

## **Response to the Research Review Economics & Business 2008-2014**

Board of the Faculty of Economics & Business

Management Research School SOM

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

### **General remarks**

FEB's Research Institute SOM has been evaluated very positively in the national Research Review Economics & Business, that was recently published. FEB takes a number 1 position in the Netherlands, together with the VU Amsterdam. Especially the societal relevance of research conducted at FEB scores very high. According to the peer review committee "it meets world-class standards". SOM's scores are:

Quality: 2 (very good)

Societal Relevance: 1 (excellent)

Viability: 2 (very good)

We have noticed a gradual improvement in research performance ourselves, but it is great that this is now also acknowledged by external experts. Compared to the previous evaluation in 2009, when the results were already very good, we have made further progress. The large number of publications of FEB researchers and the high citation scores account for the good evaluation of our quality and viability. The excellent assessment of the societal relevance of our research is very much in line with what the government and students ask of universities nowadays.

We thank the committee not only for their praise but also for their valuable recommendations regarding how to further improve our performance.

### **Objectives 2016-2020**

In the self-evaluation report the new objectives, challenges and policies for the next evaluation period of six years were formulated. On the basis of the committee's feedback some adjustments have been made.

**Strengthen the top-level output of our research, leading to enhanced international visibility and recognition in the academic world.**

We aim to be an international top-10 research school in Economics and Business (as represented by our research programmes) in Europe. As the international status of the school and the individual scholars strongly depends on publications in high-quality journals, our focus will be even more on the top outlets. To achieve this objective, we currently consider further development of our incentive system for rewarding research performance. More specifically, we are considering the possibility to further refine SOM's journal list by specifying an additional 'star' category. We plan to implement this change in the first half of 2016.

Furthermore we will continue to organise international conferences, which increase the visibility of SOM. Support in terms of budget and time is offered to scholars to attract and organise such conferences.

## Attract and retain high-quality staff

To improve the effectiveness of our recruitment efforts, FEB has recently engaged a headhunter agency, namely Parrett Laver, and initial results are very promising. With respect to gender diversity and internationalisation, we aim to increase diversity through internal promotion and external hires. As the TT system and the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship have proven to be successful, FEB will continue these policies, while fine-tuning the TT system, improving the conditions of employment, and its hiring activities on the international job markets.

## Signature Areas

Many of the grand challenges faced by society require research-based insights from multiple disciplines. Research conducted at SOM has the potential to contribute significantly to this need for insights. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of such themes, and the fact that the significance of each theme is likely to change over time, FEB has decided to fund a number of so-called signature areas. These signature areas are seen as “research communities” where several researchers with proven track records, and oftentimes different backgrounds, work on joint research projects. In contrast to existing research programmes and departments, these communities do not have a formal governance structure (with boards or directors) and are much more flexible. By supporting these initiatives, FEB hopes to stimulate innovative, interdisciplinary research projects, and to further improve the quality and visibility of FEB’s research.

These Signature Areas are:

- *Individual Health & The Economic Environment*
- *Digital Business Models and Analytics*
- *The Dynamics of Global Development and Inequality*
- *Board Effectiveness*
- *Connecting innovation and creativity*
- *Collective Resilience*
- *Markets and Sustainability*

## Funding and research projects

We accept the challenge to put even more focus on fundraising and become less dependent on decision-makers. Building on the proven success of our current policies, a next step will be to attract funding for large-scale projects in cooperation with international research consortia. Related to this, and given the increasing significance of funding by the European Union (EU), our objective is to attract substantial funds from Horizon2020, the European Research Council (ERC) and related programmes. Initiatives have been taken to support potential applicants, by providing specialized expertise, financial means and compensation of time investment.

SOM will experiment with the possibility to outsource some of its support activities regarding external funding to PNO Consultants. PNO is a renowned consultancy firm with

branches in different cities, including Groningen. They offer expertise in writing research proposals, matching research proposals to specific calls, and finding consortium partners.

### International status

As strongly suggested by the committee we are currently working on an ambitious visiting professorship programme. A budget will be made available to not only invite excellent scholars from abroad to spend a longer period in Groningen, but also to support our own staff to spend time at reputed universities abroad.

Also a more formal programme to encourage PhD students to spend some time at well-reputed business schools abroad will be established, including funds and administrative support.

### Placement of PhD students

The committee has strongly recommended to provide more career guidance to PhD students. This year the graduate school will set up a programme including activities like career events, placement services (including appointing placement officers), internships in cooperation with the Centres of Expertise and the Careers Company, but also funds for PhD students to visit job markets in their final year.

### Other

To improve interaction with the general public, and further improve the dissemination of research findings, as suggested by the committee, we are currently recruiting an in-house journalist.