').

The committee notes that ICOG has set targets that specify that in 2020 50% of the PhD's have to complete within 4 years, and 75% within 5 years. The institute also aims for more faculty incentives for well-performing PhD students (intensified mentoring for their professional careers; creation of a number of post-doc positions). In case of underperformance, ICOG would like to have the possibility to end contracts past the go/no-go decision in year 1.

#### *Diversity*

Almost half (45%) of ICOG's staff is female. Women outnumber men in the ranks of PhD students and postdoc researchers (ca. 58% women) and do not lag far behind at the assistant and associate professor-level (ca. 45% women), but at the level of full professor women are underrepresented (23% women, which is just below the university-wide target of 25% women in 2020). The Rosalind Franklin Fellowship

Programme was introduced at university level in 2006 to remedy the underrepresentation of women in higher-ranking positions, by offering excellent female candidates a Tenure Track position leading to full professorship. ICOG currently has an impressive number (4 out of a Faculty total of 6) Rosalind Franklin fellows. The average age of ICOG's staff (excluding PhD students) is 48 and ICOG has a fair proportion of younger staff. During the site visit it was estimated that roughly 30% of the academic staff is non-Dutch. For the PhD students this percentage is higher. According to the self-evaluation report, 56% of the cohort of PhDs that started in 2015 is international.

#### Centre for Historical Studies (CHS)

For viability in the future, the CHS will need to work ever harder to capture grants and funding in an increasingly competitive national and international environment. Nevertheless, it is evident that these opportunities are recognised and being sought, not least in the preparation of applications relating to the Medical Humanities which will also consolidate links with the Medical Faculty of the University of Groningen. The university's 'Research Priorities' of 'Healthy Ageing' and 'Energy' (in addition to 'Sustainable Societies' which has proved so productive for CHS and ICOG as a whole) may afford further opportunities for CHS to collaborate with colleagues across the Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. For all Humanities staff, the University Library is their laboratory, and the University of Groningen is fortunate in that its Special Collections (visited by the review committee) reflect at many levels the university's 400-year old history and contain many resources for the CHS to exploit both for research and societal impact still further. The CHS could be encouraged to foster further collaborative research on themes emerging organically from its members' research, with a view to producing path-breaking edited volumes to showcase Groningen's distinctive expertise. More individual visiting international Fellowships, which allow payment for substitute teaching, might be a further way in which research leave could be won.

#### Centre for Research on Arts in Society (AiS)

The numbers of research staff within AiS have been largely static during the review period, though the number of full professors fell from 10 to seven. In common with ICOG generally, PhD completions remain relatively modest (19 in total for the review period). AiS staff highlighted the issue of high teaching and administrative workloads as posing 'the largest threat to the realisation of research goals'. They also mentioned the difficulty in the past of fully integrating some members of the AiS community. Other issues are worth attention for AiS scholars. For example, the excellent record of grant capture, depends at present largely upon the effort and achievement of a small number of staff. The organisation of research within the centre is markedly complex, with (for example) seven theme groups (not to mention interfaculty networks and centres of expertise). However, AiS has many strengths. Its track-record of societal engagement is superb, with particular achievements in cultural education and landscape studies. Related to this, the track-record of grant capture in these areas is also excellent. AiS staff have clearly made effective efforts to improve the overall quality of their publications. The committee was also impressed by the evident passion and commitment of the current leadership of AiS. In short, while AiS faces some challenges, the review committee saw it as a successful community, whose central feature, the interaction between its scholarly researchers and external partners, has brought benefits to numerous local and national communities, as well as prestige to ICOG and the wider university.

### Centre for International Relations Research (CIRR)

There is no reason to doubt the viability of CIRR. Research within the centre is firmly linked to teaching and largely guided by a well-considered research profile. The staff of CIRR is nationally and generationally mixed, with a core of dedicated and active researchers. Theme groups (research) and the chairing of teaching departments largely correspond, which gives substance to the idea of research-based teaching and adds to the organisational strength and viability of the centre. The Theme groups seem logical and coherent, with History and Theory of International Relations and International Relations and Security Studies as the most prominent ones. These two research theme groups seem to form the core of CIRR's research profile, i.e. theoretical and critical IR and Security Studies. Historical research is another crucial research component, giving credence to the Humanities-based nature of CIRR's research. Staff composition of CIRR is teaching-driven. International Relations & International Organization (IRIO) is a strong programme that attracts a significant number of Dutch and foreign students. It further strengthens the viability of research within CIRR. Limited possibilities for career development, especially from assistant to associate professorship, are considered as problematic. It hampers the build-up of a balanced faculty. Among the mid-career faculty in particular there is a rather large group of people who are not particularly active in research. The CIRR leadership is aware of this problem, and is working on the improvement of its colleagues' research productivity. The new clustering of the Faculty of Arts may have an impact on the teaching organisation of CIRR, but it will most probably not affect the research centre's sustainability.

### Centre for Media and Journalism Studies (CMJS)

CMJS has excellent prospects for the coming years, given its strong research focus and rising academic prestige. It has been highly successful in generating external research funding, and has also started new BA and MA programmes. There is a high and still growing national and international visibility of the centre, and staff members publish widely in the most prestigious international journals and with the most prestigious publishers in the domain of journalism and media studies. Given the young, international, diverse and interdisciplinary composition of the staff (Humanities and Social Sciences) the prospects for further development are excellent and exemplary for the Faculty of Arts. If there will be some convergence of the Humanities and Social Sciences, as forecasted in the self-evaluation report, this centre is already practising this future.

### Centre for Research on the Americas (RCA)

The viability of RCA depends on the quality of the centre's research, which the committee considers as generally very good, and future plans by ICOG and the faculty, which it is unable to foresee. There is a small, but critical mass of America-research within ICOG, which may prosper under a variety of organisational structures. The committee suggests that ICOG maintains the organisational and intellectual visibility of the study of the Americas, although not necessarily as a research centre. The clustering of the faculty will group the RCA's teaching with that of History and other, which may have a negative impact on the group's cohesiveness, but might solve the recent problems concerning critical mass and leadership.

### *Overview of viability*

The committee originally identified a range of challenges influencing the viability of ICOG. These included the relatively small FTE allocation to the leadership roles within ICOG (0.25 in total), as well as the relatively small administrative support available (0.9 FTE). While the number of staff has grown throughout the review period, the number of full professors has declined. There is at present no strategy to develop the post-doctoral community. The levels of recruitment to the doctoral programme, as well as the number of successful completions, remain low. During the site visit the

committee learned of the restructuring of teaching units across the faculty into new disciplinary 'clusters'. Given this late timing, the committee did not form a unified view of the precise impact of clustering; but it did have concerns about the increasing complexity of the governance structures impinging upon ICOG, and of the likely detrimental impact upon research time (and possibly morale) of continuing reorganisation. However, the committee also noted that, when asked, ICOG members said that they were at present relatively unperturbed by the new clustering arrangements.

The committee learned of different initiatives to recruit doctoral students, and to improve completion rates, and saw some preliminary evidence of success in these areas. Staff numbers appear to be robust (even allowing for relatively difficult economic environments): while the number of full professors has fallen, it was also clear that the faculty and university were investing in other – permanent – academic appointments (as distinct from temporary or informal contracts). The current configuration of ICOG appears to work very well, with good relations between the centres and the institute and between the institute and the faculty. As discussed above, research quality is improving, and there are strong records of grant capture and of societal engagement.

Some work remains to be done, however, in terms of post-doctoral opportunities, and in terms of the FTE available to the leaders and administrators of ICOG. But the overall viability of ICOG is assured.

### **3.5 PhD programme**

The Graduate School for the Humanities (GSH) is formally responsible for ICOG's PhD programme. It plays a role in the selection of PhD students, the evaluation of research proposals and training and supervision plans (TSPs), the monitoring of progress, and in facilitating the participation of PhD candidates in local, national and international research education activities. While PhD supervision devolves to the supervisor, the GSH does monitor the supervisory situation and plays a key role in yearly evaluations.

ICOG hosts different types of PhD students. The first category consists of 'internal' PhD students with full employment status. Some of these PhD students are internally funded: in the first half of the review period (2010-2012) the faculty allowed ICOG to appoint five PhD students per year through an open recruitment procedure organised by the Graduate School for the Humanities. Because of financial constraints, this number was reduced to three positions per year in the second half of the review period (2013-2015). Directly funded internal PhD students are often graduates from one of the three Groningen research master's programmes in ICOG's research domains. Another group of employed PhD students is externally funded, usually by NWO project funding. They either work on a project of their own design or are part of a larger research project for which a member of ICOG's research staff received funding.

A separate group of employed PhD students, the *docent-promovendi*, combine teaching (40%) and research (60%) in a five-year contract. These positions have been created between 2010 and 2013 to increase the number of graduations, but have been critically received by the PhD council. During the site visit, *docent-promovendi* that the committee spoke with confirmed that their heavy teaching loads could potentially hamper research progress, which is why teaching-free semesters and teaching subjects close to the PhD research are essential. At the faculty level, it has been decided not to create new positions until the results of the current thirteen *docent-promovendi* are available.

External PhD students form a final category. These students are self-funded, regularly through grants obtained by the PhD-students in their country of origin (so called fixed term external candidates) or are employed elsewhere. Over the review period, 31 external PhD students were admitted at ICOG, as compared to 87 internal PhD students. To enrol at ICOG, external candidates need to first find a supervisor willing to accept them and propose the candidates research proposal and CV to the GSH. The candidate is then (marginally) evaluated by a committee consisting of the director of the GSH and ICOG's Director. This same procedure is applied with external candidates seeking conditional enrolment as part of a grant application process (e.g. for the Chinese Scholarship Council).

The committee was informed that as of 2016, the University of Groningen takes part in a national experiment with bursary students (*Bursalenexperiment*), who are not employed but receive a scholarship of € 1700 per month from the university. For the duration of the experiment ICOG will be able to offer (at least) five bursary positions per year. Internally funded positions for PhD students (previously 3 per year) with full employment status will no longer be offered.

At the start of the appointment of PhD students a tailor-made training and supervision plan (TSP) is drawn up, which contains details on the composition of the supervision team, an outline of the research project, and a list of training activities to be undertaken by the PhD candidate. A budget of €2000 is available for each PhD student's training programme. The time allotted to training is 30 ECTS (840 hours). Various activities count as training, including participation in international events such as conferences and summer schools, discipline specific training programmes offered by national research schools, and courses organised locally by the joint Groningen Graduate Schools (GGs) or the GSH, which cover a range of general subjects and transferable skills. The local training programme is the responsibility of the GSH programme director (0.2 fte during the evaluated period).

Because of the previously disappointing results in terms of lead times, a number of measures have been taken during the review period. Six months after the start, all PhD projects are assessed internally, within the research centre that the student belongs to. If necessary, the TSP can be adjusted. One year into the project, the GSH organises the 'first-year review', which involves the timely submission of a first-year report and an interview of the student by the ICOG director. It leads to a go/no-go decision. The committee was informed that during the review period this had led to the discontinuation of one ICOG PhD project, while some other students were granted a grace period of six months after which they had to demonstrate concrete progress. After the go/no-go decision progress and the supervision situation are monitored annually in appraisal interviews with the line manager and by online surveys sent out by the GSH. The GSH organises exit meetings for those students who are seriously delayed at the end of their PhD-project.

The committee also learned of other initiatives to encourage swifter and better completion rates. These included an increasing emphasis upon early and continuing writing, the development of peer networks, and the consolidation of professional links at national and international levels. It was also made aware of the training in research ethics which is given to ICOG and other faculty research students.

As a general rule at least two supervisors are involved in PhD projects, including at least one full professor ('promoter') with the *ius promovendi*. The PhD students that the committee spoke with indicated that experiences with regard to supervision vary from PhD student to PhD student, which was also the outcome of a recent session organised by the PhD council on 'how to deal with your supervisor'. Some of the students feel that – at least until recently – supervision practices did not fully contribute to a culture of timely completion. They suggested that a set of guidelines



for supervision, highlighting best practices, would be welcome. A problem that was brought up by both students and supervisors is that supervisors do not get time allotted for supervising PhD students. Supervision is part of their already considerable teaching load, which means that supervisors with many PhD students cannot devote as much time to supervision as they, or their PhD students, would like. Rather than receiving a bonus for a *completed* PhD, supervisors would prefer to have time allocated to supervision during the project.

In the case of disputes and/or grievances, PhD students can turn to a confidential adviser assigned to them at the beginning of their project. The interests of PhD students are served by the PhD council, which regularly organises workshops addressing particular issues related to PhD research and also evaluates the quality of courses offered by the GSH.

PhD students typically complete a monograph, although article-based dissertations are allowed.

All of the PhD students that the committee spoke with expressed the intention to pursue an academic career. Some felt that their supervisors could do more to increase their chances on the fiercely competitive academic labour market, for example by introducing them to their own networks, taking them to conferences and teaching them to write a good abstract. On the issue of career perspectives the committee also notes that the faculty has no postdoc policy and there is a lack of university-funded postdoc positions, while NWO Veni-scholarships are increasingly difficult to obtain.

Career orientation, either academic or non-academic, is not part of the local GSH training programme, but the committee was informed that the newly appointed GSH programme director is working on that issue. The PhD students that the committee spoke with indicated that a three day course tailored to PhD students is offered by a career and talent training institute outside of the university. This course costs € 750 and has to be paid by the PhD student itself, although some students appear to have received funding via the HR Department. The committee learned that the PhD council aims to make this course available to more PhDs.

ICOG and the GSH do not appear to extensively monitor the career paths of PhD graduates. From the information provided by the Graduate School the committee learned that for almost a third (32%) of recent ICOG graduates it is unknown whether they pursued an academic or non-academic career.

In the past the numbers of research students, and their rates of completion, had been unsatisfactory, given the size and prestige of ICOG. However, the committee accepted that much was being done to improve this situation, and that a 'change of culture' had been established within the Graduate School and ICOG. Indeed, there was already some evidence to suggest that completion rates were beginning to improve (as of 2016). The committee commended the range of new initiatives which had been put in place to attract potential research students, and to improve their chances of success. The committee was impressed by the broad evidence of satisfaction expressed by the various research students whom it met. However, it also identified a range of issues which might be further considered by ICOG and GSH and which are listed under 'recommendations'.

### **3.6 Research integrity policy**

Like all Dutch universities, the University of Groningen adheres to the code of conduct of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) which provides guidelines on ethical attitude and behaviour for academic staff, and on the proper handling and storage of information and data. On top of the VSNU's code of conduct, the university

has developed its own 'Regulations for the Protection of Academic Integrity', which details the steps that must be taken if academic norms are violated. The self-evaluation report indicates that these regulations are an aspect of the annual performance evaluation of staff. Suspected violations of academic integrity can, either via the Board of the university or via the confidential advisor, be submitted to the UG Academic Integrity Committee.

As of 2015, the Faculty is developing its own policy and instrumentation concerning academic integrity. Together, the three Humanities Faculties (Arts, Philosophy, and Theology and Religious Studies) have established an interfaculty Ethical Review Committee that reviews proposed research projects that include human participants. In its first year, this Ethical Review Committee has reviewed the ethical paragraphs of seven ICOG research proposals. Furthermore, a Research Data Management Committee was created, which works in close cooperation with the Research Data Office at the university level to develop a faculty protocol for storage of, content curation of and providing access to research data. According to the self-evaluation report 'open, unless...' is the basic principle here: data should be open unless ethical, legal or contractual obligations dictate otherwise. During the site visit it was mentioned that progress on research data management is not very fast, partly because budgetary constraints hamper the development of storage facilities.

In the self-evaluation report it is stressed that research integrity is brought forward structurally in all phases of staff members careers, from the Research Master and PhD curriculum (the local GSH training programme includes a 1 ECTS module 'Research ethics') to the yearly Result & Development Cycle for staff members. The research institute also has the usual plagiarism recognition mechanisms in place. As for Research Data Management, each PhD student's TSP now contains a clause regarding his/her commitment to providing full access to research data after completion of the PhD-project.

During the site visit it was mentioned that ICOG has not had concrete cases of lack of integrity in research. The committee judged that the research integrity policies of ICOG and the Faculty of Arts were currently appropriate, and that they were working effectively.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

In reviewing the different award categories defined by the SEP, as well as the associated performance indicators, the committee concluded that ICOG was a 'very good, internationally recognised' institution, which had some excellent or potentially excellent features, but which also had some areas where the need for improvement had been identified. The committee considered that the following scores or categories fairly summarised the standing and achievement of ICOG:

Research quality:	very good
Relevance to society:	very good
Viability:	very good

Some recommendations are suggested in the following section. The committee thought that ICOG had worked hard to take on board previous advice, expressed through (for example) the mid-term review (where the current chair was also the external reviewer). In general it was very favourably impressed by the dynamic leadership of ICOG – despite the low FTE allocation given to the roles of Director and Deputy Director: it was clear to members of the committee that, under its current Director and her Deputy, ICOG was on an upward trajectory.

The committee commended in particular the evidence of improvement in the quality of publications, as evidenced by the successful targeting of high quality international

journals and publishers. The committee was similarly impressed by the extent to which the issue of societal relevance had become thoroughly embedded within the work of ICOG. There remain some difficult issues, of which the most pressing is the relatively low level of doctoral completions associated with several of the ICOG research centres. However, the committee was convinced by the coherent strategies to address this difficulty: it supported the effort to incorporate research students within the governance of ICOG, and was impressed by the high level of postgraduate approval which was expressed during the visit. The committee also noted that Faculty members, in general, were united in supporting the 'added value' which ICOG supplied to the humanities research culture at Groningen. In general, the committee was strongly persuaded that the existing configuration of ICOG and the faculty worked well, and that there were productive and supportive working relationships connecting ICOG and the faculty.



## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee was impressed by the achievements and strengths of ICOG. At the same time there are clearly several issues which have concerned ICOG and faculty members, and which have hitherto proved intractable. The committee therefore invites the ICOG and faculty leadership to consider the following suggestions:

The committee noted a wide array of research focuses within and beyond the Faculty of Arts: research institutes, research centres, centres of expertise, research theme groups, interfaculty networks. It understands that new disciplinary 'clusters' are currently being developed for the delivery of the teaching programmes. While the existing governance of research appears to work well, the committee considered that a further proliferation of organisational focuses for research, especially in the light of constricted administrative resource, might ultimately prove counter-productive.

The committee suggests that the Faculty of Arts, Graduate School of Humanities and ICOG leadership consider formulating and funding a policy for post-doctoral fellowships. At present this appears to be a gap in faculty provision. Such a policy would, in the committee's view, help to incentivise the completion of doctoral projects. Also, it would permit ICOG, the Faculty and university to retain the best of its doctoral talent more readily and attract promising young scholars from other universities.

The committee also considers that other initiatives might well be considered in seeking to improve the doctoral completion figures which (while we were given some evidence to suggest recent improvements) remain an issue for ICOG, GSH and the Faculty of Arts. A code of 'best practice' for promotores could help to ensure the maintenance of the highest standards of doctoral supervision, and also to support successful doctoral completions.

At present promotores in ICOG and the wider faculty receive no time allocation in their workloads for the supervision of doctoral theses. The committee suggests that, given the faculty's emphasis upon successful completions, it recognises this priority through the award of a reasonable time allocation for supervision.

The committee invites a review of the FTE allowances and provision made for the director and deputy director of ICOG. The total allowance of 0.25 FTE seemed to the committee very modest, given the ambition and complexity of ICOG. Equally, the level of administrative support (0.9 FTE spread over three colleagues) seemed comparatively modest.

The committee considered that ICOG was the focus of some excellent and socially relevant work in the Humanities. Committee members were united in the hope that the university leadership at Groningen recognised the value of this excellent work, particularly at a time when much attention is being paid to the development of STEM subjects.



# APPENDICES





## APPENDIX 1: EXPLANATION OF THE SEP CRITERIA AND CATEGORIES

There are three criteria that have to be assessed.

- Research quality:
  - Level of excellence in the international field;
  - Quality and Scientific relevance of research;
  - Contribution to body of scientific knowledge;
  - Academic reputation;
  - Scale of the unit's research results (scientific publications, instruments and infrastructure developed and other contributions).
- Relevance to society:
  - quality, scale and relevance of contributions targeting specific economic, social or cultural target groups;
  - advisory reports for policy;
  - contributions to public debates.

The point is to assess contributions in areas that the research unit has itself designated as target areas.

- Viability:
  - the strategy that the research unit intends to pursue in the years ahead and the extent to which it is capable of meeting its targets in research and society during this period;
  - the governance and leadership skills of the research unit's management.

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



## APPENDIX 2: CURRICULA VITAE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Alvin Jackson (chair)** is Sir Richard Lodge Professor of History at the University of Edinburgh, and a former Head of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology and Dean of Research and Deputy Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science at Edinburgh. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, an Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and a Member of the Academia Europaea. He has held numerous research awards including the British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship, the British Academy Research Readership, the Leverhulme-British Academy Senior Research Fellowship and he at present holds a Major Leverhulme Research Fellowship. His work focuses on constitutional unions and unionisms, and on modern Irish, Scottish and British political history. He is the author of numerous books, including most recently *The Two Unions: Ireland, Scotland and the Survival of the United Kingdom, 1707-2007* (Oxford: 2012): he has also recently edited *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History* (Oxford: 2014).

**Johannes Bardoel** is Professor Emeritus in Journalism and Media of the Radboud University of Nijmegen and a Honorary Research Fellow at the Amsterdam School of Communications Research (ASCoR) of the University of Amsterdam. Between 1976 and 1993 he worked with NOS, Netherlands Public Broadcasting, where he worked as a strategic planner and policy advisor. In 1993 Bardoel joined the University of Amsterdam where he defended his PhD-thesis 'Journalism in the Information Society' in 1997. He has taught and done research on subjects as national and European media structures and policies and the future of the journalistic profession. He has written numerous academic articles and books on these subjects, published in English, Dutch and other languages, including Chinese and Korean. He is an expert on public broadcasting, both in a national and international context. Until 2016 he was the chairman of the Working Group on Public Service Media Policies for the International Association of Media and Communications Research (IAMCR). He was member of the first broadcasting review commission in the Netherlands that assessed the performance of public broadcasting institutions in the Netherlands. Later on he served as the chair of the Media Commission of the Council for Culture that is the official adviser of the Dutch government on media and cultural policies. Currently he is doing a consultancy project on good governance, independence and integrity in Dutch public broadcasting. Bardoel was also a member of the Board of the Erasmus Mundus Master in Journalism and Globalisation, a collaborative project of five Western-European universities with a fine tradition in journalism education and research.

**André Gerrits** is Professor of International Studies and Global Politics, and Chair of the MA International Relations (European Union Studies / International Studies) and the BA International Studies, based in The Hague. Previously, he held the chair in Russian History and Politics at Leiden University and the Jean Monnet Chair in European Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Gerrits was also a Senior Research Fellow at the Netherlands Institute of International Studies Clingendael. He has published multiple articles, edited several collections, and wrote various books on these and related topics. He conducted several research projects financed and / or commissioned by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the European Commission. His latest publication is *Nationalism in Europe Since 1945*. London: Palgrave Macmillan 2016.

**Marielle Hendriks** is director of the Boekman Foundation, institute for arts, culture and related policy in Amsterdam. Recently, Hendriks was the initiator and driving force behind the Arts Index Netherlands, a national barometer for the vitality of the arts in the Netherlands. She is currently member of the Board of Governors of the

European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research, treasurer of the European Association of Cultural Researchers, secretary of the jury of the Johannes Vermeer Award and member of the ZonMW committee Knowledge Synthesis *Culture and Long-term Care*. Hendriks studied Cultural Studies and Arts Administration at the University of Utrecht. She previously worked at the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), and at the Municipality of Issy-les-Moulineaux (Paris).

**Rosamond McKitterick** is Professor Emerita of Medieval History in the University of Cambridge, formerly Director of Research in the Faculty of History, a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College and, since 2011, Chair of the Faculty of Archaeology, History and Letters of the British School at Rome. She holds the degrees of MA, PhD and Litt.D from the University of Cambridge and also studied Palaeography as a graduate student at the University of Munich 1974-75. She is Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and Royal Society for the Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce in Britain, as well as being a Korrespondierendes Mitglied der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Germany, a Korrespondierendes Mitglied im Ausland, phil.-hist. Klass, Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, and a Corresponding Fellow, Medieval Academy of America. She has held short-term visiting Fellowships at the British School at Rome (2002); the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Science (Royal Dutch Academy) (2005-2006); Scaliger Instituut, Universiteit Leiden (2005-6 and 2010) and the American Academy in Rome (2011). She was the LECTIO Professor at KU Leuven in 2015 In 2010 she was awarded the Dr A.H. Heineken International Prize for History by the Royal Dutch Academy. Her publications, to date 26 books and edited books and 160 articles and chapters in books, include *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms 789-895* (1977); *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (1983) *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (1989) *Books, scribes and learning in the Frankish kingdoms, sixth to ninth centuries* (1994); *Frankish kings and culture in the early middle ages* (1995) *History and memory in the Carolingian world* (2004); *Perceptions of the past in the early middle ages* (2006); *Karl der Große/ Charlemagne: the formation of a European identity* (2008); *Change and development in the medieval book* (with Erik Kwakkel and Rodney Thomson) (Leiden, 2011).

## APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

time	location	event	persons
<b>Monday 12 December</b>			
16.00 – 18.00	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331. Address: <a href="#">Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 26.</a>	PRC Preliminary meeting	PRC (7)
From 18.30	<a href="#">Bistro 't Gerecht</a> , Address: <a href="#">Oude Boteringestraat 43.</a>	Opening dinner	PRC (7)
<b>Tuesday 13 December</b>			
09.00 – 09.45	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer. Address: <a href="#">Oude Boteringestraat 19.</a>	Formal opening: meeting with Faculty Board, ICOG directors & coordinator, CETO director, Policy officer	PRC + Prof. G.C. (Gerry) Wakker (Dean); Prof. D.C.M. (Daan) Raemaekers (vice Dean); M.C. (Maarten) Schunselaar, MA (Policy Officer); Prof. J.C.J. (John) Hoeks (Chair CETO); Prof. E.J. (Liesbeth) Korthals Altes (ICOG Director); Prof R.M. (Raingard) Esser (deputy Director ICOG); Nadja Zadorina, MA (ICOG coordinator). (14)
10.00 – 10.20	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting with ICOG Advisory Council	PRC + Prof. S. (Sabrina) Corbellini (chair); Prof. L.E. (Luis Lobo-Guerrero); S. (Sanne) Kamerling, MA (PhD member). (10)
10.30 – 11.20	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting with PhD students	PRC + R.E. (Ruben) Verwaal, MA (CHS); S.M. (Sjoukje) Kamphorst, MA (CHS); A. (Anahita) Arian, MA (CIRR); P.H. (Rik) Smit, MA (CMJS); Prayoga Permana, MA (CIRR); Q.T. (Krina) Huisman, MA (AIS, member of PhD council). (13)
11.30 – 12.20	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting with Graduate School (GSH) and ICOG promotores	PRC + Prof. C.J.W. (Jan-Wouter) Zwart (Director Graduate School); Dr K. (Konstantin) Mierau (Programme Director Graduate School); Prof. C.W. (Mineke) Bosch (Modern History); Prof. O.M. (Onno) van Nijf (Ancient History); Prof. J. (Jan) van der Harst (European Integration); Prof. M.J. (Marcel) Broersma (Journalism Studies & Media); Prof. M.G. (Mary) Kemperink (Modern Dutch Literature). (14)
12.30 – 13.45	<a href="#">Land van Kokanje</a> . Address: <a href="#">Oude Boteringestraat 9</a>	Lunch	PRC (7)
13.45 – 14.45	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting with RC 1: Centre for Historical Studies (CHS)	PRC + Prof. R.M. (Raingard) Esser (coordinator); Prof. B.A.M. (Bart) Ramakers; Dr H.G. (Rina) Knoeff; Dr S.A. (Suzan) Folkerts; Dr J.W. (Jan Willem) Veluwenkamp. (12)
15.00 – 16.00	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting with RC 2: Centre for Arts in Society (AIS)	PRC + Prof. A.S. (Ann-Sophie) Lehmann (coordinator); Prof. B.P. (Barend) van Heusden; Prof. A.M.A. (Annie) van den Oever; Dr A. (Alberto) Godioli; Dr. J.A.C. (Johan) Kolsteeg. (12)
16.20 – 17.00	Van Swinderen Huys, Bestuurskamer.	Meeting on Centres of Expertise and Societal Relevance	PRC + Prof. M.G.J. (Maarten) Duijvendak (NAHI); Dr R.L. (Ron) Holzacker (Singa); Dr S.I. (Susan) Aasman (Digital Humanities); Dr J.M.L. (Jeanette) den Toonder (Shared Literature); Dr T.A.C. (Tamara) Witschge (Entrepreneurial Journalism); S.J. (Saskia) Visser, MA (Policy Officer Public Engagement). (13)
From 18.30	<a href="#">Stadscafé Pronk</a> , Herfstzaal. Address: <a href="#">Vismarkt 56</a>	Dinner	PRC (7)

time	location	event	Persons
<b>Wednesday 14 December</b>			
08.45 – 09.00	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331. Address: <a href="#">Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 26.</a>	PRC meeting	PRC (7)
09.00 – 10.00	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331	Meeting with RC 3: Centre for International Relations Research (CIRR)	PRC + Prof. J.H. (Jaap) de Wilde (coordinator); Prof. L.E. (Luis Lobo-Guerrero); Dr J. (Jana) Hönke; Dr J. (Julia) Costa López; Dr F. (Francesco) Giumelli. (12)
10.15 – 11.15	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331	Meeting with RG 4: Center for Research on the Americas (CRA)	PRC + Prof. M.S. (Michael) Foley (coordinator); Dr A.M. (Anne) Martinez; Dr M.L. (Mark) Thompson; Dr T. (Tim) Jelfs. (11)
11.30 – 12.30	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331	Meeting with RG 5: Centre for Media and Journalism Studies (CMJS)	PRC + Prof. M.J. (Marcel) Broersma (coordinator); Dr T.A.C. (Tamara) Witschge; Dr D. (Dana) Mustata; Dr M.P. (Michael) Stevenson; Dr F. (Frank) Harbers. (12)
12.30 – 13.30	<a href="#">Canteen Harmoniecomplex</a>	Lunch	PRC (7)
13.30 – 14.30	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331	Open office hour	PRC + ?
14.30 – 16.30	Bestuurskamer Harmonie, 1315.0331	PRC discussion	PRC (7)
16.30 – 17.00	Engelse Zaal, Academiegebouw. Address: <a href="#">Broerstraat 5</a>	PRC oral presentation and formal closing	PRC + ICOG
17.00 – 18.00	Engelse Zaal, Academiegebouw	Drinks	
From 18.30	t.b.d.	Closing dinner (optional)	PRC

## APPENDIX 4: QUANTITATIVE DATA

*SEP Table D3a - Research staff*

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE	#	FTE
Assistant Prof.	79	28,5	87	31,4	84	30,6	89	32,1	91	33,4	95	35,8
Associate Prof.	17	6,6	17	6,31	19	7,5	19	7,4	20	7,5	20	7,7
Full Professor	37	15,9	34	14,3	34	13,9	36	14,1	33	13,8	32	14
<i>Scientific staff</i> <sup>17</sup>	<i>133</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>138</i>	<i>52,1</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>142</i>	<i>53,5</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>54,9</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>57,6</i>
Post-docs <sup>18</sup>	7	5,6	6	5,1	8	6,9	6	4,5	5	3,7	10	7
PhD students <sup>19</sup>	14	9,1	23	17,9	35	25,9	45	35,1	48	37,6	48	39,5
<i>Total research staff</i> <sup>20</sup>	<i>154</i>	<i>65,7</i>	<i>167</i>	<i>75,1</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>84,8</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>93,1</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>96,2</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>104</i>
Support staff	3	0,7	3	0,7	3	0,7	3	0,7	3	0,9	3	0,9
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>66,4</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>75,8</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>85,5</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>93,9</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>97,1</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>105</b>

*SEP Table D3b – Main categories of research output*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	total
Refereed articles	80	69	106	85	77	106	523
Non-refereed articles	30	19	26	13	12	19	119
Books	9	18	15	13	11	16	82
Book chapters	131	182	144	138	100	140	835
Editorships	38	44	33	32	22	39	208
PhD theses	14	11	14	11	14	12	76
Conference proceedings	12	12	13	2	5	9	53
Professional publications	90	62	52	69	75	53	401
Publ. aimed at the general public	34	76	50	23	23	26	232
Review	109	173	166	87	88	80	703
Other research output	30	21	39	12	52	48	202
<b>Total publications</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>3434</b>

SEP Table D3d - PhD candidates

SUCCESS RATES ICOG					Graduated in year 4		Graduated in year 5		Graduated in year 6		Graduated in year 7		Graduated in year? (unknown)		Not yet finished		Discontinued		
starting year	Enrolment			dissertations total		D ≤ 4 jaar ≤ 48 mnd		4 < D ≤ 5 jaar 49 t/m 60 mnd		5 < D ≤ 6 jaar 61 t/m 72 mnd		6 < D ≤ 7 jaar 73 t/m 83 mnd							
	# m	# f	total (#)	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
2007	6	7	13	12	92%	0	0%	1	8%	9	70%	10	78%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%
2008	11	7	18	9	50%	0	0%	3	17%	4	22%	9	50%	0	0%	8	44%	1	6%
2009	9	6	15	7	47%	0	0%	2	13%	5	33%	7	47%	0	0%	8	53%	0	0%
2010	8	6	14	6	43%	1	7%	3	21%	5	36%	0	0%	1	7%	7	50%	1	7%
2011	7	5	12	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12	100%	0	0%
2012	6	12	18	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	16	89%	2	11%
2013	11	13	24	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	23	96%	1	4%
2014	8	9	17	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	15	88%	2	12%
2015	6	12	18	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	18	100%	0	0%

SEP Table D3c – Funding

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%
<b>Funding:</b>												
Direct funding	47,5	84	49,8	87	49	83	52,3	90	51,3	87	53,7	83
Research grants	5,7	10	4,2	7	6,9	12	4,7	8	5,9	10	8,6	13
Contract Research	3,5	6	3,1	5	3,1	5	1,1	2	1,5	3	2,3	4
Total non-direct funding	9,2	16	7,3	12	10	17	5,8	10	7,4	13	10,9	17
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>56,7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>57,1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58,1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58,7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64,6</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>In €</b>	<b>%</b>
Personnel costs	4.063.185	97	4.201.294	97,4	4.404.319	97,2	4.601.656	97,3	4.668.044	97,1	4.894.860	97,1
Other costs	125.893	3	107.500	2,6	123.400	2,8	123.795	2,7	138.450	2,9	146.400	2,9
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>4.189.078</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.308.794</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.527.719</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.725.451</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.806.494</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5.041.270</b>	<b>100</b>