UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

AIHR

AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR HUMANITIES RESEARCH

RESEARCH EVALUATION 2018-2023

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Preface

The committee felt honoured to be invited to evaluate five different research schools (ACLS, ASH, AHM, ASCA, ARTES) that operate under the umbrella organization AIHR and to assess the two national research schools (LOT and OSK) that are currently governed by AIHR. The committee, which consisted of many international experts across the full spectrum of the humanities, worked with great synergy and commitment. Though the complexity and scale of the task were slightly daunting, we were also very excited to have this chance to see the variety, quality, and innovative aspects of such an amazing faculty of humanities, which presented its cutting-edge research, forms of societal engagement, and interdisciplinary breadth in an atmosphere of great collaboration and openness.

The committee operated as a critical friend, in a spirit of collegiality and solidarity, showing support especially in these austere times of governmental budget cuts, reiterating the importance of defending the value of the humanities and the need to protect research time.

The site visit, which lasted five full days, with over 35 panels and meetings with more than 200 researchers and staff, proved to be very intense, as well as very productive. We carried out frank and challenging conversations, discussing issues including polarization in our academic culture, safety, both at home and in conflict-zone locations, and the rise of hate speech and harassment of academics and researchers online.

We encountered a vibrant, dynamic, and resilient faculty open to new fields of research, such as new humanities (digital, environmental, medical), and to alternative forms of engagement with societal stakeholders, civic partners, and the cultural sector. The city of Amsterdam proved not only to provide a beautiful setting but also to be an endless source of inspiration and collaboration thanks to its rich cultural sector, heritage, and sociopolitical fabric.

We received wonderful hospitality, and we want to thank the faculty's policy officer for all the care and attention, and the AIHR director and the dean of humanities for their exhaustive and crystal-clear clarifications and explanations, for making us feel at home, and for fostering an atmosphere of conviviality and critical engagement. We were very impressed with the site visit to the new *National Holocaust Museum* and the guided visit to the seven Humanities Labs.

Last but not least, it is very important to mention that we were shepherded with great professionalism, rigour, and kindness by our two secretaries. They taught us to attend carefully to the SEP protocol criteria and helped us through the different stages of preparation, reviewing, and reporting with great competence, much-needed efficiency, and considerable patience.

Finally, I would like to warmly thank my colleagues in the committee for their commitment, cordiality, and constructive cooperation throughout the whole process. We have all felt enriched by each other's expertise and approach, and we feel emboldened by seeing the humanities thriving so much.

Prof. Sandra Ponzanesi
Committee chair

1. Evaluation method and procedures

In 2024, the Executive Board of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) commissioned the evaluation of the quality of research and strategy conducted by the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR). The evaluation included the five underlying research schools of AIHR: Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication (ACLC); Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM); Amsterdam School for Regional, Transnational and European Studies (ARTES); Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA); and Amsterdam School of Historical Studies (ASH). Also part of the evaluation were two national research schools that are currently coordinated by AIHR: the National Research School for Art History (OSK) and the National Graduate School of Linguistics (LOT). To carry out the evaluation, the Executive Board appointed a committee composed of seven (inter)national experts in the relevant fields of study and two independent secretaries. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Strategy Evaluation Protocol 2021-2027 (SEP).

This report covers the evaluation of AIHR and the five research schools. The evaluations of the two national research schools that are coordinated by AIHR are covered in separate reports.

1.1 Composition of the assessment committee

The evaluation committee (hereafter: 'the committee') comprised the following external experts:

- **Prof. Sandra Ponzanesi** (chair), Professor of Media, Gender, and Postcolonial Studies at Utrecht University, the Netherlands;
- **Prof. Johan van der Auwera**, Professor Emeritus of General and English Linguistics at the University of Antwerp, Belgium;
- **Prof. Stef Craps**, Professor of English Literature at Ghent University, Belgium;
- **Luca Forgiarini MSc**, PhD candidate at Utrecht University, the Netherlands;
- **Prof. Anne Goldgar**, Garrett and Anne Van Hunnick Professor of European History at the University of Southern California, USA;
- **Dr Francesco Mazzucchelli**, Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Bologna, Italy;
- **Prof. Reetta Toivanen**, Professor of Sustainability Science at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

Drs Leonie van Drooge and Dr Floor Meijer served as the committee's independent secretaries.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The committee conducted its evaluation in accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) provided by UvA's Executive Board. The ToR refers to the nationally adopted SEP. The main goal of a SEP evaluation is to evaluate a research unit in light of its own aims and strategy. A self-evaluation report compiled by the unit and a site visit by the committee form the basis for the assessment.

More precisely, the committee was tasked with evaluating the quality of research conducted by AIHR, and with offering recommendations in order to improve the quality of research and the strategy of AIHR. Specifically, the committee was asked to judge the performance of the unit on the main assessment criteria and offer its written conclusions as well as recommendations based on considerations and arguments. The main assessment criteria are:

1. research quality;
2. societal relevance;
3. viability of the unit.

Moreover, the committee was asked to incorporate four specific aspects:

1. Open Science;
2. PhD policy and training;
3. academic culture;
4. Human Resources policy.

In addition, UvA's Executive Board asked the committee to pay attention to additional questions and offer recommendations:

1. Research quality: Is the notion of interdisciplinarity and working across different research fields/competing paradigms and/or methods sufficiently integrated and organized within the research schools?
2. Societal relevance: To what extent does the committee feel that the research conducted within AIHR and at the different research schools (ACLC, AHM, ARTES, ASCA, ASH) contributes to urgent societal and/or contested issues within AIHR's/the research schools' own community, education, and society at large?
3. Organizational viability: does the committee assess AIHR's organizational structure as sufficiently equipped to achieve AIHR's aim of strategically and programmatically collaborating within the research-teaching-societal partner nexus to strengthen its research quality and societal relevance?

1.3 Documentation

Prior to the site visit, the committee received the following documents:

- Terms of Reference AIHR (UvA, 2024);
- Research Quality Assessment 2018-2023 with appendices, covering the self-evaluation of AIHR and the five schools (AIHR, 2024);
- Report of the previous evaluation committee (2018).

1.4 Working method

On 7 October 2024, the committee convened for an online kick-off meeting to discuss the evaluation protocol and procedures, and to establish a clear division of tasks and the working method. In the following weeks, the committee members individually studied the documentation and formulated preliminary findings and questions. The committee's secretaries compiled the members' preliminary findings into a collective document. During a follow-up online meeting on 14 November 2024, the committee discussed these initial impressions and further refined its approach.

The site visit took place from 24 to 29 November 2024. It started with an internal committee meeting and dinner on the evening of 24 November. Over the following five days, the committee spoke with representatives and stakeholders of the Faculty of Humanities. The visit concluded with a plenary presentation of the committee's findings by the committee chair on 29 November. The schedule of the site visit is included in appendix 1.

The programme of the site visit was affected by proposed cuts to the national higher education and science budgets. At the time of the site visit, it was still unclear whether these severe cuts would indeed be implemented, and if so, how that would affect UvA and AIHR. After consultation with the dean of the faculty and the director of AIHR, it was decided to make room for obvious concerns, but not to let the uncertain future dominate the meetings too much. The site visit to ASH was affected more severely. Shortly before the site visit took place, a national demonstration was announced for the afternoon of Monday 25 November in The Hague. Many members of AIHR's leadership and staff participated. As a result, the planned site visit to ASH had to be shortened to half a morning. This resulted in a lesser opportunity to evaluate ASH.

Following the site visit, committee members submitted their written contributions for the evaluation report. The secretaries compiled these inputs and drafted the initial report, which was circulated among all committee members for

review. The revised report was then sent to AIHR and the research schools for factual corrections on 7 February 2025. In close consultation with the chair and the committee, the secretaries incorporated the feedback and finalized the report, which was subsequently presented to the Executive Board of the University of Amsterdam on 7 March 2025.

2. Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research

The Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR) is a comprehensive research institute that coordinates and supports research across all major humanities subdisciplines in the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam. AIHR encompasses six interdisciplinary research schools, five of which are part of this evaluation:

1. **Amsterdam Centre for Language and Communication (ACLC)**
2. **Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA)**
3. **Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM)**
4. **Amsterdam School of Historical Studies (ASH)**
5. **Amsterdam School for Regional, Transnational and European Studies (ARTES)**

The Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC), an interfaculty institute shared with the Faculty of Science, is also part of AIHR but not included in this evaluation.

AIHR was founded in 2014 as part of a faculty-wide reorganization of research structures. At the time, the Faculty of Humanities comprised four research institutes: ASCA, ACLC, ILLC, and ICG (Institute for Culture and History). Due to its size, ICG had become difficult to manage effectively and was split into three new research schools: ASH, ARTES, and AHM. This reorganization increased the total number of research schools from four to six. AIHR was established as an umbrella organization for these six schools. Notably, the configuration of the current research schools was shaped by a bottom-up approach, with researchers determining their group affiliations.

AIHR researchers work in and across traditional humanities disciplines including linguistics, history, art history, archaeology, area studies, religious studies, and philosophy, as well as pioneering fields such as new media, digital humanities, and conservation and restoration. Through this broad scope, AIHR has established itself as a virtually all-encompassing humanities research institute with high visibility and recognition at local, national, European, and global levels.

Within the broader UvA research landscape, AIHR participates in several university-wide strategic initiatives. The institute contributes to six core thematic areas ("hubs") that align with the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Sector Plan and university strategic themes: Humane AI, Languages and Cultures, Cultural Heritage, Digital Citizenship, Environmental Humanities, and Health Humanities. These hubs receive dedicated funding to support grassroots initiatives and help make them sustainable and fundable. Additionally, AIHR researchers participate in university Research Priority Areas (RPAs) such as Global Digital Cultures and Decolonial Futures, with researchers initiating projects that receive seed funding from the university level.

In 2023, AIHR's funding totals 48 million euros, with 32 million from government funding and 16 million from (inter)national grants and contract work, supporting a research staff of 159 FTE (including postdocs) and 67 FTE PhD candidates. AIHR is supported by a Research & Impact department of approximately 41 staff members (30 FTE), which includes policy officers, research school coordinators, office managers, data stewards, lab technicians, software engineers, grant advisors, and project support staff.

2.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

Strategic objectives. AIHR's strategy, as outlined in the Faculty of Humanities' strategic plans (2016-2020 and 2021-2026), focuses on preserving the breadth and interdisciplinary nature of research while responding to contemporary challenges. To achieve these aims, the institute supports both individual research excellence and programmatic initiatives through cross-school, cross-faculty, and international collaborations. Key strategic services include providing robust research infrastructure, stimulating societal impact through partnerships with external stakeholders, and advancing innovative research in the aforementioned six core themes. Acting as both a protector of and advocate for humanities research, AIHR actively engages with the university's Executive Board as well as with academic and societal audiences. Here, its efforts are aimed at emphasizing the essential role of the humanities in tackling the pressing issues of the modern world.

The committee recognizes that over the review period, AIHR has successfully established itself as a cohesive umbrella organization. The six thematic hubs represent a deliberate and valuable effort to balance traditional humanities disciplines with emerging areas of societal concern, covering a wide range of research interests—from foundational inquiries into languages and cultures to applied research in areas like AI ethics and environmental sustainability. While AIHR's broad scope is an asset, some challenges related to coverage remain. As AIHR's management acknowledges, not all research areas are equally well represented.

The development of AIHR's strategy was presented to the committee as largely bottom-up in nature. For example, thematic research areas like environmental humanities emerge organically when individual researchers begin working on a topic and attract others to collaborate. AIHR's role is to organize necessary support, facilitate connections, and forge collaborations, rather than imposing research directions from above. This approach has proven particularly effective in developing new research areas and responding to emerging societal challenges.

A key question emerging from the committee's assessment is how AIHR ensures space for curiosity-driven, fundamental research alongside its focus on societal challenges and impact. The strategic emphasis on urgent societal challenges and interdisciplinarity, while highly valuable, must be balanced against the need to support research that may not have immediate societal applications but is intrinsically valuable for knowledge advancement. The committee particularly notes the importance of maintaining support for individual academics whose work may not directly align with the institute's thematic priorities.

Governance. The governance structure of AIHR is both robust and thoughtfully designed, balancing centralized coordination with academic autonomy. The institute is led by the Faculty Research Director, who collaborates closely with the Research Council, comprised of research directors from each school, with regular meetings held every six weeks. Operational support is provided by the Research & Impact department, consisting of a dedicated team of 30 FTE (41 staff) that includes policy officers, research school coordinators, data stewards, lab technicians, grant advisors, and project support staff.

The committee observes that AIHR's governance structure facilitates clear and effective communication between AIHR and the individual schools. Regular formal update meetings—held monthly between the Faculty Research Director and school directors, along with more frequent informal exchanges—ensure that communication lines remain short and direct between school management and AIHR leadership. This arrangement fosters an intimate understanding of activities across all schools, enabling coherence in decision-making and effective advocacy at the university level. In other words: the success of AIHR's governance model is apparent from its growing capacity to function not merely as an administrative body, but as a content-driven intermediary. Over time, as AIHR has become more established, a clearer understanding has

developed of what can be expected from the organization.

Additionally, the committee notes a careful balance between centralization and academic autonomy within the governance structure. A notable feature at the school level is the dual leadership approach in certain schools, where research directors collaborate with vice-directors and coordinators, ensuring a balance between strategic oversight and operational execution.

The particular setup of AIHR places research schools and teaching departments in close proximity by way of a matrix structure. This organizational model enables researchers to interact with colleagues from various departments, helping break down traditional disciplinary silos and facilitate social cohesion. It also allows for agile decision-making and easier steering. AIHR has managed to centralize essential functions like grant support, ethics approval, PhD policy, and research data management, while maintaining space for methodological and disciplinary diversity.

As well as bringing benefits, the matrix structure also comes with some downsides as research schools do not coincide with the teaching departments, where staff are officially appointed. This can create longer lines of communication and increased bureaucracy and complexities in hiring processes. To ensure that recruitment considers research needs alongside teaching requirements, the Research Directors of the schools participate in hiring discussions. Further challenges seem to result from the fact that research activities (40% of staff time) and their evaluation are managed at the school level, whereas teaching responsibilities (60%) remain with the departments. Moreover, the interviews suggested that junior researchers tend to identify more strongly with their research school, whereas senior staff often align more closely with their teaching department. While these downsides require careful managing, the committee was convinced that the benefits of the chosen model outweigh the disadvantages.

The committee also learned that UvA as a whole is organized as a decentralized university, requiring constant negotiation between different levels. While this decentralized model holds challenges, AIHR seems to have developed effective mechanisms for university-level engagement. The Faculty Research Director meets twice yearly with the Executive Board to advocate for humanities research and maintain strategic alignment. This arrangement allows AIHR to function as an effective intermediary between the research schools and central university governance.

Overall, interviews with management and staff revealed that AIHR's organizational model has matured considerably since its inception. In the early years, the landscape was uneven, with some schools (such as ASCA) being well established, while others were still in development. Initial reservations about the centralized approach have largely been replaced by support, as the tangible benefits of coordination and integration have become more apparent. In the committee's view, AIHR has succeeded in creating a more unified "house", where all schools collaborate cohesively, a sentiment that has grown stronger since the previous evaluation six years ago.

2.2 Infrastructure

AIHR structurally invests in research infrastructure to support innovation, specifically via seven Humanities Labs: CREATE, 4D Research Lab, Conservation and Restoration Labs, Digital Methods Initiative, Music Lab, SignLab, and Speech Lab. These Labs are central hubs, where technically supported humanities research on urgent societal topics is conducted in collaboration with societal partners. During the site visit, the committee visited the Humanities Labs and was highly impressed. The Labs have emerged from specific research projects and groups but are now available to the wider community, and provide various forms of training for students in the Graduate School of Humanities.

The Humanities Labs have played a particularly significant role in the growth of digital humanities across AIHR's schools. For example, labs focusing on heritage and digital methods (notably CREATE) have enabled schools like ASH and ARTES to

expand their work on digital cultures. This development represents a major shift in the fields covered by these schools and demonstrates AIHR's success in building faculty-level research infrastructure.

AIHR supports research within the schools with policymaking on critical topics such as research data management, integrity, diversity, and ethics approval. This centralized approach has proven highly effective, ensuring consistency and cohesion across all schools, while addressing overarching challenges that span the humanities. At the same time, AIHR respects and accommodates the diverse methodological and discipline-specific traditions unique to each school.

At the heart of AIHR's research support system is a centralized Grant Team, which has earned widespread praise from researchers across all schools. With its team of experienced advisors, the Grant Team provides tailored assistance for grant applications, offering expertise that individual research schools would struggle to replicate on their own. The team plays a proactive role in identifying funding opportunities, advising researchers on suitable calls, and guiding them through the proposal development process. Its centralized structure ensures a consistent and strategic approach to external funding, promoting interdisciplinary and cross-school collaborations, while equipping researchers with the tools to navigate complex application processes. By centralizing this function, AIHR ensures a consistent and strategic approach to external funding, which is particularly valuable for the smaller research schools with more limited internal resources.

The grant capture process begins at the research school level, where schools play an active role in preselecting proposals. This ensures alignment with the school's research priorities and allows for targeted support that matches the strengths of individual researchers. However, consistency in preselection practices seems to vary somewhat across research schools, potentially impacting fairness. Once proposals are preselected, the Grant Team steps in to provide comprehensive guidance. Researchers especially value the team's ability to offer constructive feedback on drafts, provide insights on funder expectations, and liaise with potential collaborators. Early-career researchers, including junior faculty and postdocs, are a key focus, receiving one-on-one coaching and targeted workshops to secure their initial major grants. Nevertheless, interviews indicated that the support for early-career staff could be strengthened further.

Given AIHR's interdisciplinary focus, the Grant Team has developed expertise in bridging disciplinary frameworks, although schools report varying levels of success with grant support for such projects. Although the Grant Team has been instrumental in driving a noticeable increase in grant success rates, the interviews highlighted opportunities to expand support for non-traditional funding schemes, including private partnerships, foundations, and contract research applications. Maintaining short communication lines across the schools and researchers will remain crucial as these functions grow.

2.3 Research quality

While AIHR serves as the overarching research institute, the actual research activities take place within its constituent schools, each with its distinct identity, mission, and stage of development. As detailed metrics on research output, staff size, and funding are tracked at the school level rather than the institute level, this section focuses primarily on AIHR's role in facilitating research. Specifically, the committee examined how AIHR creates an environment where research can thrive, with particular attention to its approach to interdisciplinarity and research paradigms – key themes highlighted in the Terms of Reference. For more detailed assessments of research quality, the reader is referred to the individual chapters on each of the five research schools.

AIHR has successfully cultivated a vibrant and dynamic research environment, with the underlying research schools earning a strong reputation nationally and internationally for their leadership in the humanities. Grounded in the

various disciplines, AIHR's comprehensive scope supports work across a diverse array of fields. The research organization is flexible enough to enable quick responses to emerging societal challenges, while at the same time conducting fundamental research with long-term perspectives, grounded in area expertise. Through its extensive scholarly and societal networks, the institute's schools have firmly positioned themselves as key players in fostering innovative research. Their engagement with international networks has deepened opportunities for academic exchange, attracting visiting scholars, self-funded PhD candidates, and a wide range of partnerships with global institutions. Here, the committee also points to a notable increase in Open Access publications and grant capture over the review period. AIHR's approach to fostering research quality is further strengthened by its highly qualified academic staff and robust infrastructure, including shared facilities such as the Humanities Labs and centralized support systems.

Interdisciplinarity is a defining feature of AIHR's strategy and one of its key strengths. In the committee's view, AIHR has developed a sophisticated and flexible approach to interdisciplinarity that reflects its strategic philosophy. Rather than imposing a prescriptive, top-down model, AIHR enables each research school to approach interdisciplinarity in a way that aligns with its disciplinary traditions and goals. This is evident in how various schools operate: while ASH and ACLC, for instance, maintain strong disciplinary specializations, working across fields, ASCA pursues interdisciplinarity through a shared methodological framework. This flexibility, combined with AIHR's grounding in fundamental humanities disciplines, enables both academic depth and innovative cross-pollination.

The institute's organizational design, which pairs disciplinary expertise with transversal thematic clusters, has proven particularly effective in stimulating programmatic research and intra-faculty collaboration. The institute's thematic focus areas – such as Environmental Humanities, Humane AI, and Health Humanities – serve as cross-school "hubs" where researchers converge on shared challenges, showcasing AIHR's capacity to generate innovative and impactful research through collaboration. Well-functioning Research Priority Areas complement these efforts by aligning AIHR's thematic priorities with the wider strategic goals of the University of Amsterdam and ensuring the institute's relevance in addressing pressing global challenges. While this approach has yielded strong interdisciplinary collaborations, opportunities remain to increase the visibility of key societal challenges, better integrate unexpected collaborations, and develop clearer frameworks for assessing interdisciplinary quality.

Although specific figures at the AIHR level were not provided to the committee, there is clear evidence of overall growth in both staff numbers and research funding during the review period. This growth is particularly visible in the increasing number of international and self-funded PhD candidates, the successful expansion of research teams, and growing grant capture. AIHR plays a pivotal role in securing and pooling resources to support its schools. Specific funding instruments are the Research Innovation and Sustainability (RIS) Fund and the Consortium Fund (formerly Cutting Edge Research Fund) for interdisciplinary networking. While the RIS fund (established in 2017) enables staff to temporarily increase their research time for strategic purposes such as writing grant applications or completing significant publications that could strengthen future funding applications, the Consortium Fund supports interdisciplinary networking activities, facilitating both national and international collaborations.

The institute's funding landscape shows both strengths and challenges. AIHR demonstrates a strong capacity to attract external funding through its centralized Grant Team. However, funding accessibility varies across humanities fields, creating a situation where more readily fundable research areas must effectively subsidize others to maintain the institute's guarantee of a standardized research allocation for all academic staff (with the exception of teaching-only staff, who are not part of the research schools). A cornerstone of AIHR's strategy is its commitment

to maintaining 40% research time for all academic staff, a policy that has been preserved despite downward trends in government funding. Much to the committee's liking, this guarantee creates critical space for sustained scholarly engagement, attracting talented researchers from across the globe.

2.4 Open Science

AIHR and the schools have made significant strides in open science through several key initiatives. The institute's approach to open access publishing follows the principle "open when possible, closed when necessary", resulting in a dramatic increase in open access publications from 53% to 87% over the evaluation period. This is very impressive for a humanities research institute. In line with the Dutch Copyright Act, AIHR encourages researchers to share manuscript versions six months after publication (green route). To further promote open science, UvA maintains a Diamond Open Access Fund, which supports diamond open access initiatives in which UvA researchers have published. As repeatedly mentioned in interviews, OA publishing of monographs involves particular challenges, including prohibitive Book Processing Charges (BPCs), limited funding options for humanities books compared to journal articles, and the traditional preference of prestigious academic publishers for closed access models. While acknowledging these challenges, the committee recommends closely monitoring international developments in this rapidly evolving landscape. AIHR has also strengthened its research data management by updating protocols to align with UvA guidelines and appointing two data stewards, who provide support and privacy protection review services. These efforts demonstrate AIHR's strong commitment to making research more accessible while respecting the diverse publication cultures and data management needs across humanities disciplines.

2.5 Societal relevance

AIHR places strong emphasis on promoting societal relevance as a core aspect of its strategy. The institute deliberately distances itself from purely economic definitions of valorization, instead defining impact more broadly as "what research brings to society". This perspective emphasizes the humanities' vital role in societal debates and validates diverse forms of output, from traditional publications to innovative applications (like the avatars developed in AIHR's SignLab).

AIHR's institute-wide approach to societal relevance complements the varied approaches taken by individual research schools, each of which pursues impact in ways aligned with their specific disciplines and missions. At the institute level, AIHR ensures coherent attention to major societal challenges through six strategic focus areas: Languages & Cultures, Humane AI, Cultural Heritage & Identity, Digital Citizenship, Health Humanities, Environmental Humanities. These themes are deliberately aligned with national research priorities, including the Dutch National Research Agenda (NWA) and sector plans. They provide frameworks for building public-public and public-private partnerships to address urgent societal needs.

AIHR's location in Amsterdam's city centre has proven invaluable for developing impactful partnerships. The institute has established strong collaborative relationships with cultural institutions (museums, archives, theatres), the Municipality of Amsterdam, the KNAW Humanities Cluster, private sector partners, NGOs and civic organizations, and educational institutions. This network of partnerships enables AIHR to effectively translate research into societal impact.

Notable accomplishments include the establishment of the aforementioned seven Humanities Labs as hubs for technically supported research on societal problems, the growing participation in research consortia with societal stakeholders, the successful integration of

students into impact-focused projects, and the development of alternative research outputs aligned with Open Science principles. A Research and Impact department supports these initiatives. These achievements demonstrate AIHR's commitment to meaningful societal engagement across multiple dimensions.

However, several challenges remain. The university's decentralized structure can complicate coordination of societal engagement, and some researchers feel excluded from thematic hubs and key societal challenges, indicating the need for more inclusive participation mechanisms. The visibility of research related to major challenges (AI, Health, Climate) could be improved, as AIHR is well aware. Additionally, while AIHR's geographic focus on Amsterdam has been productive, it may limit broader impact potential. Complex overhead cost structures can also create barriers to external partnerships.

Looking ahead, the committee sees significant opportunities for AIHR to continue building its societal impact. It recommends expanding partnerships beyond Amsterdam to develop clearer national and international impact strategies. AIHR should also focus on strengthening collaboration with partners outside the cultural sector, developing more inclusive mechanisms for researcher participation in societal impact initiatives, creating clearer frameworks for assessing and communicating impact, and streamlining administrative processes to facilitate partnerships with third parties. With its strong foundation in humanities research and established network of partnerships, AIHR is well positioned to enhance its societal relevance in the coming years.

2.6 HR policy

Talent management. AIHR's talent management is governed by the Faculty of Humanities' HR policy. New assistant professor positions, which include a 40% research allocation, are distributed annually across eight departments using an allocation model, with profiles jointly developed by department chairs, research directors, and programme directors to align with both research school strategies and department teaching needs. While the committee commends AIHR for considering research needs in hiring decisions, it was also noted that the current governance model for hiring can slow down recruitment. The committee recommends aiming for the shortest possible communication lines to streamline this process.

For career progression beyond assistant professor level, AIHR currently relies primarily on external recruitment rather than internal promotion pathways. While this open recruitment model is not uncommon in Dutch humanities faculties, the committee notes that it may not optimally serve talent retention and development. The absence of structured advancement opportunities, particularly to associate and full professor levels, risks losing talented mid-career researchers and their associated research capacity. Although SSH sector plan funding has enabled some internal promotions, these remain ad hoc rather than being part of a systematic approach.

The committee recommends investigating a hybrid promotion system that would create more structured pathways from assistant to associate and full professor levels, while maintaining some positions for external recruitment. Drawing on successful models from other faculties, such a system could enhance career development opportunities while preserving the benefits of bringing in external talent.

To support early-career development, AIHR has implemented several helpful mechanisms. The aforementioned RIS Fund provides teaching release time for assistant professors to allow them to strengthen their research profiles and prepare grant applications. The faculty also offers comprehensive training programmes covering academic leadership, supervision, intercultural collaboration, and other professional development areas. The committee particularly appreciates that special attention is given to first-generation academics.

AIHR has begun implementing the national "Recognition and Rewards" programme, which

aims to broaden how academic excellence is evaluated beyond traditional research metrics. The institute's approach focuses on recognizing achievements across research, teaching, and societal impact (with funding hubs aligned with interdisciplinary themes encouraging engagement with societal partners). However, interviews with staff revealed some tensions in the implementation of this new evaluation framework. While many researchers embrace opportunities for societal engagement, others expressed concern about preserving space for fundamental research that may not have immediate practical applications. The committee notes that AIHR will need to carefully balance these competing priorities as it continues developing its recognition and rewards policies. Clear guidelines for evaluating different types of academic contributions, while protecting curiosity-driven research, will be essential.

Workload. Workload management remains a significant challenge at AIHR. While the institute maintains a 60:40 teaching-research ratio for research staff – which is comparable to or even more favourable than the ratio at other Dutch humanities faculties – researchers report that teaching and administrative duties frequently encroach on nominally protected research time. Even when researchers secure major grants, teaching obligations cannot be reduced below 30%, reflecting the faculty's commitment to keeping all tenured staff engaged in teaching. While this policy has merit, it can constrain research potential, particularly for grant-funded projects requiring intensive focus. The absence of a sabbatical policy that would allow for dedicated research periods compounds these challenges. Researchers also note that the current workload model fails to adequately account for the organizational demands of collaborative, co-creative research projects. The committee is concerned that these mounting pressures on workload threaten both research quality and staff wellbeing. Effectively protecting the 40% research time allocation must remain a priority, even as AIHR faces budget constraints.

Postdocs. The position of postdoctoral researchers emerged as a concern during the evaluation. Currently, postdocs occupy an ambiguous position within AIHR's organizational structure. Though focused primarily on research, they are employed by teaching departments rather than research schools. Their vulnerable position stems from both national constraints (including the *inbeddingsgarantie,* which limits postdocs' ability to apply for major grants) and the absence of a comprehensive postdoc policy at AIHR. While some support exists through surveys and networking events, these efforts appear somewhat fragmented. Postdocs often feel isolated, lacking clear career paths and meaningful integration into the research communities.

The committee recommends developing a comprehensive postdoc policy addressing onboarding, career planning, and community integration. It also feels that postdocs should have their primary home in a research school rather than a teaching department, with mentorship structures connecting them to both senior researchers and PhD candidates.

Diversity. In line with the Faculty Strategic Plan, AIHR has made notable efforts to foster diversity and inclusion through various initiatives over the review period. These include mandatory diversity advocates on hiring committees, standardized interview protocols, and dedicated funding schemes to support female researchers (such as participation in the NWO Aspasia grant and Westerdijk Talent Scheme). In 2022, the institute took steps towards intersectional approaches by organizing sessions on inclusive research, and in 2023 it appointed a Faculty Diversity Officer who developed new guidelines for inclusive recruitment.

However, the committee found that implementation of diversity policies remains uneven across the organization. Despite having formal structures in place, systemic biases in academic hiring seem to persists. While diversity advocates are included in hiring committees, their effectiveness appears limited without broader structural changes. The committee recommends mandatory implicit bias training for all hiring committee members and the development of more robust strategies to address systemic

barriers in recruitment and promotion processes. Additionally, AIHR should consider how its current open recruitment model for senior positions might impact diversity goals, particularly regarding internal talent development and retention

2.7 Academic culture

In response to growing national attention to these issues, AIHR has taken initial steps to address openness, inclusivity, and social safety. Though the institute has introduced some positive policy measures – including confidential advisors for PhD candidates, training sessions for supervisors (which received excellent feedback from researchers in the interviews), and courses on academic integrity – these efforts remain largely optional and fragmented. The absence of mandatory training programmes and comprehensive social safety policies is a notable gap. While social safety and inclusivity are discussed in various settings, from research group meetings to annual staff evaluations, a more systematic and enforced approach is recommended. The committee advises strengthening these areas through mandatory training requirements, clearer reporting mechanisms, and more robust preventive measures.

A deeply concerning development has been the increasing prevalence of external threats to academic freedom and researcher safety. AIHR researchers face an expanding array of challenges that warrant urgent attention. These range from rising anti-international and anti-scientific/anti-intellectual sentiment in Dutch politics to coordinated online harassment campaigns targeting scholars engaged in politically sensitive or polarized debates. The proliferation of social media has intensified these risks, with scholarly expertise increasingly undermined and academic arguments dismissed as mere opinions amid growing public scepticism towards academic institutions. Additional safety concerns mentioned during the interviews involved researchers conducting fieldwork in geopolitically unstable regions or studying authoritarian regimes. These scholars often face unique risks, from surveillance and intimidation to potential reprisals against local research partners. While AIHR has begun to acknowledge these challenges, both the institute and UvA currently lack robust protocols for protecting researchers facing political or online threats. The committee observed that researchers require significantly greater institutional support and protection. It strongly recommends developing a comprehensive support system, which includes clear safety protocols, legal assistance, media training, psychological support, and email monitoring services for affected researchers. The latter would allow researchers under threat to delegate the screening of potentially harmful messages to trained staff, protecting them from direct exposure to harassment or threats. Such a system should also encompass preventive measures and provide guidelines for institutional responses when researchers face external threats to their academic freedom.

Research integrity. AIHR upholds research integrity through adherence to the Netherlands Code of Conduct and evaluation of third-party collaborations by a dedicated advisory committee at the central UvA level. Research integrity training is provided to PhD candidates as part of general social safety sessions, but attendance is not mandatory. A stronger focus on mandatory training, not just for PhD candidates but also for supervisors and leadership, is recommended to enhance awareness and accountability.

Projects that create databases and datasets adhere to the FAIR data principles, ensuring that data are re-usable and, where possible, publicly accessible. In the interviews, the committee was made aware that while current ethics review processes effectively address data protection, they sometimes struggle to fully grasp humanities-specific research practices. The committee noted that ethical considerations unique to humanities research methods – such as oral history or fieldwork in conflict zones – would benefit from more discipline-sensitive review procedures.

2.8 PhD policy and training

AIHR hosts two distinct categories of PhD candidates: (1) funded candidates employed through direct or external project funding, and (2) self-funded candidates who finance their research through scholarships or personal resources. During the review period, the proportion of self-funded candidates has grown substantially, partly due to policies incentivizing this group. While AIHR commendably strives to provide equal opportunities and nearly identical programmes to both groups, the shifting PhD population presents several challenges related to maintaining research quality, ensuring timely completion, and managing supervisory workload. These challenges will be further outlined below.

Selection and admission. The recruitment and selection processes differ markedly between these groups. For funded positions, candidates apply through open advertisements and submit research proposals for evaluation by diverse selection committees that include PhD representatives. These candidates undergo a standardized assessment process requiring final approval by the Dean. For external grants (NWO/EU), similar open procedures apply, with additional coordination between research schools and teaching departments. Self-funded candidates, however, follow a different path. They approach schools directly with research proposals, recommendation letters, and CVs. Selection criteria vary significantly across schools, with some leaving the decision entirely to prospective supervisors, while others involve the research director. This variation in procedures raises questions about consistency and equity under the AIHR model, as well as concerns about quality control given the "lighter" selection procedures for external PhD candidates. A second concern is the absence of a research master's programme for ARTES and AHM, which hampers systematic identification and recruitment of talent. In the committee's view, these differences in recruitment pathways and evaluation standards require careful consideration.

Support and representation. AIHR strives to provide equitable support for both funded and self-funded PhD candidates. All PhD candidates receive financial support for essential research activities, including conference attendance, fieldwork expenses, and thesis printing costs. Since 2022, AIHR has strengthened its commitment to financial equity by introducing top-up funding for external scholarship holders whose funding falls below UvA's minimum threshold. Beyond financial support, AIHR offers practical assistance with housing and visa arrangements, recognizing the particular challenges faced by international PhD candidates. The institute also fosters community integration through its PhD Council. The council organizes networking events at the school level and represents PhD interests in regular dialogues with institute leadership.

Quality assurance. Like other humanities research institutes in the Netherlands, AIHR faces persistent challenges regarding high discontinuation rates and extended completion times. To address these issues, the Graduate School has implemented a quality assurance model centred on individual Training and Supervision Plans (TSPs) and formal evaluation moments. Each PhD candidate, whether funded or self-funded, must develop a TSP within one month of starting the PhD trajectory. This plan, created in collaboration with their supervisors, outlines agreements on supervision and training requirements. The TSP requires multiple approvals, including signatures from the PhD candidate, supervisors, research school director, and Graduate School director, ensuring institutional oversight of the trajectory. A key monitoring mechanism is the pilot study requirement, which typically takes place after nine months for funded candidates and after twelve months for self-funded candidates. This initial milestone is evaluated by the research school director, the supervisor, and an external reader. For funded PhD candidates, a positive assessment leads to contract extension. Self-funded PhD candidates get a renewed guest account (email address and access to the library). If the pilot study falls short, candidates have four weeks to improve

their work before a final assessment that determines whether they can continue. A "go" decision is followed by annual progress meetings.

While the formal structures show important progress, the committee identified some opportunities for further improvement. For example, interviews indicated that schools are inconsistent in how they implement monitoring – some conduct formal annual evaluations, sometimes complemented by annual meetings with the research director, while others only have informal progress chats with their supervisors. Moreover, external/self-funded PhD candidates tend to get less structured support compared to funded PhDs. Progress monitoring is particularly important for the former group, as self-funded candidates have to balance their PhD projects with other responsibilities and are more likely to drop out or take too long to complete. While schools did not enforce strict completion deadlines during the 2018-2023 evaluation period, some have recently implemented policies to formally re-evaluate projects that extend beyond 8 years. This aligns with university regulations that set an 8-year expiration date for the initial doctoral programme admission decision.

Finally, the recent suspension of the Finishing Fellowships due to budget constraints has removed an important completion incentive for external PhDs. These fellowships previously offered qualifying self-funded candidates a 0.5 FTE position for up to twelve months to complete their thesis. In the committee's opinion, more uniform implementation and enhanced support structures are needed to effectively improve completion rates. The committee recommends standardizing progression procedures across all schools and extending them to external PhD candidates.

Training. AIHR PhD candidates receive training through three complementary channels, each with a distinct focus. The Graduate School of Humanities provides broad skills courses covering essential topics like academic integrity, research data management, academic writing, and presentation skills. The AIHR research schools and the national research schools offer more specialized, content-focused training aligned with specific disciplines and research areas. The extent to which AIHR schools offer training varies, however, with ASCA standing out for its efforts in this area. PhD candidates must specify which AIHR and national research school they will join and take courses at in their TSP, creating a tailor-made PhD programme together with their supervisors.

To accommodate AIHR's diverse PhD population and their different needs, Graduate School courses are not mandatory. In the committee's view, this flexibility might need reconsideration for essential topics such as research integrity. The committee appreciates that the curriculum has evolved to address emerging needs, notably through the introduction of mental health courses and specialized training for research in crisis situations. While the courses are generally well attended and well received, demand sometimes exceeds capacity, particularly for mental health support. PhD candidates can also propose courses tailored to their specific disciplinary needs, creating a bottom-up element in the training programme. Interviewed PhD candidates mentioned that career preparation remains a somewhat underexplored aspect, which could benefit from additional attention, especially with respect to non-academic career paths. A further suggestion made in the interviews is to introduce more systematic post-PhD support programmes.

Supervision. AIHR maintains high standards for PhD supervision through a well-structured system that pairs each candidate with at least two supervisors, including at least one with *ius promovendi*. The institute has implemented several successful practices to ensure high-quality supervision, including mandatory six-weekly meetings between funded PhDs and their daily supervisors. These meetings – and supervision in general – receive positive feedback from interviewed PhD candidates. The recently introduced "Superb Supervision" course has been particularly effective in strengthening supervisory practices across schools, although it is currently not mandatory for more experienced supervisors. The committee recommends extending this training to all supervisors, not just new ones, with periodic refresher courses. Some research schools, such as ACLC, have further enhanced their

supervision through additional mentoring/intervision systems, which the committee applauds. Both AIHR and the research schools have noted increased supervision needs due to the growing self-funded PhD population, presenting a challenge that requires careful attention and resource planning moving forward.

In conclusion, AIHR has established a solid foundation for PhD training and supervision through its Graduate School. The committee particularly appreciates the efforts to provide external candidates with similar support and training opportunities as employed PhD candidates. However, some challenges require attention. The high discontinuation rates and extended completion times, particularly among self-funded candidates, call for more standardized monitoring procedures across schools. Additionally, expanding the successful "Superb Supervision" training to all supervisors and making core training on research integrity and social safety mandatory would further strengthen the quality of the PhD programme.

2.9 Viability

Resources. AIHR demonstrates strong financial and human capital management despite operating in a challenging funding environment. The institute's resource base includes substantial external funding (48 million euros in 2023, with 32 million from research grants and 16 million from contract work). As mentioned above, a key strength is AIHR's centralized Grant Team, which has proven highly effective in securing competitive funding across disciplines. Furthermore, AIHR's centralized structure helps protect individual research schools from financial instability and vulnerability, although questions remain about resource allocation across schools of different sizes.

Several resource challenges require attention. First, access to external funding varies across humanities fields, creating internal inequities that AIHR must carefully manage. Second, maintaining the institute's commitment to 40% research time for all academic staff faces increasing pressure amid budget constraints. Third, the growing population of self-funded PhD candidates, while bringing additional research capacity at relatively low cost, places new demands on supervision and support resources. AIHR's strategy for addressing these challenges includes diversifying funding sources, optimizing infrastructure efficiency, and strengthening partnerships with external stakeholders.

Organizational structure and strategic collaboration. AIHR's current organizational structure – one umbrella institute housing five research schools, the Humanities Labs, and various impact initiatives – shows both strengths and limitations in facilitating strategic collaboration. The structure effectively enables uniform policy development and implementation while supporting interdisciplinary initiatives through thematic hubs and Research Priority Areas. The matrix arrangement combining research schools with teaching departments has proven particularly successful in breaking down silos and fostering innovative collaborations, while maintaining disciplinary expertise.
However, in a period of growth, both in terms of researcher numbers and the scope of activities, the consequences of this expansion have increasingly demanded careful attention to organizational dynamics. Growth seems to have amplified some inherent challenges. For instance, staff spoke about longer lines of communication, increased bureaucracy, and complexities in aligning recruitment with both research and teaching needs. Moreover, the rapid increase in membership requires more intensive community-building efforts to maintain cohesion and ensure that the integration of new researchers does not dilute the institute's collaborative culture or overextend its centralized support services.

To manage these growing pains effectively, AIHR must maintain its balance between centralized coordination and academic autonomy, preserving the agility that allows it to adapt to emerging challenges while continuing to provide robust support across all levels of the organization. The committee notes that the AIHR leadership is actively considering these challenges, exploring

ways to maintain organizational efficiency while supporting increasingly complex collaborative arrangements.

Foresight of leadership. AIHR's leadership demonstrates clear strategic vision and adaptability in navigating both current challenges and future opportunities. Here, the committee notes that the institute's strategic goals have gained particular significance as the humanities face broader challenges in the current Dutch political context. As emphasized by the Dean, AIHR plays a crucial protective role for humanities research at UvA, demonstrating its societal relevance through integrated approaches like the Humanities Labs. This protective function extends beyond individual schools to safeguarding the humanities' position within the broader academic landscape.

Particularly noteworthy is AIHR's confident and balanced approach to the announced budget cuts. Unlike some other humanities faculties in the Netherlands, where government funding cuts have led to drastic reorganization plans involving the merger or even closure of degree programmes, with significant consequences for underlying research activities and staff positions, AIHR has adopted a more strategic approach. Rather than making hasty decisions, AIHR maintains a balanced stance, vowing firmly to protect its 40% research time allocation while viewing continued investment, for instance in strategic efficiency improvements in infrastructure and support services, as essential for its future viability. Even in the face of reduced funding, AIHR's leadership believes research excellence can be maintained by strategically engaging external partners in their research agenda, thereby diversifying their portfolio and creating new opportunities. The committee commends this approach.

Strategy for the future. AIHR's strategic vision for the coming period centres on strengthening its dual commitment to academic excellence and societal relevance through a number of key priorities. First, AIHR aims to deepen the connection between research and teaching through new modular programmes that will integrate students into ongoing research projects. The Humanities Labs will play a vital role in this integration, serving as showcases for collaborative research and its societal impact.

Second, AIHR will focus on enhancing collaboration with stakeholders and external partners. This includes strengthening existing partnerships with the Municipality of Amsterdam and the KNAW Humanities Cluster via the Amsterdam Humanities Hub, while also expanding relationships with cultural institutions, heritage organizations, and private sector partners. The institute recognizes that broader engagement with civil society organizations and NGOs will be crucial to amplify its societal impact.

Third, AIHR will increase its focused attention on emerging societal challenges. This means expanding research initiatives addressing the ethical implications and societal impacts of AI, contributing to health humanities and medical ethics discussions, engaging with climate change through the environmental humanities, and examining the effects of digital transformation on society. These priorities will be supported by AIHR's established infrastructure while leveraging its position in Amsterdam's Inner City Quarter to maximize impact and visibility. While the committee finds this focus on AI, health, and climate challenges promising, it encourages AIHR to define more concrete measures, plans, and actions.

Overall, the committee notes that AIHR demonstrates both realism about challenges and confidence in addressing them. Rather than allowing budget constraints to create institutional anxiety, the institute maintains a balanced approach focused on efficiency, quality, and strategic partnership development. This approach positions AIHR well to maintain research excellence while adapting to changing circumstances in both academic and societal contexts.

2.10 Conclusion and overall recommendations

The committee is impressed with AIHR's development since its inception in 2014. The institute has successfully established itself as an effective umbrella organization for humanities research at the University of Amsterdam, achieving a commendable balance between centralized coordination and bottom-up initiatives while preserving the autonomy of its research schools. AIHR's success lies in its ability to function not merely as an administrative unit, but as a content-driven intermediary that creates genuine research synergies across disciplines.

The institute's strengths are particularly evident in its robust grant support system, comprehensive PhD training programmes, and cutting-edge research infrastructure through the Humanities Labs. These centralized services have proven especially valuable for smaller research schools that would struggle to maintain such high-level support independently. Throughout the review period, AIHR has demonstrated remarkable adaptability in responding to challenges while maintaining clear strategic vision for the future.

While certain areas require (further) attention, for instance the vulnerable and somewhat isolated position of postdocs, workload management, and social safety, the committee is confident in AIHR's capacity to address these challenges. The institute's balanced approach to maintaining research excellence while expanding societal impact, combined with its strong organizational foundation and effective leadership, positions it well for continued success in an evolving academic landscape.

The committee offers several key recommendations for AIHR's future development:

1. Societal impact. AIHR should proactively expand partnerships beyond Amsterdam to develop clearer national and international impact strategies. Furthermore, it should also invest in strengthening collaboration with partners outside the cultural sector, streamline administrative processes to facilitate external partnerships, and create clearer frameworks for assessing and communicating impact.

2. Grant support. AIHR should expand support for non-traditional funding schemes, including private partnerships, foundations, and contract research applications.

3. HR policy. AIHR should standardize key policies across research schools while preserving the necessary autonomy and create unified frameworks for monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, AIHR should consider implementing a hybrid promotion system that creates more structured pathways from assistant to associate and full professor levels, while maintaining some positions for external recruitment. This would enhance career development opportunities while preserving the benefits of bringing in external talent.

4. Postdoc policy. The position of postdoctoral researchers requires particular attention. AIHR should develop a comprehensive postdoc policy, ensure postdocs are embedded in research schools rather than departments, and create clearer career development paths and community-building opportunities.

5. Diversity and recruitment. AIHR should implement mandatory implicit bias training for all selection committees, develop more robust strategies to address systemic barriers in recruitment, and create clear policies and metrics for achieving diversity goals.

6. **Academic safety and security. To address growing concerns about academic safety and security, AIHR and UvA at large need to develop comprehensive policies for protecting researchers facing external threats, establish clear protocols for responding to political pressure and online harassment, and create support systems including, for instance, legal assistance and psychological support.**

7. **PhD policy and training. The PhD programme would benefit from several enhancements. AIHR should address high discontinuation rates, particularly among self-funded PhDs, strengthen monitoring and support systems across all schools, expand successful initiatives like the "Superb Supervision" training, and harmonize PhD progress monitoring across schools.**

3. Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication (ACLC)

The Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication (ACLC), established in 2000, is one of the oldest research schools in AIHR. The school focuses on constraints on variation in human language, communication, and cognition. ACLC collaborates across competing paradigms and methods, and aims to develop interdisciplinary solutions for the scientific community as well as for society.

The structure of the school has evolved in a bottom-up way, comprising 21 research groups and 2 research labs at the end of the evaluation period. Over the past years, dormant groups have been closed and new groups have opened, for instance by new staff members.

The total research staff count over the past six years varied between 60 people (31.6 FTE) and 48 people (20.03 FTE) and was 59 people (27.52 FTE) in 2023. This number includes 13 funded PhD candidates (10.38 FTE) in 2023. Not included are the self-funded candidates, 20 in 2023, and 2 professors by special appointment (previously 3). The general and technical support staff is mentioned, yet they are employed at the AIHR level. A growing share of the budget comes from direct funding, 57% in 2023, with the remainder coming from Dutch research grants. The share of European research grants was small and dropped to zero in 2023.

3.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

The mission of ACLC is to study the complex relations between language, cognition, and society. ACLC engages in foundational work, driven by the research interests of individual researchers or groups of researchers, or by issues that are prominent in the subdisciplines. It also pursues socially relevant work, which develops out of the foundational work and/or stems from interaction with the societal partners.

To achieve its mission, ACLC identified three strategies: (1) Team Science – ACLC aimed to foster strongly collaborative approaches; (2) Grant capture – ACLC aimed to support the acquisition of national and international grants; and (3) Renewal – ACLC aimed to renew research lines through strategic hiring.

Ad (1) - the Team Science strategy has been successfully implemented in at least four distinct ways: (a) the organization of the research in research groups (see below); (b) the collaboration with linguists of the Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC), most prominently on sign languages; (c) the collaboration with linguists outside of the University of Amsterdam, like the Fryske Akademy; and (d) partnerships with non-linguists such as experts from the Netherlands Cancer Institute or the Municipality of Amsterdam. Collaboration is also strengthened when it comes to the guidance of the PhD candidates, who are steered not only by at least two supervisors, but also supported by a moderator.

Ad (2) - ACLC is very positive about the work of the grant office at the level of AIHR, and ACLC can also show an excellent grant portfolio at the national level. Grant capture at the European level needs more attention, since it dropped and there was no EU funding at all at the end of the evaluation period.

Ad (3) - in the 2018-2023 period, ACLC was able to hire 13 new members (at different levels) and for different new or strengthened lines of research (e.g. Neurolinguistics, Literature and Computational linguistics).

The research is organized in a bottom-up and transparent fashion through the model of the research groups. They have different sizes and different life cycles, they are easy to join, they are organized around themes, whether widely or narrowly defined, and they promote collaborative work, both between ACLC linguists and between the latter and linguists outside of ACLC. Two of the research groups are special, viz. Lab Linguistics and Sign Lab Amsterdam, in the sense that they are associated with running two of the AIHR Humanities Labs, the Speech Lab and the SignLab. These two labs have technical staff, and they provide linguists from ACLC and further afield with the equipment, the technical skills, and the software for experiments and analysis.

Each of the research groups sends a representative to the ACLC Advisory Board, as do the PhD candidates and postdocs, and this board advises the Research School Director. The aim is to work towards a consensus. This reportedly works well, although it sounds cumbersome to gather all 24 members of the board at the same time. For ACLC, the leading principle is that everyone is represented, and the committee appreciates that. This principle led to the decision to exclude the Research Director from the selection process of PhD candidates – for the Research Director belongs to a research group too, which could thus overrepresent the voice of that research group.

The ACLC Research Director sits on AIHR's Research Council, effectively representing the school within the broader AIHR organizational structure. As far as ACLC is concerned, this arrangement has proven to be both efficient and effective.

There is a third element of governance, an indirect one. All the researchers are also teachers, and even to a greater extent, with a strictly handled 60 (teaching and administration) - 40% (research) division. Thus, the research is inevitably impacted by the governance and decision making that happens at the level of the teaching departments. It appears that since the last research evaluation the calculation of what counts for the 60-40% division has improved, resulting in a more favourable research allocation. ACLC researchers no longer complain about overly heavy teaching loads, unlike during the previous research evaluation. Curiously, the ACLC postdocs are administered by the teaching departments rather than the research schools. The committee recommends that this be reconsidered.

3.2 Research quality

The committee recognizes ACLC as a highly esteemed research centre in linguistics, demonstrating world-class excellence in some subdisciplines and exploring multiple aspects of the interaction of mind, language, and society. This evaluation aligns with findings from the previous research evaluation. The committee endorses the self-evaluation report's characterization of ACLC's ambition: not to become a world-renowned centre, but rather to maintain its existing status as one.

The scientific relevance and reputation of ACLC can be appreciated in the usual way, from, e.g., an impressive number of keynote and public lectures, the organization of workshops and conferences, memberships of the editorial boards of journals, and, of course, publications and other output products.

The overall publication count of ACLC is very high. This has been the case for at least over a decade now, since the previous research evaluation committee mentioned this as well. This high productivity is particularly noteworthy as ACLC does not impose publication quotas. Researchers appreciate the absence of quotas. They can do more risky research, which might not lead to publications; they do not feel a push to be the sole author; and they can and do involve junior scholars in research and publications. It clearly adds to a stimulating academic climate.

It is crucial to remark that the category of output products extends beyond publications. Particularly noteworthy is the open access

speech analysis programme *Praat,* developed by ACLC in 1992, which, according to the previous evaluation committee, 'transformed phonetics teaching and research world-wide'. The continued prominence of *Praat* is not only due to work before the 2018-2023 period but also to its maintenance and improvement in the 2018-2023 period. Another prominent example is the development of an app that will help hearing parents to understand deaf children. These examples show the importance of the two ACLC labs, the Speech Lab and the SignLab. But it must also be stressed that the research groups have achieved world-wide prominence for their top-level work on theoretical grammar and the study of multilingualism and communication disorders.

Interdisciplinarity is an important feature of much of ACLC's work, prominently featuring sign language and literature experts collaborating with computational linguists, neurolinguists joining forces with specialists in argumentation theory, experts bringing together concepts and methods from sociolinguistics and historical linguistics, or researchers focusing on the well-being of multilinguals combining linguistic, sociological, psychological, and education science perspectives. Interdisciplinary research does not stand in the way of monodisciplinary work, since high-quality interdisciplinary work requires strong monodisciplinary foundations.

Important partners of the ACLC linguists are the ILLC linguists, who work with different paradigms and methods but complement them. Although ILLC is affiliated with both the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Science, its physical location within the Science Faculty buildings can create barriers for collaboration with AIHR colleagues. The committee feels that this impediment needs attention.

3.3 Societal relevance

Part of ACLC's research has a strong link with society. The committee appreciates the variety of projects, with some research and researchers involved in and inspired by societal aspects, and other research and researchers more inspired by academic questions. In interviews, researchers stress that their focus is on academic research, whether they are inspired by societal aspects, work in a societal setting, do co-creation, or work in a more traditional academic setting doing curiosity-driven research.

The societal relevance of ACLC's work relates to multilingualism, language impairments, and sign language. ACLC studies and collaborates with multilingual communities, including the historical Frisian minority in the Netherlands and children in (primarily) Dutch-English bilingual daycare programmes. These groups exhibit different forms and degrees of multilingualism, which drives ACLC's continued investment in both theoretical and applied multilingualism research. The committee notes that the school's research partnership with the Fryske Akademy is commendable, for Frisian is an endangered language. Moreover, their work on bilingual daycare has influenced government policy and led to new legislation. Beyond the Netherlands, ACLC conducts multilingualism research in Benin and Belize, in association with the University of Leiden and the University of California San Diego.

Language impairment research relates to speakers with oncological voice and speech impediments. Some of the research takes place in a hospital in collaboration with speech therapists and surgeons, and is very much geared towards patients. ACLC researchers do research into the quality of voice prostheses over time.

ACLC's work on sign language advances the theoretical understanding of sign languages broadly, not just Dutch Sign Language. This work aims at applications that serve the community of deaf speakers as well as that of hearing speakers who are in contact with deaf speakers. The committee notes that ACLC organizes outreach events aimed at making the general public and decision makers aware that sign language is a real language. A remarkable achievement is that 2020 saw the recognition of

Dutch Sign Language as an official language of the Netherlands, a culmination point of a process in which ACLC played a crucial role.

As to the research-teaching nexus, ACLC members are not only involved in bachelor's and master's programmes, but also in a research master. Additionally, they take an active role in courses offered by the National Graduate School of Linguistics (LOT) and in teaching courses abroad.

3.4 Viability

In the period under evaluation, ACLC was able to add 13 researcher positions, in domains that respond to new developments (e.g. Sign Language Linguistics and AI). In each case the hiring process was done with the teaching department, and as far as the committee could see, the decisions were taken in a consensual matter.

These emerging research lines prepare ACLC for weathering potentially severe budget storms. What also adds to ACLC's resilience is the ease with which new research lines can be organized in research groups, the ease with which researchers can join these, and the possibility for researchers to join more than one research group. Nevertheless, the committee also heard concerns that relate to the uncertain financial situation. Three professors will retire soon, and ACLC might be able to retain only one chair.

A problem that is not particular to ACLC but still very relevant is the lack of clarity about and the near-absence of promotion opportunities, a situation that could lead early- and mid-career colleagues to look for employment elsewhere.

Human capital that is potentially underused or underappreciated is the growing cohort of active emeriti/ae: neither the self-evaluation nor the webpages make any mention of these colleagues. Their experience and their ongoing research should be cherished.

3.5 HR policy

Staff members are aware of gender diversity in hirings and aim to act accordingly. Other dimensions of diversity are also visible in the ACLC set-up, yet primarily at the level of the PhD candidates. The self-evaluation reports that ACLC 'has significantly improved its diversity taken in the broad sense (e.g. female-male ratio at all career stages).' Yet, ACLC acknowledges not having succeeded in 'recruit[ing] PhD candidates or postdocs who are native speakers of languages outside Indo-European'. The committee suggests that ACLC challenge itself more by developing an ambitious diversity strategy.

As to the diversity of subdisciplines, ACLC has greatly increased it, with the opportunities provided by the 13 new hires.

The vagueness and near-absence of internal promotion opportunities has already been mentioned as a problem for the viability of the school, but it also affects the people involved. The size and the vulnerability of the group of postdocs is also a problem, both for viability and from the point of view of HR.

3.6 Academic culture

In all conversations with ACLC representatives, the committee had the sense that ACLC cultivates openness, respect, and understanding. New and international colleagues feel that they are given space to voice their opinion. As an interdisciplinary institute, ACLC researchers come from different disciplines, have discussions, disagree, and challenge each other. The committee learned that this is not perceived as a problem; on the contrary, it is appreciated by the researchers as it leads to deeper insight and better understanding. The decision not to impose strict publication requirements was found to reduce pressure.

3.7 PhD policy and training

ACLC's policy for the training and supervision of PhD candidates is based on the AIHR policy, but ACLC added an important detail. Next to the mandatory two supervisors (or potentially more), the supervision team further includes a so-called 'moderator'. This moderator is affiliated with ACLC but does not work in the same research group as the candidate. The moderator is thus not involved in the scientific aspects of the project, but monitors PhD progress through early progress interviews and supports in matters of social safety and mental health. The self-evaluation states that the moderator system is appreciated by all parties, an impression confirmed during the site visit. ACLC correctly considers the moderator policy as one aspect of team science, even already at the level of PhD supervision.

Not every AIHR school has a research master's programme, but ACLC does. Here, ACLC can scout research talent and guide it towards a PhD path.

With 20 self-funded and 13 funded candidates, ACLC has a lower proportion of self-funded PhD candidates than other AIHR schools. The self-evaluation report states that ACLC took the 'bold' decision to treat funded and self-funded doctoral candidates in exactly the same way. Just how bold the decision was, remains to be seen, but it does contribute to a culture of inclusivity. Given also that the number of funded and self-funded doctoral candidates is modest, it is plausible that this will be achieved in practice.

PhD candidates follow a variety of more general courses offered by the Graduate School of Humanities, dealing with academic skills, academic integrity, and career planning, chosen in consultation with their supervisors and described in their individual Training and Supervision Plan (TSP). Some such courses are also offered in the LOT programme, which functions exceptionally well. Moreover, ACLC PhD candidates now have a short communication line with LOT, for this graduate school has been administered, for some time now, by the UvA Faculty of Humanities.

ACLC PhD candidates do not generally finish in 4 years. Both the management as well as the PhD candidates mentioned Covid-19, part-time contracts, sick leave, pregnancy leave, and a delay between the thesis completion date and the defence date as reasons. Neither group showed much if any concern about the long duration of many PhDs. However, the committee finds this problematic. It is especially concerned that one in four candidates do not finish in 'year 7 or later', as stated in the information provided. The committee suggests monitoring the progress of all PhD candidates and systematically identifying the causes for delay and factors that contribute to timely completion of the thesis and act upon it.

3.8 Open Science

For Open Science and data management, ACLC fully follows AIHR and the more general UvA guidelines. This is not restricted to traditional publications only. The software ACLC develops is open source. Moreover, ACLS has developed a platform to share videos. The committee commends these efforts.

Special mention should be made of the fact that LOT, the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics, has had a LOT dissertation series in place since 2012. All of the dissertations published in the series are open access.

3.9 Conclusion and recommendations

The committee considers ACLC to be a highly esteemed research centre of linguistics. It has been so for a long time, and the current strategy will likely help the school maintain that position. The interdisciplinary collaboration, the strategic hiring, the encouragement of team science, and the bottom-up approach to initiating research groups and abandoning dormant groups have

all contributed to this. The committee is impressed by ACLC's scientific relevance and reputation, and by the diversity of its outputs. It suggests continuing current practices regarding societal relevance.

The main recommendations are:

1. **Develop a more ambitious diversity strategy beyond current diversity initiatives.**

2. **Increase efforts to secure European-level grants and build a more stable, diverse EU funding portfolio. The committee is concerned about the current lack of ACLC earned European grants.**

3. **Reconsider the current governance structure. The committee acknowledges the importance of representation of all research groups, plus the PhD candidates and postdocs. However, it is a challenge to convene meetings and to effectively include all groups into decision making. Consider a more flexible structure.**

4. **Systematically monitor PhD candidates' progress by tracking their development, identifying causes of delays, and determining key success factors for timely completion. Take action based on these insights.**

4. Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM)

The Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM) is an interdisciplinary research school that focuses on the study of narratives and representations of the past, combining different theoretical perspectives. It was founded in 2014 under a different name (Amsterdam School for Heritage and Memory Studies, ASHMS). The renaming in 2015 reflects the addition of a new research line on materiality, following the inclusion of research groups dealing with topics related to archaeology and the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage. Today, AHM examines heritage, memory, and material culture with a particular emphasis on power structures, identity, conflict, and societal relevance.

Research at AHM is structured around five overarching themes: Museums & Memorials, Heritage & Conflict, Transnational Memory Narratives, Digitality & E-Memories, and Materiality & Material Culture. These five themes provide a flexible framework that helps organize and connect the more specialized bottom-up research groups. Over the review period, their number was strategically reduced from 35 to 25 groups to encourage fresh research dynamics and more focused collaboration.

Over the same period, the total number of research staff increased steadily from 45 (30.7 FTE) in 2018 to 60 (24.6 FTE) in 2023. This growth was driven mainly by increases in the number of assistant professors (made possible through SSH sector plan investments) and PhD candidates. Despite the retirement of several senior staff members, the number of full professors remained relatively stable. The total staff, including self-funded PhD candidates, professors by special appointment, and research fellows, increased from 114 to 189.

AHM experienced a significant shift in its funding structure between 2018 and 2023, with direct funding growing from 31% to 63% while both Dutch and EU research grants declined in relative importance. Despite maintaining some EU funding presence and minimal contract research engagement, the overall funding capacity decreased from 33.3 to 29.1 FTE.

4.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

AHM holds a unique position as Europe's only research school dedicated to the interconnected fields of heritage, memory, and material culture. Its mission centres on analysing how remnants and narratives of the past exist and are transformed in the present, integrating research on both material and intangible heritage. AHM pursues two parallel objectives: achieving research excellence through expanding its approach to material culture, and maintaining active societal engagement through partnerships with museums, foundations, and heritage centres across the Netherlands and beyond. This strategic direction was guided by recommendations from the previous research evaluation, leading to a broadened and deepened presence in the field and engagement with societal institutions. For the 2018-2023 period, the school defined four operational strategic aims: expanding institutional development, recovering staff capacity, strengthening its PhD programme, and diversifying publications.

The committee established that AHM has effectively matured and consolidated its position since the previous evaluation. The school has a well-developed, daring, flexible, and highly innovative profile that is coherent and consistent with its general mission and strategic vision. AHM has broadened its scope to include emerging fields like digital heritage studies, colonial heritage

research, and archaeological studies. Its distinctive interdisciplinary approach successfully combines three methodologies: theoretical analysis, object-based research, and user-focused studies. A noteworthy achievement is that AHM has enhanced its focus on materiality while maintaining robust theoretical foundations. This balanced approach was evident during site visit interviews, where researchers articulated how they examine physical artifacts not in isolation, but as elements embedded within broader cultural narratives and historical frameworks. Furthermore, the school has demonstrated resilience in facing challenges such as staff retirements and Covid-19, fostering an adaptable community through online events, social gatherings, and a strengthened focus on diversity and crisis-responsive initiatives.

AHM employs a distinctive bottom-up organizational model that prioritizes researcher autonomy while maintaining coherence through a flexible framework of five overarching themes and 25 research groups. This structure deliberately enables mobility and cross-pollination, with most researchers affiliated with multiple groups. The committee appreciates that the themes serve as flexible focal points rather than rigid boundaries, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration through regular cross-theme activities like conferences and monthly reading groups. This approach successfully balances individual researcher initiative with institutional cohesion, though careful attention is needed to maintain this balance as the school continues to grow.

The governance framework provides clear leadership while supporting the school's non-hierarchical ethos. At the top level, the research director oversees overall direction and quality, supported by two key advisory bodies: an advisory board that meets at least three times annually and includes diverse representation including PhD candidates, and an international scientific committee that provides field-specific expertise. These bodies ensure quality, coherence, and strategic alignment with faculty priorities. Each research theme is led by two theme leaders who coordinate activities and facilitate connections across the school. Day-to-day operations are supported by a coordinator and an office manager.

The school maintains strong integration with the AIHR umbrella structure, particularly benefiting from grant support services. The committee concludes that this governance model has proven effective in managing the school's expansion while maintaining its collaborative culture, though continued attention to formalizing successful informal practices may be beneficial as the organization grows.

4.2. Research quality

Over the review period, AHM strategically shifted its publication strategy towards peer-reviewed publications, with refereed articles increasing from 37 to 46 annually, despite an overall decline in total publications from 219 to 166 between 2018 and 2023. While the school has successfully established multiple scholarly outlets – two peer-reviewed book series with AUP and Palgrave, an open access journal, a proceedings series, and a (co-founded) large-scale interdisciplinary encyclopaedia – the committee expressed concerns about an overreliance on these internal publication channels at the expense of engagement with top-tier international venues.

While the committee recognizes the value of internal publication channels – particularly for junior and mid-career researchers and interdisciplinary work that may face challenges finding external outlets – it recommends developing a more balanced publication strategy to enhance global visibility, especially given AHM's aspirations for international leadership in heritage, memory, and material culture studies. Additionally, claims of academic excellence could be better substantiated through developing more comprehensive quality indicators that capture the full scope of the school's research impact.

In terms of external funding and collaboration, AHM has achieved significant success, securing over fifty national and European research grants between 2018 and 2023, including prestigious awards like HERA-JRP, MSCA-ITN, and Horizon

2020 projects, though recent years have seen a decline in the relative share of grant funding compared to direct funding. The school has also built strong international partnerships through networks like the Memory Studies Association. AHM's distinctive theoretical and methodological framework – bridging the traditionally separate fields of heritage, memory, and materiality studies – has been a key strength but also presents challenges in securing funding, as its interdisciplinary approach does not always fit neatly into conventional disciplinary categories. To navigate this, the school has adopted a strategy of cross-fertilization between research areas, enhancing its adaptability to different funding contexts and programmes.

The committee recognizes that AHM has made substantial research contributions across multiple areas, particularly in understanding how societies engage with memory and conflict. The school's dual focus on conceptual understanding and practical application has produced both theoretical insights and tangible preservation methods. The integration of theory and practice is evident in projects like the Amsterdam Time Machine and *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Cultural Heritage and Conflict*, which advance digital research methods while engaging public audiences.

AHM's research is highly interdisciplinary, merging heritage and memory studies with fields such as digital humanities, public history, and conservation science. Integration is achieved through flexible communication between the three distinct but complementary approaches within the school, internal conferences, and museum partnerships. The school's collaborations with diverse institutions, like the Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision and the Eye Filmmuseum, underscore its commitment to bridging academic and professional domains. As was highlighted during interviews with AHM members, the school effectively uses museum spaces as meeting points for theoretical and practical work.

4.3 Societal relevance

AHM's impact strategy is deeply embedded in its research priorities. Described as "part of its DNA" in the self-assessment report, societal relevance is an integral part of the school's mission. Its research themes – heritage, memory, conflict, and identity – are highly pertinent to contemporary society, and the school actively promotes an approach that integrates theoretical enquiry with practice-oriented and impact-driven research. This commitment is reinforced by an extensive network of more than 35 national and international academic and professional partners. Particularly noteworthy are AHM's numerous collaborations with key local institutions in Amsterdam, such as the Rijksmuseum, the Jewish Cultural Quarter, the *Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed*, and the City of Amsterdam. The school's international network is equally robust, strengthened by its members' active participation in advisory boards and interdisciplinary projects.

AHM has demonstrated substantial societal relevance through a range of impactful initiatives that bridge academia and broader audiences. Its extensive partnerships underscore its central role in fostering interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration. The school excels in public outreach, organizing widely attended conferences, lectures, and exhibitions that effectively disseminate knowledge beyond academic circles. Professors by special appointment further extend AHM's expertise into non-academic domains, ensuring that its research informs and benefits diverse sectors. These professors are typically connected to key stakeholders, enhancing the school's influence across different fields. Notably, AHM has developed public knowledge tools such as the aforementioned Amsterdam Time Machine, which provides open access to historical data for a broad audience. High-impact case studies – ranging from oral history initiatives to technical photography and underwater preservation – illustrate the school's innovative approaches to addressing contemporary challenges.

The uptake and impact of AHM's work is evident through its strong presence in professional sectors

and influence on policy making through board and advisory roles, particularly in areas of cultural sustainability, appropriation, restitution, and musealization. Through these efforts, AHM helps connect heritage sites to broader discourses and assists the public in understanding contested pasts and reconciling conflicts. The committee established that the school has made significant contributions to addressing urgent societal issues, particularly around postcolonialism, identity in multicultural contexts, and the decolonization of memory. Its participation in innovative initiatives like the 4D Research Lab and the Alliance for Research on Cultural Heritage in Europe (ARCHE) has enabled AHM to contribute to policy and practice at local, national, and European levels.

The research-teaching nexus is strengthened by the integration of AHM's research themes into educational initiatives across multiple departments and programmes, including dual master's programmes in heritage and memory studies, museum studies, media studies, art history, cultural studies, archaeology, literary studies, and conservation and restoration studies, as well as the new bachelor's programme in Global Arts, Culture, and Politics. Teaching often involves collaborative projects with external partners, thereby enriching students' academic experience and providing hands-on learning in real-world contexts.

The case studies presented in the self-report highlight AHM's ability to conduct practical, high-impact research that directly benefits museums and cultural institutions. Collaborations with museums have generated tangible outcomes. Through projects on sustainable oral history methods, low-cost technical photography for artifacts, and preservation of underwater material culture, AHM has developed techniques with immediate practical applications. The technical photography project, which was used for the Allard Pierson Museum's exhibition on mummy portraits, included innovative public sessions where visitors could discuss findings with researchers. Most notably, the Texel shipwreck project that included research on a remarkably preserved 17th-century dress resulted in a permanent exhibition that won the Innovator of the Year award at the 2022 Museum + Heritage Awards. These projects exemplify how AHM successfully bridges academic research with public engagement while achieving international recognition.
AHM's focus on postcolonialism, decolonization in museums, multiculturalism, migration, cultural trauma, identity conflicts, and cultural sustainability underscores its commitment to addressing critical questions of cultural diversity and social inclusion. Particularly impactful is its approach to heritage preservation and ethical practices – such as restitution and ethical musealization – which involves integrating heritage sites into broader local, national, and transnational frameworks. This multi-layered strategy fosters public awareness and understanding of contested pasts while contributing to reconciliation processes.

4.4 Viability

AHM faces both challenges and opportunities regarding its resources and long-term sustainability. The school has recently undergone substantial staffing changes, with a wave of senior staff retirements being addressed through the hiring of 15 new assistant professors and one full professor. While this renewal has brought fresh perspectives and expertise, it has also created structural challenges, particularly regarding PhD supervision capacity relative to the large number of PhD candidates.

The school rightfully notes that implementing expansion plans amid a university funding crisis is challenging. Although AHM has demonstrated success in obtaining EU and local grants, there has been a notable decline in grant funding (as measured by FTE share) since 2020. Many of the grants secured are relatively small, and the school currently relies heavily on direct university funding – one must ask whether this can be relied on to continue. The need for expensive technical research infrastructure adds another layer of financial pressure. In the committee's opinion, securing sustainable external funding sources should be given priority, especially given likely university funding cuts. Attracting more funded

rather than self-funded PhD positions should be part of such a strategy.

Looking ahead, AHM sees "consolidation and measured growth" as its priorities for the coming six years. The committee agrees with this strategy, noting that AHM demonstrates a forward-looking approach with strategic goals that align with anticipated shifts in both academia and society. On an operational level, AHM aims to find a better balance between PhD candidates and staff supervision capacity, launch a research master's programme on heritage, memory, and material culture studies to help attract future PhD candidates, and to appoint a new chair in the conceptual side of its programme to enhance academic leadership and project acquisition potential. Given likely cuts in university funding, this may, however, prove difficult.

On a content level, AHM aims to enhance its resilience by consolidating its thematic focus and interdisciplinary approach. The committee believes AHM is well positioned to expand its research on pressing societal issues – such as postcolonialism, conflict, and cultural heritage sustainability – while fostering academic-societal engagement. This is an emerging field, and AHM appears to be successfully capitalizing on growing academic and societal interest in heritage studies. Its focus on material objects reflects current academic interests while enabling closer collaboration with museums and heritage institutions.

AHM's adaptability is reflected in its plans to leverage Amsterdam's cultural institutions and international partnerships to advance its impact and visibility. The school's research appeals to both conceptual cultural historians and policy makers while providing training in theoretical and material perspectives, making it attractive to PhD candidates. The high number of cross-institutional collaborations suggests AHM will flourish if funding continues to be available. Should funding become sparse in the Netherlands, AHM is well positioned to become an internationally known hub for these topics and may benefit from funds and interest elsewhere.

In conclusion, the committee endorses AHM's strategy of consolidation and measured growth but underscores the importance of financial sustainability in the face of impending university budget cuts. Strengthening external funding efforts – both through European and large-scale local grants and partnerships with museums and other stakeholders – will be essential. This is not only critical for supporting early-career researchers but also for maintaining the technical infrastructure necessary for AHM's research. Long-term viability will require proactive leadership, strategic foresight, and the flexibility to respond to shifts in the research landscape, societal developments, and institutional changes. The committee emphasizes the need for AHM to reinforce its funding strategy while continuing to adapt to the evolving demands of its field and the pressing societal issues it seeks to address.

4.5 HR policy

AHM aligns closely with broader institutional strategies on human resource management. Formal promotion and career progression decisions are made at the faculty level rather than within the school, limiting AHM's influence over talent management. During interviews, staff expressed frustration with what they perceived as an opaque promotion system at the faculty level, citing unclear career advancement pathways and criteria. Opinions on AHM's support for staff development were more positive. The school actively supports grant applications and career advancement through mentoring and professional development opportunities, with a particular focus on early-career researchers.

This support is particularly evident in AHM's postdoctoral community, which has expanded to eight members thanks to sector plan funding. Postdocs benefit from structured mentoring, grant application assistance, and various professional development opportunities. However, a key area for improvement is their lack of direct representation in AHM's governance structure, as there is currently no postdoc member on the AHM advisory board. This gap may limit the school's ability to address postdoc-specific needs and

concerns and should be rectified. Additionally, the committee noted that new staff members often struggle to navigate the university's complex administrative structure. Providing enhanced orientation and guidance could help ease their transition and improve integration into the school.

AHM embraces a broad definition of diversity, encompassing gender, nationality, migration background, ethnicity, and disability. The school actively engages in AIHR and Faculty of Humanities initiatives, offering training on inclusion and bias-free selection while promoting diverse forms of academic recognition across research, teaching, and leadership.

4.6 Academic culture

AHM fosters a non-hierarchical, inclusive, and supportive academic environment that particularly appeals to international scholars. The school prioritizes community building through conferences, journals, and collaborative projects, maintaining strong communication channels via newsletters and a dedicated app. While its bottom-up organizational structure and collaborative approach to grants and research have been successful, AHM faces challenges in sustaining community cohesion. The geographic dispersion of researchers across multiple locations in Amsterdam and limited opportunities for routine meetings make regular interaction difficult. Additionally, balancing departmental commitments with AHM activities poses a challenge for many members, especially given workload constraints. To address these issues, the committee suggests introducing structured initiatives such as an "AHM Grants Day" for knowledge sharing and creating more opportunities for colleagues to connect, while remaining mindful of existing time pressures.

4.7 PhD policy and training

AHM has a substantial community of 98 PhD candidates, though there is a notable imbalance between self-funded (78) and funded positions (20). The school employs a structured admissions process through a scientific committee that evaluates applications using NWO criteria, with two annual deadlines. As mentioned above, a key challenge is maintaining appropriate supervision capacity given the large number of candidates. Completion times are concerning, with most PhDs taking longer than the standard four years. This suggests a need for clearer expectation management at the start of projects, particularly for self-funded candidates who often struggle to balance research with other work commitments.

The programme benefits from PhD representation through having a PhD member on the AHM advisory board and responsive management. The director and coordinator demonstrate clear commitment to PhD welfare through regular engagement. Community building and scholarly engagement are fostered through the annual conference and PhD days, which provide platforms for presenting research and networking. While PhD candidates appreciate these opportunities for meeting and socializing, some call for more structured community building. Suggestions include more routine meeting scheduling and annual information sessions for all PhD candidates rather than just orientation at the start of the PhD trajectory. The possibility of adopting a more structured theory seminar following the ASCA model was also mentioned. AHM has conscientiously implemented the AIHR support structure for its doctoral candidates, combining formal oversight with personal development opportunities. The supervision framework starts with a critical first-year milestone – the pilot study – which serves as a formal go/no-go assessment point. Throughout their PhD journey, candidates meet regularly with their supervisors, typically every 2 to 6 weeks, ensuring consistent guidance and feedback. A particularly noteworthy aspect is the annual evaluation system with the director, which includes private check-ins where candidates can discuss any concerns without their supervisors present. This demonstrates AHM's commitment to creating a safe space for open dialogue and addressing potential issues early. The school places strong emphasis on mental health support and social safety, recognizing the emotional and psychological demands of doctoral research.

Additionally, AHM organized a CV clinic for PhD supervisors that served as a platform to share best practices on supervision while providing opportunities for feedback and advice on funding applications.

The professional development support for PhD candidates is equally robust. Through the Graduate School of Humanities, candidates have access to a structured training programme that builds essential academic skills. They can also participate in national research schools (such as the Huizinga Institute, OSL, NICA, OSK, and Archaeon), broadening their scholarly networks and helping them acquire specialized knowledge. Funded PhD candidates gain valuable teaching experience, with a 0.2 FTE teaching load in their second and third years.

4.8 Open Science

AHM demonstrates a strong commitment to Open Science principles through multiple initiatives and approaches. At the core of its Open Science strategy is the diamond open access journal *Heritage, Memory and Culture*, complemented by two book series that provide additional open publishing venues for researchers. The school follows the pragmatic principle of "open when possible, closed when necessary", recognizing that different disciplines within heritage and memory studies may have varying constraints and traditions regarding openness. The Amsterdam Time Machine is AHM's flagship Open Science project, making historical data freely accessible while adhering to FAIR principles in research data management. This commitment to FAIR data management extends across the school's research activities.

AHM's approach to Open Science combines institutional support with active community engagement. At the institutional level, the school leverages university agreements for open access publishing while working closely with AIHR's data steward and Humanities Labs to ensure proper data management and research ethics. What makes AHM's approach distinctive is its strong focus on stakeholder partnerships, particularly with cultural institutions ranging from major museums to smaller heritage organizations. The school makes special efforts to support smaller museums that lack research resources, while also prioritizing accessibility for Global South colleagues. Rather than treating Open Science as just a technical requirement, AHM integrates it into their broader mission of public engagement and knowledge sharing. This is evident in how scholars weave public outreach into their research activities and maintain active partnerships with city organizations.

Looking ahead, AHM plans to further strengthen its Open Science infrastructure while maintaining the flexibility to accommodate disciplinary differences and emerging needs in heritage and memory studies. This strategic approach will help ensure that AHM remains at the forefront of open and engaged scholarship.

4.9 Conclusion and recommendations

Over the past decade, AHM has established itself as Europe's only research school dedicated to heritage, memory, and material culture studies. Since its founding, the school has developed distinctive strengths through its unique interdisciplinary approach, successfully integrating these three fields. AHM's flexible, non-hierarchical structure promotes innovation while enabling the effective integration of theoretical analysis with practical applications. This is particularly evident in its strong societal partnerships and public engagement, especially through collaborations with museums and cultural institutions. AHM has also cultivated a large and well-supported PhD community, though challenges remain in balancing supervision capacity and funding sustainability. While the school has demonstrated impressive growth and resilience, it must now address key challenges related to financial sustainability, publication strategy, and maintaining research quality across its broad scope of activities.

To further strengthen AHM's position and ensure its continued success, the committee recommends the following:

1. **Develop a more balanced publication strategy. Reduce reliance on internal publishing channels and increase engagement with top-tier international venues. While AHM's existing publication outlets serve an important role, a more diversified strategy will enhance research visibility and impact on a global scale.**

2. **Strengthen financial sustainability by further diversifying funding sources. Reduce dependence on direct university funding by increasing efforts to secure large-scale European and national grants. As part of this, AHM should develop strategies to attract more externally funded PhD positions, thereby addressing the current imbalance between funded (20) and self-funded (78) PhD candidates.**

3. **Ensure supervisory capacity remains sustainable and aligned with PhD growth, and strengthen the PhD pipeline. Given the large number of PhD candidates relative to available supervisors, AHM should take measures to prevent supervisory capacity from becoming overstretched. In addition, the planned research master's programme in heritage, memory, and material culture studies should be developed as a means of strengthening AHM's PhD pipeline, ensuring a steady flow of high-quality candidates and increasing funded PhD opportunities.**

4. **Enhance support structures for the postdoctoral community. Establish more formalized support mechanisms for postdocs, including dedicated professional development programming and representation in AHM's governance structures to ensure their perspectives and needs are adequately addressed.**

5. **Deepen strategic internal and external collaborations. Strengthen cross-theme collaboration within AHM to enhance interdisciplinary synergies, while also fostering stronger connections with other AIHR research schools and external academic and cultural institutions. This will help maintain AHM's distinct identity while maximizing research impact.**

6. **Strengthen community cohesion and engagement. Introduce more structured social activities and networking opportunities to enhance internal community-building efforts.**

5. Amsterdam School for Regional and Transnational and European Studies (ARTES)

Established in 2014, the Amsterdam School for Regional and Transnational and European Studies (ARTES) emphasizes interdisciplinary and transnational approaches to understanding global and regional dynamics. It seeks to move beyond traditional area and regional studies by exploring the formation and transformation of world regions, borders, and identities, both historically and in the modern context. The research is organized around five clusters and a variety of research groups and projects, each of which belongs to one or more clusters.

In the past six years, ARTES has grown gradually in terms of staff and consolidated in terms of funding. Research staff increased from 30.23 FTE (54 people) in 2018 to 34.31 FTE (71 people) in 2023. There has been substantial growth on the level of assistant and associate professors and postdoctoral researchers and a slight decrease in full time professors. The number of funded PhD candidates varied between 11 and 14, and was 11 at the time of the self-assessment report. The number of self-funded PhD candidates, not included in the research staff count, dropped from 34 to 23.

About half of the budget comes from direct funding; the share dropped slightly during the six years to 47%. The share of Dutch research grants dropped considerably, from 37% to 16 %, partly due to a concluding NWO Spinoza prize. However, the share of EU funding rose from 8% to 36%. A small share of the budget comes from contract research (dropping from 3% to 1%).

A research director leads the school. The director is assisted by a coordinator and an office manager. An Advisory Board consisting of six senior academics and two PhD candidates assists with assessment procedures and offers advice on strategy, new research groups, and the selection of new research areas.

5.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

ARTES, a young and comparatively small school, had several strategic aims over the past six years. They include developing and strengthening the research profile and attracting external funding. Other aims were to strengthen academic as well as public impact. More on these aims in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Internal discussions and ultimately a decision by the Advisory Board led to the definition of five transversal research clusters: (1) Belonging and Identity; (2) Social Justice and Contestation; (3) Power and Governance; (4) Sustainability and Disruption; and (5) Digital Networks, Communications, and Technologies. The committee thinks the clusters are well chosen and cover many of the potential topics of research at ARTES. Each cluster hosts a series of research projects and groups, varying between 6 and 22 per cluster. A group or project can belong to more than one cluster, which is in line with the multidisciplinary nature of the research.

So far, clusters have developed a range of activities, such as lecture series, reading groups, PhD workshops, and thematic debates. The committee thinks these clusters can be beneficial for further integration of the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation (CEDLA) and for collaboration with the Amsterdam Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (ACMES), two centres dedicated to regional studies as well. In recent years, ARTES has widened its network with the Faculties of Law and of Social and Behavioural Sciences.

An important development in AIHR is the establishment of the Humanities Labs. The labs focusing on heritage and digital methods and data (notably CREATE) help ARTES members expand their work on digital cultures.

Regarding the strategy to attract external funding, ARTES researchers feel that opportunities differ between the EU level (international consortia) and the national level (smaller individual grants). The total monetary value has remained stable during the past six years, but varied in sources, with a shift from Dutch (NWO) to EU (ERC, HERA) funds. This shift is not intentional and partly due to a concluding NWO Spinoza prize.

5.2 Research quality

The research done at ARTES has achieved a strong international standing, as recognized by peers, stakeholders, and the general public. The school has produced high-quality publications in respected peer-reviewed journals and with prominent publishers, such as Oxford University Press and Cornell University Press.

In the past six years, the school has innovated by exploring transversal and interdisciplinary research. The research contributes significantly to understanding cultural, political, linguistic, and religious identities, as well as their representations in the arts and literature. The approach combines institutional perspectives on world regions with a critical lens on how regions, borders, and differences are constructed. This makes ARTES research particularly relevant to pressing global challenges, such as threats to democracy, the rise of illiberalism, migration, climate change, digitalization, social disruptions, structural and institutional violations of human rights, and political mass violence. While there is a strong geographical focus on the Netherlands and Europe, the research also extends to other regions, including Latin America (via CEDLA), the Middle East, and Central Asia, highlighting its global reach and relevance. ARTES's scope of research thus extends beyond traditional dichotomies such as the Global North and the Global South, and incorporates perspectives from the Global East. This inclusive outlook enriches its global engagement and fosters a more comprehensive understanding of international dynamics.

ARTES researchers cover a wide range of topics, drawing from diverse disciplinary traditions within the humanities, social sciences, and law. However, there seems to be some lack of clarity regarding how these various disciplinary methods are integrated into the research outputs. In particular, the role of legal research appears to be somewhat underdeveloped. Recent hiring efforts are expected to strengthen ARTES's focus on the socio-legal field, addressing this gap and further enhancing the school's multidisciplinary approach.

"The margin in other departments is our core strength", one of the ARTES research staff members stated during an interview. In other words, the research carried out by ARTES differs from that of the other schools quite significantly, due to the methods used, such as ethnography and co-creation, and due to the distant locations and different time zones in which some of the research and data collection take place. Much of the research is time- and resource-intensive. Co-creation is also risky, as the interests of the participants may differ significantly from the academic objectives. Despite the challenges of co-creative work, the committee was impressed by the manner in which ARTES fosters collaboration with societal partners and successfully delivers on these partnerships. The committee recommends that ARTES continue this way and hopes that AIHR and UvA recognize this characteristic of ARTES and protect it.

ARTES faces challenges stemming from the organizational activities required to do co-creative research, as it is time intensive. Additionally, ARTES researchers have expressed a need for greater support from AIHR and the university, particularly concerning social safety. This is critical for those studying potentially vindictive regimes (such as Russia) or conducting fieldwork in unsafe locations. The absence of a comprehensive safety policy and the university's apparent lack of experience in supporting researchers working with

external partners further exacerbate these concerns. To illustrate this, an example was mentioned of an interview where the safety of the interviewee was crucial for the ARTES researcher. For the AIHR ethics committee, a medical issue was key (the interviewed war veteran had lost a leg; could this be described or not). The safety of the interviewee remained a concern for the researcher.

ARTES is one of the smaller schools and as such struggles with developing a critical mass of research and other activities. At the moment, ARTES lacks its own premises and meeting places, which limits opportunities to develop group cohesion and identity. Establishing a dedicated ARTES location would be beneficial for the further development of the school.

5.3 Societal relevance

ARTES stands out for its strong public engagement and societal relevance, demonstrated through collaborative and co-creative research projects, public lectures, and the integration of public components into workshops and conferences. Additionally, ARTES researchers are actively engaged in the cultural and literary sphere, ensuring their research reaches and impacts a wide audience.

ARTES's strategy regarding societal relevance is firmly rooted in a research approach that actively engages with and serves societal groups and stakeholders through processes of collaboration and co-creation. This approach is particularly evident in intensive collaborations with the city of Amsterdam, a metropolitan hub with a highly global character. Examples are projects such as Media-oorlog, Amsterdam Diaries, and Collecting the City. An example of co-creation in a very different region is the LINKAGES project, which brings together researchers, practitioners, and producers on the topic and practice of bio-based economies in the Brazilian Amazon.

Furthermore, ARTES researchers are active as curators and programmers, both in the city of Amsterdam as well as elsewhere in the Netherlands. Examples are activities at De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam Public Library, De Balie, and Crossing Border Festival. ARTES launched the annual State of European Literature lecture in collaboration with organizations in Amsterdam. After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, ARTES, with support from ACES, hosted a hybrid lecture series on the history and culture of Ukraine.

ARTES researchers are frequently called upon to provide policy and legal advice, further highlighting the school's practical impact and its integration into societal and policy-oriented discussions. For instance, the city of Amsterdam has initiated collaboration on topics relating to EU law. Moreover, ARTES researchers are involved in policy advice at the EU level.

Finally, ARTES researchers play an important role in connecting teaching and research by contributing to various bachelor's and master's programmes. Their involvement reflects their broad disciplinary and linguistic expertise.

5.4 Viability

As a young research school, ARTES has actively worked to "consolidate, expand, and innovate" by pursuing five strategic aims. These include attracting external funding, strengthening the internal research culture, increasing engagement with cultural and societal stakeholders, reinforcing the PhD community, and enhancing gender equality as well as cultural and linguistic diversity.

Given its thematic focus, the multidisciplinary approach, and the collaborative and co-creative nature of much of its research, ARTES is exceptionally well positioned to respond to societal developments and challenges. These qualities make ARTES a dynamic and forward-thinking research school, capable of addressing contemporary issues with relevance and impact. The school's encouragement and support for the acquisition of grants help ensure that the research carried out by ARTES researchers is state-of-the-art.

There has been a shift in the external funding portfolio. Moreover, there have been attempts to tap into less conventional sources (i.e. international sources other than the EU, such private foundations). However, ARTES researchers felt they could not rely on the grant office for this, since the office seems unfamiliar with international sources other than the EU. Also, these grants are not appreciated as much by the university. ARTES researchers had a similar experience with support for contract research, which did not fit their needs. Given the scope and methods of ARTES' research, diverse funding sources can be important enablers for collaboration. There is certainly room for development of the support at the AIHR level.

When it comes to potential budget cuts, ARTES researchers indicated already feeling overwhelmed by the amount of teaching that is required of them. Research time is increasingly difficult to protect, as the teaching workload exceeds the school's staffing capacity. A solution is needed to prevent ARTES researchers from focusing almost exclusively on teaching. Budget cuts would only exacerbate this problem.

5.5 HR policy

ARTES faces challenges, particularly in supporting postdoctoral researchers who are often on temporary contracts and reliant on external funding. ARTES has recognized this gap, with plans to build a dedicated postdoc community and provide targeted support for publishing and funding applications. Yet, a broader, more structured policy could better support postdocs' career development and job security, ensuring they feel valued and integrated within the school. It will be important for ARTES to strengthen the application of Recognition and Rewards and postdoctoral support policies.

ARTES is proactive in promoting diversity and inclusion, including in the hiring process. Yet it is recognized that ARTES is still learning, and that the implementation of diversity and inclusion still requires attention and refinement by the hiring teams and the leadership of ARTES. For example, Dutch citizens with a migration background are seriously underrepresented. ARTES has struggled to attract members of this community. It is recommended that the leadership and hiring teams actively address this issue.

5.6 Academic culture

ARTES demonstrates a robust framework for fostering leadership development among its junior staff through its transversal clusters. These clusters enable colleagues, including PhD candidates, postdocs, as well as those in teaching-only positions, to assume responsibilities and influence the organizational agenda. This structure effectively facilitates the cultivation of leadership skills and professional growth among early-career academics. Postdocs working as part of larger projects felt well included and felt that their voices were heard. ARTES has a flat hierarchy. The committee recognizes this culture as one of ARTES's key strengths.

Colleagues who have transitioned from other institutions praise ARTES for its multidisciplinary approach and the diverse perspectives it fosters. In particular, the informal sharing of knowledge, for example during casual interactions like coffee breaks, nurtures a collaborative and supportive research environment.

ARTES has taken steps to address the need for safe spaces for researchers, exemplified by initiatives like the "Writing Violence Seminar", which offers practical, emotional, and stylistic strategies for navigating sensitive topics within a supportive environment.

Postdocs and PhD candidates value the responsibilities they are given and the informal atmosphere. However, they also express a desire for more interaction with senior scholars, as they sometimes feel isolated. The introduction of initiatives such as roundtable events featuring senior academics could enhance mentorship opportunities and foster stronger intergenerational academic engagement.

On a practical level, the organizational structure of ARTES presents a dual affiliation dynamic: while researchers identify strongly with their research schools, senior staff often align more closely with teaching departments. The physical setup, which places research schools and teaching departments in close proximity, facilitates daily interactions and contributes to a sense of social cohesion among faculty members.

ARTES is to be commended for its commitment to leadership development, diversity, and inclusion, as well as its emphasis on creating a collaborative and safe research environment. Addressing the expressed needs for increased mentorship opportunities and refining structural alignments between research and teaching roles will further enhance its organizational effectiveness and academic community.

5.7 PhD policy and training

ARTES has implemented its PhD policy through a structured framework designed to build a supportive and sustainable environment for its PhD candidates. This includes providing access to the AIHR PhD training programme, integrating candidates into discipline-specific national research schools, and establishing initiatives like peer-review groups, seminars, and an annual PhD conference. Furthermore, ARTES has addressed the challenges associated with the multidisciplinary and often politically sensitive nature of its research areas by creating a structure for community support, which includes social safety protocols, mental health support, and conflict mediation.

Notable outcomes of ARTES's PhD policy include strengthened community bonds, as reported by the PhD candidates. The committee appreciates this development. ARTES organizes an annual retreat and other more regular events aimed at fostering academic and social integration. Additionally, the introduction of transversal clusters and ARTES's commitment to diversifying staff and research themes contribute to a richer, more inclusive research environment for the PhD candidates and a greater sense of belonging. At the same time, one of the core issues reported by representative of ARTES is the lack of a dedicated research master's programme. Such a programme would enable ARTES to identify potential PhD candidates, and allows talented students to get acquainted with research and ARTES. The lack of a research master's programme hampers the continuity between teaching and research for ARTES, so the committee was told.

ARTES feels that they are at times less successful in the selection by AIHR of potential PhD candidates for the NWO PhD scheme. This might be due to the interdisciplinary and co-creative nature of the research. The committee recommends that ARTES discusses the position of potential ARTES PhD candidates for the NWO PhD scheme with AIHR and reaches out to ASCA to learn about their experience with the scheme.

The number of self-funded PhD candidates has declined over the past six years. Given the challenges of supervising these candidates, and the often extended duration of their projects, the committee does not view this development as a major cause for concern.

In theory, all PhD candidates are expected to have a yearly meeting with the research school director. These complement the regular supervisory meetings between PhD candidates and their supervisors which take place at least every six weeks. The committee noticed that the purpose of the yearly meetings is sometimes unclear to the PhD candidates, as some feel they are being assessed by both their supervisors as well as the school directors in the annual meetings. This issue has been raised by the PhD candidates, and it has now been clarified that the meetings with the research school director are intended to provide space and support for the PhD candidates. Nevertheless, the power dynamics involved remain delicate. Attention of both the supervisors as well as the research school director to these dynamics remains necessary. It is also recommended to state the purpose of each meeting clearly.

The committee also noticed an issue with externally funded PhD candidates, as some

apparently never have these meetings. Regular annual meetings, similar to those of the funded PhD candidates, are beneficial and should be introduced across the board.

Finally, while a confidential adviser is available, PhD candidates do not always find this role helpful for their needs. For example, if someone has a conflict with a senior colleague, the confidential adviser currently recommends a highly formal procedure. However, in some cases, an informal conversation might be more helpful. A more flexible approach from the confidential adviser, along with the involvement of a mediator – whether the adviser, a mentor, or another trusted figure – would be beneficial in such situations.

5.8 Open Science

ARTES follows the Open Science and Open Access policies established by both the faculty and the university. However, Open Access publishing poses particular challenges for monograph-based disciplines, such as those represented within ARTES, due to the significant costs associated with this publishing model. As a result, ARTES acknowledges the practical limitations and accepts that not every publication can be made openly accessible.

5.9 Conclusion and recommendations

The committee recognizes the efforts ARTES has made over the past six years. It is a young and relatively small school, and it has made great progress in the establishment of a clear structure and profile. The transversal clusters are organized in a non-hierarchical manner. It allows junior as well as senior staff to develop leadership skills and to take responsibility for the research agenda. The collaborative and co-creative research contribute to its strong public engagement and societal relevance. ARTES work is visible and relevant to society far beyond Amsterdam, and this work should be valued and safeguarded. The funding strategy suits ARTES's research.

The main recommendations are the following:

1. **In order to further enhance the quality of research and the research community at ARTES, it is recommended that ARTES pursue the development of its own Research Master's programme and continue to advocate with AIHR for its necessity.**

2. **Advocacy and policy work is needed from the ARTES leadership to ensure that the specific interdisciplinary nature and the ways of co-creating are better understood outside of ARTES, especially at AIHR and UvA level.**

3. **ARTES should ensure that all PhD candidates and postdocs have, in addition to regular meetings with their supervisors and the annual meeting with the research school director , an annual opportunity to discuss their well-being, work, and life with someone independent of their supervisors, such as a mentor or the research director. It is important to clearly communicate the purpose of this meeting to the PhD candidates. Additionally, ARTES should ensure equal treatment of funded and self-funded individuals, and provide them with clear, annual information about available support.**

4. **It is vital to prioritize diversity in hiring processes and implement varied recruitment strategies to ensure that prospective Dutch scholars with a migrant background have a fair opportunity. ARTES should also work towards creating platforms – and particularly physical spaces – where senior and junior scholars can meet and collaborate. Additionally, efforts to co-create policies and initiatives on researcher safety and research integrity should be sustained.**

6. Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA)

Founded in 1994, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA) has established itself as a leading interdisciplinary research school that brings together scholars engaged in the theory-driven analysis of culture in the broadest sense. Operating through 36 dynamic research groups, ASCA aims to combine cutting-edge theoretical approaches with deep methodological reflection and close analysis of cultural objects, artistic practices, and contemporary issues. The school unites scholars from diverse disciplines, including literary studies, philosophy, film and media studies, performance studies, musicology, religious studies, and art history, promoting collaboration across traditional disciplinary boundaries while maintaining strong connections to established fields.

ASCA has experienced substantial growth since 2018, with research staff increasing from 126 to 159 members. This expansion was largely made possible through the Dutch government's sector plan funding, which enabled the hiring of numerous new assistant professors (increasing from 54 to 75). Additionally, major grant successes, particularly in securing large-scale project funding, facilitated a significant rise in postdoctoral researchers (from 4 to 19). The PhD community has also greatly expanded, with the number of self-funded candidates growing from 100 to 135, alongside 27 funded positions. Funding sources in 2023 comprised direct funding (58%), Dutch research grants (19%), and EU grants (21%), with total expenditure rising from €8.6M to €11.9M over the evaluation period. These developments underscore ASCA's ability to attract resources and talent, solidifying its reputation as a hub for innovative and interdisciplinary cultural research.

6.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

ASCA has cultivated a distinct, clearly defined, and appealing profile, which it has successfully upheld for 30 years now. It occupies a unique position in the international research landscape. The school's core principles – responsible interdisciplinarity, theoretical and methodological renewal, societal relevance, close analysis of cultural expressions, and a contemporary perspective – have remained steadfast throughout its history.

ASCA research is structured around the MAGIC framework, encompassing five thematic constellations: Mediality, Arts & Aesthetics, Globalization & Migration, Identities, and Cultural & Social Critique. Introduced in 2012, this framework has provided a valuable organizing structure and is regularly reassessed by the ASCA Board and during the annual ASCA Summits.

While the framework's broad categories have historically accommodated diverse research interests, emerging fields like AI, environmental humanities, and health humanities may not fit neatly within its existing constellations. The committee feels that maintaining a fixed framework could constrain ASCA's ability to fully embrace new research directions and methodologies. Therefore, the committee recommends that the school consider whether the MAGIC framework might benefit from strategic updates or restructuring to better reflect the contemporary research landscape. This could involve expanding or redefining existing categories or potentially developing a new organizational structure altogether. While this may mean bidding farewell to the much-loved MAGIC acronym, the goal is precisely to ensure ASCA continues to evolve without "losing the magic" that has made the school so effective and inspiring. Regular consultations and community summits provide an ideal platform for such discussions, ensuring that ASCA's research

organization remains dynamic and responsive to pressing global issues while preserving its interdisciplinary strengths.
The school's bottom-up structure empowers researchers at all levels to experiment, driving pioneering work in emerging interdisciplinary fields. Researchers can form groups, organize events, seek grants, and publish, fostering both individual excellence and collaboration. This open approach creates a responsive, dynamic, and non-hierarchical environment that adapts to academic and societal changes.

Over the past six years, ASCA has made impressive strides in meeting all of the recommendations formulated by the previous research evaluation committee. The school has successfully broadened its interdisciplinary reach by engaging with experts across diverse fields, including social sciences, life sciences, and law. ASCA has also strengthened its PhD programme, reinforcing it as the core of its research community, while promoting diversity within both staff and curriculum. Additionally, ASCA – in collaboration with the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR) grant team – has enhanced its support for external funding applications, resulting in significant improvements in grant capture. Moreover, the school has deepened collaborations with partners at local, national, and international levels. These achievements demonstrate ASCA's responsiveness to feedback and nimbleness in adapting to evolving circumstances.

ASCA's daily management team consists of a research director who is assisted by a vice-director, a coordinator, and an office manager. The ASCA Board comprises both senior and junior staff members, plus two PhD representatives. The school is one of six research schools within AIHR, which provides its annual funding. As part of AIHR, ASCA collaborates with the other research schools in establishing common policies on grant support, research evaluation, recruitment and career development, and PhD training. Through representation on the AIHR Research Council, the school maintains active engagement in institutional governance. While the existence of AIHR undeniably offers benefits to ASCA, particularly through the expert assistance of the Grant Office, tensions arise from the need to balance the autonomy of a highly successful and well-established school with the umbrella organization's understandable tendency towards standardization. ASCA is encouraged to engage in ongoing, constructive dialogue with AIHR to address the tensions between maintaining its autonomy and aligning with the umbrella organization's standardization requirements. In the committee's opinion, ASCA should remain open to exploring new approaches that could enhance efficiency and effectiveness, even if they require some adjustment. At the same time, AIHR should respect the established practices that have contributed to ASCA's sustained success, ensuring that any changes are carefully considered and thoroughly evaluated.

6.2 Research quality

The quality and scholarly relevance of ASCA's research are highly commendable, with a clear focus on excellence and innovation. ASCA's commitment to producing high-impact, peer-reviewed work in diverse forms – ranging from journal articles to monographs and edited volumes – has resulted in a robust publication output that meets international academic standards. Beyond traditional publications, ASCA recognizes diverse research outputs such as software, datasets, and audiovisual essays, but peer-reviewed work continues to serve as the core quality benchmark.

The expectation that ASCA members publish at least two peer-reviewed academic articles per year, or one monograph every five years and one article per year (with editing a peer-reviewed volume counting as one article), seems reasonable, given their 40% allocation for research. This standard – which most members comfortably meet – helps ensure a consistent level of scholarly output, fostering both individual academic development and ASCA's collective research profile. The notable drop in average research output in 2022 and 2023 can be plausibly accounted for as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The committee notes that ASCA has established a strong academic reputation and leadership within its field. Its researchers are frequently recognized for their contributions, as evidenced by prestigious awards and memberships in academic bodies, such as the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Amsterdam Young Academy. The annual ASCA dissertation, article, and book awards also foster a culture of scholarly excellence and encourage high standards across the school's doctoral and research programmes. ASCA's connections with internationally renowned publishers and peer-reviewed journals highlight its pivotal role in advancing critical discourse across various disciplines.

The body of knowledge in cultural analysis, new media studies, and digital methods has been significantly enriched by ASCA's output, which includes influential monographs and pioneering software development for social media research. The substantial number of grant awards, including many ERC grants (from Starting to Consolidator and Advanced), underlines the school's capacity to secure competitive funding and contribute valuable research tools, methodologies, and theoretical insights to both academic and applied fields. The high number of PhD theses defended over the past six years demonstrates ASCA's effectiveness in nurturing early-career researchers, who continue to impact the field. Indeed, a significant percentage of ASCA PhDs go on to hold academic positions.

Over the evaluation period, ASCA has made further strides in enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration and integrating diverse fields, paradigms, and methods, in line with recommendations from the previous research evaluation committee. Importantly, while interdisciplinary research is actively encouraged, it is not imposed on ASCA members. The committee found this approach commendable, as promoting responsible interdisciplinarity involves respecting and nurturing strong disciplinary foundations. Recognizing the challenges inherent in interdisciplinary collaboration – particularly the risk that humanities research might take a secondary role – ASCA has actively worked to position its researchers as leaders in shaping interdisciplinary enquiries. Through strategic initiatives such as the 2019 Summit on "Broad Interdisciplinarity, Social Relevance, Artistic Research" and the 2022 Summit on "Fieldwork and (Re)Emerging Fields," ASCA has engaged its researchers in meaningful discussions on how to avoid being pushed into supporting roles when collaborating with researchers from the social, natural, and legal sciences. In the committee's opinion, this approach to ensuring that researchers take a leading role in shaping the questions and directions of interdisciplinary projects should be continued. Additionally, the school may need to consider specific strategies or support to help researchers balance the demands of consortium-building and interdisciplinary collaboration with their individual research goals.

ASCA's involvement in the creation and coordination of interfaculty Research Priority Areas (RPAs) such as Global Digital Cultures and Decolonial Futures highlights its leadership in addressing complex, cross-disciplinary issues. Furthermore, its close relations with research centres across UvA, including the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) and the Amsterdam Centre for European Studies (ACES), exemplify ASCA's commitment to building robust interdisciplinary collaborations with social, natural, and legal sciences. By encouraging consortium-building and directing researchers towards grant opportunities like NWO Aspasia and the RIS Fund, ASCA is equipping its scholars to undertake collaborative projects that tackle pressing societal challenges in ways that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries.

6.3 Societal relevance

ASCA has a clear strategy for societal relevance, actively aiming to contribute to public debates and foster critical engagement with contemporary issues. The school is committed to making research accessible to broader audiences, including professionals in cultural production, policymakers, activists, and the general public. The emphasis on sharing research with the public and connecting it to teaching underscores ASCA's attachment to the research-teaching nexus. ASCA

also strives to maintain a safe space for researchers addressing polarizing topics (as is discussed in more detail in section 6.6). The school dedicates substantial effort to protecting its researchers and fostering constructive dialogue, as evidenced by the 2023 Summit on "Doing Research in a Polarised World," which included best practices for handling backlash, especially in sensitive areas like climate change, institutional racism, and human rights violations.

The committee concludes that ASCA researchers have achieved significant public engagement through a variety of channels. Examples include public programmes like the "Eastplainers" series on the war in Ukraine and the recent "History Is Not Context, It's Reality" teach-ins on the Israel/Palestine conflict, which demonstrate ASCA's commitment to creating spaces for nuanced and research-informed discussions on complex issues. Researchers also frequently collaborate with prominent cultural venues in Amsterdam and beyond, delivering lectures, organizing exhibitions, and curating festivals, such as the Nos Tei exhibition on Dutch Black queer sexuality and the Global Extraction Film Festival. These efforts are further strengthened by ASCA's many professors by special appointment, funded by institutions such as the Eye Filmmuseum, the VandenEnde Foundation, and Dutch National Opera and Ballet, who play a vital role in fostering relationships with societal partners. However, interviews revealed mixed outcomes regarding the integration and impact of these appointments, suggesting a need for further policies to evaluate their contribution. Together, these initiatives highlight ASCA's robust contributions to the public sphere and its role in advancing critical cultural conversations.

As evidenced by the self-evaluation report, ASCA's research is widely disseminated across media platforms, contributing to debates on structural inequalities, media literacy, data activism, and more. ASCA members regularly write for leading newspapers, appear on television and radio programmes, and participate in influential podcasts, thus ensuring that research findings reach both national and international audiences. Additionally, the committee notes that ASCA researchers have been involved in policy-oriented projects, such as reports for the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets. These policy contributions, alongside ASCA researchers' participation in advisory boards and civil society organizations, exemplify the tangible impact of ASCA's research on public discourse and policy development.

The committee focused specifically on ASCA's contributions to urgent societal and contested issues within its academic community, educational context, and broader society. It found that ASCA demonstrates a strong commitment to engaging with pressing contemporary challenges, providing a platform for critical discussions on politically charged topics such as the Israel/Palestine conflict, colonial legacies, and environmental degradation. The school also organizes public events, such as the "Future of the Dutch Colonial Past" symposium, designed to engage diverse and broader audiences. By tackling issues like structural inequality, post-truth politics, and national identity in the context of globalization, ASCA demonstrates its responsiveness to the pressing challenges faced by contemporary society. Its efforts have strengthened connections with educational and cultural institutions, expanding its outreach and fostering meaningful community engagement. In light of the frequent online backlash, threats, and harassment directed at its researchers, ASCA has dedicated a recent Summit to addressing these challenges. The school would welcome more robust support from both the Faculty of Humanities and the university in confronting such issues.

6.4 Viability

Over the evaluation period, ASCA has demonstrated a thoughtful approach to resource allocation amidst its recent growth, as seen in the increase in leadership hours and the creation of new roles (i.e., the role of vice-director). ASCA is committed to sustaining its research community by encouraging new members to form and join research groups, organizing regular meetings for

PhD candidates and other members, and increasing the number of events.

Additionally, ASCA is proactive in supporting its members' efforts to secure external funding, resulting in a remarkable number of major grant successes (especially ERC, NWO, MSCA, and Horizon) in recent years, while also advocating for funding for small-scale, individually developed projects that may not align with typical funding body preferences. This balance aims to support both high-profile interdisciplinary projects and the diversity of individual scholarly contributions.

The committee views ASCA's strategy for the future, as outlined in the self-evaluation report and during interviews, in a positive light. ASCA's strategic focus on maintaining a vibrant and interdisciplinary research environment, addressing emerging societal issues, promoting inclusivity, and building resilience in the face of polarized political contexts. Furthermore, ASCA has positioned itself to remain at the forefront of its field by fostering collaborations across disciplines and with non-academic partners, all while prioritizing an inclusive and safe academic culture.

ASCA's leadership has shown foresight in preparing the school for its next phase, focusing on consolidation after a period of rapid growth. Its planned phase of "tranquility" is aimed at stabilizing community dynamics, fostering greater inclusivity, and adapting to external pressures. Recognizing the challenges of rapid expansion, the committee agrees that preserving ASCA's strong community spirit will be vital in the coming years. As the community continues to grow, there is a risk that social cohesion could be strained. The school should carefully assess whether further growth aligns with its core mission and values, or whether it might compromise the quality of support, collaboration, and engagement that have been central to its success. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that events are organized inclusively and in a manner that distributes responsibilities equitably, avoiding undue burden on the most active members.

Furthermore, ASCA is encouraged to carefully consider how best to preserve its bottom-up ethos while navigating an increasing reliance on external funding, which often brings funders' research preferences, priorities, or agendas. To safeguard the independence of PhD candidates and postdocs, as well as the intellectual freedom of senior researchers, ASCA should explore ways to balance large-scale funded projects with opportunities for curiosity-driven, blue skies research. Furthermore, ASCA may wish to evaluate the potential constraints of external funding to ensure that its flexibility and intellectual autonomy – core to its identity – remain uncompromised.

Finally, ASCA will need to navigate the challenges posed by drastic budget cuts and limitations on the internationalization of higher education announced by the Dutch government. In interviews with the committee, researchers raised concerns about the increasingly hostile environment for international academics, including language requirements and cultural barriers. These trends were said to risk undermining global research collaborations and the institution's international engagement. While these developments will undoubtedly impact the school, its leadership has demonstrated resilience and a proactive approach, with contingency strategies (e.g. diversifying the grant portfolio and placing increased emphasis on European grants to sustain research diversity) in place. These measures position ASCA to adapt effectively to budget constraints and suggest that the school will not merely survive but continue to thrive despite challenging circumstances.

6.5 HR policy

ASCA's HR policies, aligned with those of AIHR, are implemented through structured, supportive engagements with department chairs and individual researchers. The research director and the coordinator meet annually with department chairs to review each researcher's publications and research contributions, offering individualized support such as publication planning when necessary. ASCA's annual review process values various scholarly activities but gives primary weight to peer-reviewed publications. While

outreach is recognized, it is considered secondary to formal academic publishing. Failing to meet publication requirements over multiple years may result in reduced research time. The committee advises increasing focus on how to recognize and reward contributions beyond publications, such as societal engagement and mentorship, within ASCA's HR policies.

ASCA collaborates with the faculty's Grant Office to support strategic long-term planning for grant applications, ensuring researchers at various career stages are matched with suitable funding opportunities. Efforts are directed at providing strategic guidance while also respecting researchers' intrinsic motivations.

Staff interviews highlighted two key concerns with respect to talent management: (1) limited career advancement opportunities for mid-career researchers, even for those who secure major grants, and (2) insufficient support for postdoctoral researchers, who face distinct challenges, including limited formal representation in decision-making bodies and unclear career progression pathways. Recognizing that these issues extend beyond ASCA's sole purview, the committee recommends that the Faculty of Humanities and ASCA collaborate to (1) develop clear career advancement pathways to retain talented mid-career researchers and (2) establish specific support systems and career development programmes for postdoctoral researchers, who currently lack sufficient institutional backing.

ASCA has made notable progress in fostering ethnic diversity, building upon its earlier successes in promoting gender and sexual diversity among staff. This progress has been driven by affirmative action policies and inclusive hiring practices, now implemented through standardized procedures overseen by a designated diversity officer who ensures an intersectional approach. Rather than presenting itself as "bias-free," ASCA acknowledges the existence of potential biases and actively works to address them. The recruitment process emphasizes diverse perspectives within hiring committees to reduce homogeneity and foster inclusivity. Additionally, the school has created new assistant and full professor positions in fields that advance diversity, including disability studies, decoloniality, critical race studies, queer and trans studies, and world literatures. Efforts are also being directed towards greater inclusion in areas such as class, ability, and mental health. As reiterated by the management, advancing diversity across all dimensions of staff composition remains a key strategic priority for the coming period.

6.6 Academic culture

ASCA's academic culture is characterized by a bottom-up, open approach that supports curiosity-driven and innovative research, aligning well with its mission to foster diverse and interdisciplinary scholarship. The school emphasizes inclusivity and accessibility, allowing members at all levels to initiate seminars, reading groups, and other events, contributing to a vibrant intellectual environment. Despite functioning within a broader academic hierarchy, ASCA actively works to mitigate imbalances of power by ensuring that the leadership – particularly the coordinator, the vice-director and the director – remain approachable. Staff and PhD candidates reported that the horizontal management style creates a welcoming environment within ASCA. The accessibility of the leadership is particularly crucial for international PhD candidates and staff, who may face unique challenges, such as adjusting to Dutch "directness" or navigating academic hierarchies. ASCA's commitment to social safety and research integrity is further demonstrated through regular evaluations, welcome meetings, and the annual ASCA Summit.

The main challenges ASCA faces include maintaining community cohesion amid rapid growth and ensuring inclusivity in event organization, so that it does not rely disproportionately on the most active members. Initiatives like collective welcome meetings for new researchers help integrate newcomers and inform them of ASCA's resources. As ASCA continues to expand, however, prioritizing strategies that reinforce community spirit and

inclusivity will be essential to sustaining a collaborative and supportive culture.

At ASCA's request, the challenges of doing research in a polarized world were addressed explicitly and at length during the site visit. The committee learned that researchers working on contentious topics such as queer theory, feminism, and right-wing extremism face online vitriol, threats, and, in some cases, state-sponsored harassment. These pressures have led to instances of self-censorship and withdrawal from public engagement. Additionally, ASCA as a school has faced scrutiny for its perceived association with politically charged topics. While ASCA members underscored the importance of critical thinking as central to the university's mission, they expressed concern that UvA provides insufficient support to safeguard academic freedom and protect dissenting voices.

The committee is of the opinion that ASCA must continue navigating the challenges of creating a safe space for dialogue and enquiry in an increasingly polarized world. This involves fostering resilience, inclusivity, and constructive engagement, ensuring that divisive topics are explored with sensitivity and respect for diverse perspectives. To support this, the Faculty of Humanities and the university as a whole must provide robust backing for these efforts, including proactive measures to protect researchers. Consideration should be given to measures such as mailbox filtering and monitoring to block abusive messages, establishing a dedicated support network and mentorship for vulnerable researchers, offering legal and cybersecurity assistance, and promoting solidarity through group initiatives or public statements of support. A stronger, more visible defence by the institution would be invaluable, particularly as ASCA has sometimes felt isolated and vulnerable when organizing public-facing events or speaking out on contentious issues. Demonstrating an unwavering commitment to academic freedom and cultivating a culture of solidarity will help nurture an environment where risky topics can be researched and discussed openly, responsibly, and without fear.

6.7 PhD policy and training

ASCA treats sustaining its substantial and vibrant PhD community as a top priority. In recent years, the school has formalized the PhD evaluation process and professionalized supervision. ASCA's PhD policy is implemented with a strong emphasis on personalized training and supervision, starting with an initial meeting between the PhD candidate, their two (or more) supervisors, and the vice-director to develop a tailored programme. This approach continues with a pilot study and annual evaluations that review project progress, supervision quality, and career development. ASCA also encourages PhD candidates to gain teaching experience, publish research, and pursue international experience, supporting their professional development.

With respect to supervision, the committee notes that the implementation of team supervision has contributed to balancing hierarchical relationships in mentoring and enhancing oversight. Increasingly, mental health challenges affecting PhDs are being recognized and addressed. New supervisors are strongly encouraged to complete supervision training, with refresher courses proposed every ten years. Interviewed PhD candidates reported positive experiences, noting that supervision is often tailored to their individual needs. To further strengthen PhD supervision, the committee recommends further formalizing structures by providing strict guidance and mandatory training for all supervisors. This would help ensure consistent and equitable support for PhD candidates, with particular attention to those who may be more vulnerable or less proactive.

AIHR's core PhD skills courses, which cover academic integrity, social safety, and research data management, are mandatory for ASCA candidates but generally less well received than ASCA's own offerings, which focus on publishing and job market skills. ASCA also offers a Theory Seminar, held six times per year, and an annual International Workshop organized by a team of ASCA PhD candidates, both of which are highly valued by participants for fostering

interdisciplinary understanding and community building. ASCA's outcomes in PhD policy and training are robust: a significant percentage of both funded and self-funded PhDs secure academic jobs, reflecting the effectiveness of its professionally oriented training model. However, during interviews, PhD candidates noted that formal guidance on post-PhD career pathways is limited, particularly for international candidates. Additionally, career support opportunities were said to often rely on individual initiative rather than being embedded within structured programmes.

Over the evaluation period, the PhD population has rapidly increased, with the ratio of funded to self-funded PhDs shifting from 1:3 to 1:5, which struck the committee as a notable trend warranting attention. The committee is somewhat concerned about this trend, not least because self-funded PhDs always risk being treated as a financial asset, as they bring in revenue for the university, rather than as researchers with specific needs and challenges. Such rapid growth was said to pose challenges for supervisory capacity and community cohesion. While ASCA offers various support services to all PhD candidates, these resources often require individual initiative rather than being systematically provided. This may particularly disadvantage external PhD candidates, who are less well-embedded in the institution. The committee recommends increasing efforts to harmonize policies for self-funded PhD candidates, addressing their vulnerability, and providing them with the same opportunities and support as funded candidates.

The committee also notes challenges in obtaining funding for idiosyncratic, individually developed projects. Direct university funding for PhD positions has become severely restricted due to budget constraints, leaving limited opportunities for candidates to pursue their own research ideas. The primary alternative – funding through externally financed research projects – often comes with predetermined frameworks that restrict candidates' autonomy in shaping their research. This makes the so-called "free" PhD funding rounds, which allow for independently conceived projects, highly competitive. For instance, the most recent round attracted over 400 applications for only two positions allocated to ASCA, underscoring the acute mismatch between demand and availability. While self-funded PhDs offer greater freedom in topic selection, they raise equity concerns, as access to these positions is often contingent on candidates' financial resources, creating barriers for many talented researchers. This situation reflects broader concerns about research autonomy, elaborated on in section 6.6. The committee recommends that ASCA and the university explore ways to expand opportunities for candidates to pursue independently conceived projects, whether through targeted funding schemes or enhanced support for self-funded researchers, while addressing equity issues to ensure a fair and accessible system for all.

6.8 Open Science

ASCA actively promotes Open Science in line with AIHR's policies, particularly encouraging open access publication and the sharing of research data. Initiatives like the Digital Methods Initiative demonstrate ASCA's commitment to making research findings more widely accessible. However, ASCA faces challenges in implementing Open Science equitably across its research community. Without dedicated funds for open access publications, researchers in monograph-heavy fields, or those without external funding from bodies like the NWO or the ERC, encounter difficulties accessing open access opportunities. While the Dutch Taverne Agreement, which allows researchers to share articles and book chapters irrespective of publishers' restrictions, provides some relief, it does not fully address the barriers for scholars dependent on monograph-based outputs. ASCA is rightfully committed to mitigating these disparities and seeking solutions that avoid creating disparities between well-funded and less-funded researchers.

In line with Open Sciences principles, the school is also deeply invested in fostering inclusive and participatory research practices. This includes promoting equitable partnerships with external organizations and citizen science initiatives that

actively involve the public in the research process, leveraging crowdfunding to support innovative projects, and facilitating co-creation opportunities where researchers collaborate directly with communities to shape research questions, methods, and outcomes. A key focus of these efforts is engaging with marginalized communities, ensuring their voices and experiences are reflected in academic discourse. For instance, ASCA organizes events and outreach activities in the regions or communities being studied, creating spaces for dialogue and enhancing the accessibility and impact of research findings. These efforts aim to bridge the gap between academia and society, fostering mutual learning and meaningful participation while ensuring research benefits extend beyond traditional academic boundaries.

With respect to the acceptance of external funding and collaboration offers, particularly from societal partners and third parties, the committee advises ASCA to establish clear ethical guidelines and implement a robust screening process. This process should evaluate potential partnerships based on their alignment with ASCA's academic integrity standards, core values, and research independence. Such screening would help safeguard both the school's scholarly reputation and its longstanding commitment to ethical research practices.

6.9 Conclusion and recommendations

The committee concludes that ASCA has maintained and strengthened its position as a leading interdisciplinary research school, successfully combining theoretical innovation with methodological rigour and societal engagement. The school's bottom-up structure, commitment to diversity, and dynamic research environment have stimulated both individual excellence and collaborative scholarship. Despite rapid expansion, ASCA has preserved its distinctive identity and community spirit, positioning itself well for future development through thoughtful strategic planning and adaptive leadership.

The committee presents five main recommendations to support ASCA's continued development and address current challenges:

1. **ASCA is encouraged to reflect on how best to maintain its bottom-up ethos in the context of its rapid growth and increasing reliance on external funding, which often comes with specific research priorities or agendas set by funders. To safeguard the independence of PhD candidates and postdocs, as well as the intellectual freedom of senior researchers, ASCA should aim to strike a balance between pursuing large-scale funded projects and supporting curiosity-driven, exploratory research. Additionally, ASCA is advised to assess the potential limitations imposed by external funding to ensure that its flexibility and intellectual independence, both of which are central to the school's identity, remain intact.**

2. **The committee recommends that ASCA maintain an open and constructive dialogue with AIHR to address the tensions between upholding its autonomy and meeting the umbrella organization's standardization requirements. While ASCA should remain open to adopting new approaches that could enhance efficiency and effectiveness, AIHR must also acknowledge and respect the established practices that have underpinned ASCA's remarkable success. Any changes should be carefully deliberated and thoroughly evaluated.**

3. **The committee emphasizes the importance of ASCA continuing to address the challenges of fostering a safe and open environment for dialogue and enquiry in an increasingly polarized world. This requires building resilience, promoting inclusivity, and encouraging constructive engagement, while**

ensuring that divisive topics are approached with care and respect for diverse perspectives. The Faculty of Humanities and the university must play an active role in supporting these efforts by implementing concrete measures to protect researchers and uphold academic freedom. Recommended actions include mailbox filtering and monitoring to block abusive messages, establishing dedicated support networks and mentorship programmes for vulnerable researchers, providing legal and cybersecurity assistance, and promoting institutional solidarity through public statements or group initiatives. A more robust and proactive institutional stance will be crucial in safeguarding academic freedom and creating a culture where challenging topics can be explored openly, responsibly, and without fear.

4. **ASCA and the Faculty of Humanities should collaborate to address structural challenges in career development, particularly for mid-career researchers who face limited promotion opportunities despite securing major grants and for postdoctoral researchers, who represent a growing but underserved community and often find themselves in precarious positions.**

5. **ASCA should further strengthen its PhD programme by formalizing supervision requirements and aligning support mechanisms for funded and self-funded candidates, ensuring fair and consistent treatment for all PhD researchers**

7. Amsterdam School for Historical Studies (ASH)

The Amsterdam School for Historical Studies (ASH) was founded in 2014. ASH is one of the largest of the research schools under the umbrella of AIHR, encompassing a large proportion of researchers at UvA working in fields concerning past societies. It has a broad interdisciplinary remit, with researchers drawn from six teaching departments and from the fields of history, art history, classics, literary studies, and religion. At the time of its self-assessment report, ASH contained 110 academic staff and 131 PhD candidates.

The research school is run by a director, who is assisted by a vice-director, a coordinator, and an office manager. The ASH administration consults on matters of strategy and policy with an Advisory Board, which includes a representative from the PhD and postdoctoral communities. The Advisory Board has also functioned as a method to draw members of some of the smaller units within ASH, as well as areas such as literary studies and art history which were previously less active, into the centre of the school's administrative and research culture.

Feeding into the Advisory Board are the main organizations within ASH: its two research centres (the Amsterdam Centre for Urban History and the Amsterdam Centre for the Studies of Early Modernity) and the research groups, which currently number 14. The Vossius Center for the History of Humanities and Sciences is administered by ASH but operates independently.

The research centres are longer-term units whose members may also belong to other research groups within ASH and elsewhere; at the time of the previous assessment in 2018, there were three research centres, but, partly in response to this assessment, the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies was closed down. Similarly, in 2018, there were 18 research groups compared to 13 now. The 2018 assessment recommended a streamlining of the research groups. Covid-19 and changes in staff also brought about a reassessment of these groups, with some closing down and others opening.

7.1 Organization, aims, and strategy

The flexibility of the research group structure, which began in 2013 with a "speed-dating" approach and which continues to evolve through more short-term projects on which researchers wish to collaborate, is a major asset of the structure of ASH. The self-evaluation report suggested that ASH wishes to play to its strengths, and currently, with new appointments of research staff and the input of a variety of new research agendas from the national government and from the university, several new groups have been formed, such as Digital History, Environment and Society, Modernism, and the PULSE Network: Medical and Health Humanities. The bottom-up structure of ASH has been a major feature in these developments; researchers reported that the growth of digital humanities, health humanities, and environmental humanities within ASH all emerged from researchers' mutual interests in these topics, as well as the arrival of key new members of staff. These new research groups are part of the progress ASH has been making since its last evaluation in strengthening its interdisciplinary character and in going beyond a previous identity of "History plus" to one which embraces the study of the past not only by historical scholars but also by those in a variety of other humanities fields.

The previous assessment report suggested that ASH, which at that time had existed for four years, lacked a clear mission statement and

distinctiveness from other historical research institutions in the Netherlands and suggested that the research school needed a more coherent strategy for valorization, especially concerning its location in Amsterdam. Some of these recommendations may have emerged from the novelty of the school, but the current committee would judge that the increasing embrace of interdisciplinarity, bringing literary, art historical, and classical scholars more firmly into the mix in the research groups, makes ASH distinctive within not only the Dutch research landscape, but also a more international one.

The research groups in aggregate also demonstrate work towards ASH's strategic aim to take a more global outlook in research, as well as addressing questions of societal impact and broader issues of decolonization and decentring of the European narrative. Strategic hirings in the history and culture of the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Middle East and also in (post)colonial societies and cultures has led to the growth of several large clusters of staff, postdocs, and PhD students in these areas. ASH's further aims – to support collaborations across the research school that cut across methodological and theoretical boundaries – are also indicated by the types of research being done at ASH.
Thus, the vision for the future of ASH suggests strategic aims that are already in the process of being realized. The committee advises ASH to continue working with flexible groups, in this distinctive interdisciplinary setting and with a more global outlook.

7.2 Research quality

AIHR emphasizes collaborative and team projects, in which ASH has shown demonstrable success. One of the distinctive aspects of ASH is that it also stresses the importance of curiosity-driven research. The committee approves of this point of view, seeing the value both of collaborative and individual research, and in particular of research whose agenda stems from the impetus of pressing questions within research fields and within the minds of researchers.

The combination within ASH of topics driven by curiosity and also appealing to current research agendas shows an admirable balance, which is borne out by the ability of researchers within ASH to publish in top journals and with the best academic presses, as well as its success in national and international funding calls. The prevalence among the output of staff working within ASH of presses such as Oxford, Cambridge, Pennsylvania, and Amsterdam University Press, as well as publications in prestigious journals such as *Past and Present*, *The Journal of Modern History*, and *Urban History* speaks to the high quality of the research produced. This is also the case with the grants gained for major research projects, such as one NWO Vici project, two NWO Vidi grants, and a Task Force for Applied Research grant, as well as very many smaller grants from EU and Dutch sources. The sheer variety of the projects gives a sense of the chronological, geographical, and disciplinary scope of the research done within ASH. Social history, the history of politics, cultural history, the history of the press, maritime history, environmental history, and the history of medicine and health are all represented in the recent output of members of the research school. Many of the projects being done within ASH are well known to scholars in these fields both within and outside the Netherlands and are highly regarded.

The case studies presented in the self-evaluation report represent well the breadth as well as the interdisciplinarity of the projects within ASH as they illustrate diversity in subjects and methods, as well as in contributions and impact. The growth in digital humanities has been a major shift in the fields covered by ASH. This has been built up on faculty and AIHR level at UvA in recent years, in particular with the development of the Humanities Labs, but also in the nature of the projects being taken forward more generally.

7.3 Societal relevance

The breadth of the research conducted within ASH means that some aspects of research are more obviously related to societal issues than others. However, all historical research investigates social issues in one form or another and can influence a

broader public through its interpretation of important aspects of human experience in the past.

ASH has been encouraged by the drive for societal relevance within UvA and AIHR; ASH members suggested that AIHR had been helpful in facilitating this work, in particular by the inauguration of a humanities and society officer in recent years. In the most direct terms, the involvement of ASH members in communicating about their work to a broader public has been a constant, including writing and being interviewed for national newspapers, giving public lectures, running or even founding publications for a wider audience, and appearing on television.

The location of ASH and UvA within Amsterdam, with its many cultural institutions and its long history, combined with a great interest by the public in that history, has allowed ASH to be influential in conveying their interpretations more broadly. This also has taken the form of advising and curating museum exhibitions and performing advisory roles within Amsterdam and more widely in the Netherlands.

Some of this work has involved co-creation; for example, the Jewish Studies scholars within ASH joined with the municipality of Amsterdam to consider ways to deal with mass tourism and to bring about a public history project on the Jewish past of several neighbourhoods. The Dutch Research Agenda's (NWA) collection of questions from a broader public brought to the fore some questions that ASH members are interested in taking further. A concern expressed by ASH members, however, was the challenge that partners sometimes make inappropriate demands or attempt to steer research in less desirable directions. The committee suggests that it would be better for ASH to be more proactive in its pursuit of external partners, both to encourage the process and also to be able better to control the nature of the partnerships.

One area in which ASH is striving for societal impact is the pursuit of decolonization of its work and in its environment. ASH is to some degree decentring European studies and placing it within a broader context, including discussions of the nature of the Dutch past, a topic of considerable interest in public debate in the Netherlands. The renaming of ASH's Centre for the History of the Dutch Golden Age to the Centre for the Studies of Early Modernity was part of this effort; this was based on discussions within ASH among, in particular, historians and art historians. Similarly, the location of the VOC-Zaal within the Bushuis has been a matter of discussion more widely. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, the name of the VOC-Zaal. Decolonization as a topic has been brought up by students at UvA, and, as ASH members report, it is also the direction of the field, which is now more global and more postcolonial. These discussions – crystallized to some degree in "Decolonial Dialogues" events – have not only allowed for reflections by ASH researchers about the nature of Dutch history and their own efforts, but have also influenced their own work, whether in a project on decolonizing southeast Asian archives to empower local partners in Indonesia and Malaysia, or in the way they guide their external partners in the Dutch heritage industry in the presentation of the Dutch past.

ASH also presented a case study about the controversy over the book published suggesting that Anne Frank and her family had been betrayed by a Jewish notary, a claim which immediately gained international prominence, not least because of pinning blame on someone from the Jewish community. ASH members, along with colleagues from a host of other partners, wrote a report refuting this poorly researched book with more thorough research. The refutation resulted in the Dutch edition of the book being withdrawn and the German edition being cancelled; its arguments became widely known internationally through articles in major publications such as the *New York Times*, *Der Spiegel*, and the *New York Review of Books*. This research proved of major societal importance, not least at a time of increased antisemitism, and gained the ASH team the research school's valorization award.

7.4 Viability

It is difficult to judge the viability of ASH at a time when major funding cuts are announced by the Dutch government, but except for the potential for problems from this direction, there is little reason to worry about the future of ASH. The research school is one of the largest at UvA; although its numbers of researchers have fallen slightly since 2018 (and its FTEs considerably since then, from 71.94 to 48.8), it seems to be holding its own. The fall in FTEs seems to be attributable to fewer FTEs in particular at the full professor, assistant professor, and postdoctoral levels, with also eight fewer funded PhD candidates. This is not a particular problem, but if funding is available, it would be worth considering a modest growth on these levels. Some strategic hires in recent years have helped shape the direction of research and teaching of ASH and related departments.

One problem which ASH shares with the other research schools, and indeed with AIHR and other faculties at UvA, is the policy restricting chances for promotion on the basis of merit rather than merely through an open competition when a vacancy occurs. This policy, about which ASH can do little, is in the view of the committee counterproductive. For example, ASH has lost mid-career talents, who took larger grants to other universities because of the lack of prospects in Amsterdam. Greater support for postdoctoral researchers in directing their careers and bringing them more proactively into the research school would also be recommended.

While slightly reducing expenditure from 2018 to 2023, ASH has seen a loss in funding of 24.2 FTE during that time, both from a reduction in direct funding (34 to 28.8 FTE) but also in external project funding (Dutch research grants down from 33.7 to 18 FTE; EU grants down from 7.3 to 2.1 FTE). The ability of ASH researchers to gain external funding is well evidenced in the self-evaluation report; however, it will be important for the research school to focus on efforts to consider what projects are best to put forward for grants and to use the resources of the AIHR grant office to make the best case for these applications. This goal is already articulated in ASH's self-evaluation, and the new peer-review policy will assist in this. The focus of ASH on popular research agendas such as climate, migration, health, and colonial/decolonial issues will no doubt assist with this; but it is commendable (as stated earlier) that scholars in ASH are given the freedom to investigate subjects for their intrinsic interest, whatever the views of funding bodies.

ASH's self-evaluation report outlines sensible and realistic future plans. The research school is already successful; the plan is to stimulate internal collaborations and connections while also reaching outwards further to societal partners. The research school's self-evaluation identifies a desire to form a more coherent and proactive strategy for societal impact, with teamwork and capitalizing on external opportunities stressed as a means towards this. ASH members mentioned a desire to work more deliberately and proactively towards this goal. Further aims expressed in the self-evaluation echo the view of the committee that the viability of ASH will be enhanced by better integration of PhD candidates (including self-funded ones) and postdoctoral researchers into the activities of ASH, that the research groups will remain flexible and will be frequently reassessed, and that more opportunities for exchange within the school will be developed.

7.5 HR policy

ASH has made efforts towards a more inclusive HR policy, chiefly through changes in hiring procedures. Strategies have been developed to imagine profiles for new positions that complement those of current staff; this has been aided by the fact that the research and programme directors of ASH are now part of the hiring procedures alongside the head of the teaching department concerned. This is a welcome development that will ensure research plays a more central role in staffing decisions, rather than being overshadowed by teaching needs.

The backgrounds of those hired for assistant professorships in fields more related to the global history direction of the research school are now more diverse, and this approach is now being borne in mind as well for the hiring of postdoctoral researchers and PhD candidates. Indeed, ASH is trying to extend efforts at inclusion throughout the different levels of the career structure in order to provide a more diverse pipeline for the profession more generally. Gender diversity seems at a good standard; 50% of professors are female, with 45.3% of the total research staff (excluding postdocs and PhD candidates) female. However, other forms of diversity also need consideration.

ASH grants a PhD Dissertation Prize and a Valorization Prize for the best public engagement project, although ASH warns in its self-evaluation that such prizes have the drawback of stimulating unwanted feelings of competition, something it has tried to mitigate by allowing self-nomination. The research school also pursues a strategy of encouraging engagement with diverse audiences. It uses a mix of indicators to judge the performance of staff, a commendable exercise.

At the same time, barriers exist to making conditions for research optimal. As mentioned above, the comparative unlikelihood of promotion is discouraging. The lack of the opportunity for full sabbaticals, rather than accruing sabbatical hours or blocks without teaching, which then become crowded with administrative and teaching tasks overflowing from teaching blocks, is another problem for researchers. Even if researchers hold major grants, they still must devote 30% of their time to teaching. In general, ASH researchers described the issue of overwork as a major problem, with an impact on learning, teaching, and research. Like promotion, this is a problem at faculty and university level about which ASH can do little; but it is important for UvA to pay attention to these problems if it wishes to retain its staff and sustain the high standard of research within ASH.

Postdoctoral researchers in particular report a lack of support, although improving this is part of ASH's future strategy. This is a national problem, in part stemming from the ephemeral nature of their positions and the difficulty, due to the *inbeddingsgarantie*, for postdocs to apply for major grants. Postdoctoral researchers at ASH feel more connected to the teaching departments in which they are formally situated than to the research school. More needs to be done to connect postdocs both to the research school and the research groups, as well as to the PhD candidates. This can be done through instituting forms of mentorship and the development of a postdoctoral policy. For this reason, the committee recommends that postdoctoral researchers should have their primary home in the research schools rather than in the teaching departments.

7.6 Academic culture

The bottom-up culture of ASH, in which researchers are encouraged to collaborate and to use events such as literature lunches to decide on whether they can come together on a project, contributes greatly to the dynamic academic culture of ASH. The research school puts on regular events to draw in participants across the school and aspires to do more to create a sense of community. The inauguration of an ASH Day is a good start with this. PhD candidates in particular would like to go beyond this day and lectures and seminars, hoping that more could be done to encourage interaction between them and more senior scholars, something that would also benefit postdoctoral researchers. As with all the research schools, this would be easier if members of the school had a designated physical space to meet and call their own. Because of the question of space, daily interactions tend to occur more within teaching departments than in the research schools.

The committee got the sense that for the most part there was freedom of expression within the school, although there have been occasions of self-censorship due to events in the past year. Researchers both on migration and on Jewish Studies have recently had to deal with harassment from outside the university, for example from journalists. However, there is a determination to go forward with their work, and researchers reported feeling supported by ASH. Social safety

officers and security personnel have been of assistance on these occasions. Some sections of ASH have been pressurized to issue statements about political events; ASH proved a useful forum for thoughtful reflection about whether doing so was a good idea.

The opportunity and encouragement to interact with scholars in related fields are an advantage of ASH. One scholar who is attached both to ASH/UvA and to VU said that it was easier to get things done at UvA. However, the overload of teaching and administration has a negative effect on research activities. ASH is doing what it can to protect the 60%-40% split between teaching and research, but ASH researchers put forward that the issue of (teaching) overwork needs to be addressed, as it puts pressure on the research time.

7.7 PhD policy and training

ASH has been working towards improving supervision and training for PhD candidates. At the AIHR level, the "Superb Supervision" course was widely praised by staff not only in ASH but also elsewhere; plans to make this course mandatory for all staff are endorsed by the committee. The use of starter grants available to assistant professors is allowing an expansion of the talent available within ASH to supervise PhD candidates alongside more senior colleagues.

PhD candidates make an agreement in the first year about their supervision, including frequency of meetings. It includes yearly meetings with the ASH vice-director, without the supervisor, dedicated to the needs and well-being of the PhD candidate. The agreement is helpful, but it would be best if this agreement was re-examined during the yearly meetings with the ASH vice-director, so that changes in circumstances and needs might be taken into account. It is also advisable that candidates should be asked during these yearly meetings with the vice-director about any problems that might have arisen during their supervision.

PhD training mainly takes place at the AIHR level and at the national research schools for the appropriate field. The committee considers this training satisfactory. It appreciates the flexibility offered by AIHR to add new forms of training if requested. The committee supports the desire expressed by PhD candidates for the formation of support groups to discuss writing challenges, rather than simply lectures and courses. PhD candidates have held writing days, organized in an ad hoc manner, but it would be helpful either for there to be more organized activities for PhD candidates to help build community, or for such candidates to receive advice and potentially funding from ASH to organize such events themselves.

Self-funded PhD candidates could be better integrated into the research school, although the committee recognizes the difficulties posed by the varying circumstances of such candidates and the fact that they might not be located in Amsterdam. In its self-evaluation, ASH expresses the desire to improve this integration; self-funded candidates now have equal access to resources and training and are now monitored in the same fashion as funded candidates.

The committee feels some concern over completion rates more generally – most candidates take six to seven years to finish – but in particular concerning self-funded candidates, 29% of whom failed to finish at all. The self-evaluation lists self-funded PhD candidates who have been on the books since 2010. The committee would recommend that efforts be made to make sure these long-term candidates have not fallen through the cracks; are they being properly supervised? What can be done to assist them to finish? More stringent entry requirements have helped mitigate some of these problems, but more could be done to prevent candidates getting lost in the system. It would also be beneficial for the hours granted to supervisors of self-funded candidates no longer to be granted only at the end of a successfully completed PhD; this system disadvantages both candidates and supervisors. The current freezing of the finishing grants for self-funded candidates is also likely to prove problematic in future.

7.8 Open Science

ASH adheres to policies for Open Science and Open Access that are determined by the faculty and the university. It is always problematic for monograph-based disciplines such as those included in ASH to bear the costs of Open Access publishing; it is therefore understandable that ASH recognizes that not every publication can be open access. However, the good connections ASH staff have with the library assist in finding avenues for Open Access.

Open Science more generally is served by the commitment of ASH to education both inside and outside the university. Plans to strengthen and diversify public communication of research findings promise to make this a priority in future. The research-teaching nexus is also benefited by the integration of research, both completed and in progress, into the classroom; several examples have been presented of cases in which students have been active participants in research projects. The 2018 report suggested that the Open Science guidelines then in use needed revision, in particular because they were too generic and did not deal sufficiently with problems of digital data. It asked for training on research integrity to be done at a more centralized level and in a more structured way. The appointment by AIHR of two data stewards has helped address issues of digital safety and ethics, and AIHR training courses now include academic integrity and social safety, as well as research data management.

7.9 Conclusion and recommendations

ASH is clearly a highly successful research school, with a dynamic research culture, excellent production of publications placed with top presses and journals, and a fair success with grant applications. Depending on government plans for budget cuts, its future seems secure. Many of the issues raised in the 2018 report have been addressed, and the self-evaluation report lays out sensible plans for future development. Some difficulties encountered by ASH originate at a higher level, yet there are recommendations that are directed at the level of the research school.

1. **Streamline (or keep streamlining) activities by focusing on groups and centres that are more successful. This has already been addressed through the closing of some research groups and the founding of others. The exact trajectory for the coming six years is unknown, but this is not a problem as long as ASH remains flexible and supports new efforts at collaborative research.**

2. **Direct more effort towards the identification of societal partners with which to work, and be more proactive in outreach. Although ASH is clearly doing a very good job at making its work known and at coordinating work with other institutions, to some degree these efforts are reactive, which can also lead to ethical difficulties with partners, as ASH has already found.**

3. **Ensure greater involvement of postdoctoral researchers and PhD candidates in the activities of the school. The inauguration of ASH Day and postdoctoral and PhD lunches at the start of the academic year is a good start, but more could be done.**

4. **On the PhD level ASH needs to make greater attempts to monitor candidates, especially those who have been on the books for long periods of time. Slow completion speeds and poor completion rates, particularly for self-funded candidates, are a concern.**

5. **Move towards making the research school rather than the teaching department the home for postdoctoral researchers. Moreover, assigning a mentor and developing support for future careers for postdocs within ASH are advisable.**

Appendices

Schedule site visit 24-29 November 2024

Date	Time	Event
24 Nov 2024	18.00 - 20.30	Working dinner
25 Nov 2024	08.30 - 08.45	Private meeting
	08.45 - 09.30	Meeting AIHR
	09.30 - 10.00	ASH panel 1 – Management
	10.00 - 10.15	Coffee break
	10.15 - 10.45	ASH panel 2 – Societal relevance/impact
	10.45 - 11.15	ASH panel 3 – Research
	11.15 - 11.45	ASH panel 4 – PhDs & Postdocs
	11.45	Lunch for committee
	18.00 - 20.30	Working dinner
26 Nov 2024	09.30 - 10.00	Private meeting
	10.00 - 11.00	AIHR policy
	11.00 - 12.00	Coffee break & private meeting
	12.00 - 13.00	Lunch with AIHR
	13.00 - 13.35	ACLC panel 1 – Management
	13.35 - 14.10	ACLC panel 2 – Team science, interdisciplinarity, grants and diversity
	14.10 - 14.45	ACLC panel 3 – New research lines and social impact
	14.45 - 15.15	Tea break & private meeting
	15.15 - 15.50	ACLC panel 4 – Research and teaching
	15.50 - 16.25	ACLC panel 5 – PhDs & Postdocs
	16.30 - 17.30	Humanities Labs
	18.00 - 20.30	Working dinner
27 Nov 2024	09.00 -0 9.30	Private meeting

	09.30 - 10.15	ASCA panel 1 – Management
	10.15 - 11.00	ASCA panel 2 – Externally financed research projects
	11.00 - 11.30	Coffee break & private meeting
	11.30 - 12.15	ASCA panel 3 – Research in a polarised world
	12.15 - 13.00	ASCA panel 4 – PhDs & Postdocs
	13.00 - 14.00	Lunch & private meeting
	14.00 - 14.30	ARTES panel 1 – Management (strategy past and future)
	14.30 - 15.00	ARTES panel 2 – Transversal clusters
	15.00 - 15.30	ARTES panel 3 – ARTES as a multidisciplinary school in the Faculty of Humanities
	15.30 - 16.00	Tea break
	16.00 - 16.30	ARTES panel 4 – Funding strategy
	16.30 - 17.00	ARTES panel 5 – Safety
	17.00 - 17.30	ARTES panel 6 – PhDs & Postdocs
	18.00 - 20.30	Working dinner
28 Nov 2024	09.00 - 09.30	Private meeting
	09.30 - 10.05	AHM panel 1 – Management
	10.05 - 10.40	AHM panel 2 – Research profile, Themes, Open Science
	10.40 - 11.15	AHM panel 3 – Future plans (HR, societal relevance & viability)
	11.15 - 11.45	Coffee break & private meeting
	11.45 - 12.20	AHM panel 4 – PhDs, incl. academic culture
	12.20 - 13.00	AHM panel 5 – Postdocs & mid-career (HR, academic culture)
	13.00 - 14.00	Lunch & private meeting
	14.00 - 15.00	OSK panel 1 – Management & Board
	15.00 - 16.00	OSK panel 2 – PhDs
	16.00 - 16.15	Tea break
	16.15 - 18.00	Guided tour Holocaust Museum
	18.30 - 20.30	Working dinner at De Brakke Grond

29 Nov 2024	09.00 - 09.30	Private meeting
	09.30 - 10.00	LOT panel 1 – LOT office
	10.00 - 10.30	LOT panel 2 – LOT Education committee
	10.30 - 11.00	LOT panel 3 – LOT Board
	11.00 - 11.30	LOT panel 4 – LOT PhD candidates
	11.30 - 11.45	Coffee break
	11.45 - 12.30	Opportunity for further questions to AIHR, ACLC, ASCA, ASH, ARTES, AHM
	12.30 - 13.00	Lunch with AIHR, ACLC, ASCA, ASH, ARTES, AHM
	13.00 - 14.00	Educational programme for PhDs
	14.00 - 16.00	Private meeting for committee members only with secretaries
	16.00 - 16.30	Presentation preliminary conclusion by committee
	16.30	Brief general preliminary conclusions for faculty plus drinks at VOX-POP

Quantitative data

ACLC

Table A – Main categories of research output

ACLC	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total in category
Refereed articles	82	72	61	65	65	69	414
Non-refereed journal articles	13	5	6	6	3	5	38
Books	9	13	11	6	3	8	50
Book chapters	9	13	11	6	3	8	50
PhD theses	7	6	9	10	5	4	41
Conference papers	7	5	-	5	4	3	24
Professional publications	22	16	11	10	24	8	91
Publications aimed at general public	16	12	9	6	31	8	82
Other research output	64	70	40	48	47	32	301
Total publications	**241**	**240**	**165**	**190**	**202**	**160**	**1198**

Table B – Input of research staff

ACLC	2018 # / FTE	2019 # / FTE	2020 # / FTE	2021 # / FTE	2022 # / FTE	2023 # / FTE
Scientific staff						
Full professor	9 / 4.78	9 / 4.46	8 / 3.30	8 / 3.11	9 / 3.00	9 / 3.34
Associate professor	6 / 2.50	6 / 2.48	6 / 2.17	5 / 2.34	6 / 3.07	5 / 2.05
Assistant professor	23 / 6.99	17 / 5.24	17 / 5.50	19 / 5.14	21 / 6.27	25 / 7.60
Postdoctoral researchers	3 / 2.30	3 / 1.35	1 / 1.00	4 / 1.78	7 / 2.88	7 / 4.15
PhD candidates*	19 / 15.03	19 / 11.17	18 / 8.43	12 / 7.66	13 / 8.30	13 / 10.38
Total research staff	**60 / 31.6**	**54 / 24.70**	**50 / 20.40**	**48 / 20.03**	**56 / 23.52**	**59 / 27.52**
Professors by special appointment**	3	3	3	3	3	2
Visiting fellows**	No information available					
Self-funded PhD candidates**	17	18	25	25	21	20
*General support staff****	2	2	2	2	2	2
*Technical/Other support staff****	16 / 7.80	8 / 1.40	9 / 3.06	8 / 2.12	13 / 1.47	9 / 1.38
Total staff	**98 / 39.4**	**85 / 26.1**	**89 / 23.46**	**86 / 22.15**	**95 / 24.99**	**92 / 28.9**

* Numbers reflect funded (employed) PhD candidates only

** No FTE as these categories are not employees of the university

*** No specific FTE as these categories are employed at AIHR level

Table C – Funding

ACLC	2018 FTE / %	2019 FTE / %	2020 FTE / %	2021 FTE / %	2022 FTE / %	2023 FTE / %
Funding						
Direct funding	14.97 / 37%	12.11 / 46%	11.36 / 48%	10.12 / 46%	13.01 / 52%	16.38 / 57%
Research grants NL	17.96 / 45%	8.98 / 34%	7.27 / 31%	7.37 / 33%	9.01 / 36%	12.10 / 42%
Research grants EU	0.8 / 2%	1.2 / 5%	2.18 / 9%	1.42 / 6%	1.12 / 4%	0
Contract research	5.15 / 13%	3.24 / 12%	2.73 / 12%	3.30 / 15%	1.85 / 7%	0.41 / 1%
Other	1.12 / 3%	0.82 / 3%	0	0	0	0
Total funding	**40.00 / 100%**	**26.34 / 100%**	**23.53 / 100%**	**22.21 / 100%**	**25.00 / 100%**	**28.89 / 100%**
Expenditure						
Personnel costs (direct)*	€ 2,191,771	€ 2,150,952	€ 1,999,422	€ 1,876,318	€ 2,244,282	€ 2,400,199
Personnel costs (indirect)**	€ 1,417,751	€ 1,274,608	€ 1,114,834	€ 1,092,269	€ 1,301,432	€ 1,489,017
Other costs	€ 127,756	€ 95,687	€ 49,567	€ 35,926	€ 78,071	€ 132,449
Total expenditure	**€ 3,737,278**	**€ 3,521,247**	**€ 3,163,823**	**€ 3,004,513**	**€ 3,623,785**	**€ 4,021,666**

* Personnel costs (direct) refers to staff salaries.

** Personnel costs (indirect) refers to overhead costs.

Table D – PhD candidates

ACLC	Enrolment			Success rates					
	Starting year	Enrolment (male/ female)		Total (M+F)	Graduated in year 4 or earlier	Graduated in year 5	Graduated in year 6	Graduated in year 7 or later	Not yet finished	Discontinued
Funded PhD candidates	**2014**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 100%**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2015	**1**	**5**	**6**	**0**	**2 / 33%**	**2 / 33%**	**1 / 17%**	**0**	**1 / 17%**
	2016	**2**	**4**	**6**	**0**	**3 / 50%**	**1 / 17%**	**0**	**2 / 33%**	**0**
	2017	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 100%**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2018	0	2	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 50%**	**-**	**0**	**1 / 50%**
	2019	0	2	**2**	**0**	**0**	**-**	**-**	**2 / 100%**	**0**
	Total	**4M**	**14 F**	**18**	**0**	**5 / 28%**	**6 / 33%**	**1 / 6%**	**4 / 22%**	**2 / 11%**
Self-funded PhD candidates	**2014**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 100%**	**0**	**0**
	2015	**0**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 50%**	**0**		**1 / 50%**
	2016	**1**	**5**	**6**	**0**	**2 / 33%**	**0**	**1 / 17%**	**3 / 50%**	**0**
	2017	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1 / 50%**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 50%**	**0**
	2018	2	0	**2**	**0**	**1 / 50%**	**0**	**-**	**0**	**1 / 50%**
	2019	1	0	**1**	**1 / 100%**	**0**	**-**	**-**	**0**	**0**
	Total	**5M**	**9F**	**14**	**2 / 14%**	**3 / 21%**	**1 / 7%**	**2 / 14%**	**4 / 28%**	**2/ 14%**

Total		**9M**	**23 F**	**32**	**2 / 6%**	**8 / 25%**	**7 / 22%**	**3 / 9%**	**9 / 28%**	**3 / 9%**

AHM

Table A – Main categories of research output

AHM	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**Total in category**
Refereed articles	37	45	38	53	46	45	264
Non-refereed journal articles	39	27	23	26	22	16	153
Books	9	13	11	14	10	12	69
Book chapters	37	33	37	24	36	37	204
PhD theses	3	4	8	6	8	7	36
Conference papers	11	25	21	22	10	3	92
Professional publications	14	9	15	8	8	6	60
Publications aimed at general public	9	15	10	11	5	4	54
Other research output*	60	40	50	31	37	36	254
Total publications	**219**	**211**	**213**	**195**	**182**	**166**	**1186**

* editorship (special issue) journals and book series, entries for encyclopedias, reports, exhibitions, web publications

Table B – Input of research staff

AHM	**2018 # / FTE**	**2019 # / FTE**	**2020 # / FTE**	**2021 # / FTE**	**2022 # / FTE**	**2023 # / FTE**
Scientific staff						
Full professor	8 / 3.60	9 / 4.2	10 / 5.7	11 / 4.9	9 / 4.2	9 / 4.2
Associate professor	4 / 2.0	4 / 2	6 / 3.4	5 / 2.8	5 / 1.8	5 / 2.2
Assistant professor	11 / 6	15 / 5.2	15 / 5.2	20 / 6.5	22 / 7.2	28 / 6.7
Postdoctoral researchers	8 / 5.5	8 / 4.7	10 / 6	10 / 5.4	9 / 4.3	7 / 2.9
PhD candidates*	14 / 13.6	16 / 10.4	11 / 7.9	13 / 9.1	14 / 7.9	11 / 8.6
Total research staff	**45 / 30.7**	**52 / 26.5**	**52 / 28.2**	**59 / 28.7**	**59 / 25.4**	**60 / 24.6**
Professors by special appointment**	9	10	10	13	14	**10**
Visiting fellows**	5	6	5	4	14	18
Self-funded PhD candidates**	46	55	66	71	80	82
*General support staff****	2	2	2	2	2	2
*Technical/Other support staff****	7	8	6	13	19	17
Total staff	**114**	**133**	**141**	**162**	**188**	**189**

* Numbers reflect funded (employed) PhD candidates only

** No FTE as these categories are not employees of the university

*** No specific FTE as these categories are employed at AIHR level

Table C – Funding

AHM	2018 FTE / %	2019 FTE / %	2020 FTE / %	2021 FTE / %	2022 FTE / %	2023 FTE / %
Funding						
Direct funding	10.2 / 31%	10.9 / 37%	12.0 / 39%	14.9 / 46%	16.1 / 54%	18.3 / 63%
Research grants NL	8.7 / 26%	9.9 / 34%	13.8 / 45%	11.7 / 36%	8.1 / 27%	5.0 / 17%
Research grants EU	10.1 / 30%	7.3 / 25%	4.4 / 14%	4.0 / 12%	3.1 / 10%	3.1 / 11%
Contract research	4.1 / 12%	1.1 / 4%	0.5 / 2%	2.0 / 6%	2.3 / 8%	2.7 / 9%
Other	0.2 / 1%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%
Total funding	**33.3 / 100%**	**29.2 / 100%**	**30.7 / 100%**	**32.6 / 100%**	**29.6 / 100%**	**29.1 / 100%**
Expenditure						
Personnel costs (direct)	€ 2,175,031	€ 2,383,058	€ 2,850,030	€ 2,964,433	€ 2,458,790	€ 2,465,764
Personnel costs (indirect)	€ 1,367,324	€ 1,371,578	€ 1,538,780	€ 1,553,486	€ 1,319,931	€ 1,332,664
Other costs	€ 413,633	€ 277,579	€ 293,443	€ 217,175	€ 289,715	€ 291,557
Total expenditure	**€ 3,955,988**	**€ 4,032,215**	**€ 4,682,253**	**€ 4,735,094**	**€ 4,068,436**	**€ 4,089,985**

* Personnel costs (direct) refers to staff salaries.

** Personnel costs (indirect) refers to overhead costs.

Table D – PhD candidates

AHM	Enrolment			Success rates					
	Starting year	**Enrolment (male/ female)**		**Total (M+F)**	**Graduated in year 4 or earlier**	**Graduated in year 5**	**Graduated in year 6**	**Graduated in year 7 or later**	**Not yet finished**	**Discontinued**
Funded PhD candidates	**2014**	0	3	3	0	0	0	1 / 33%	1 / 33%	1 / 33%
	2015	1	3	4	0	1 / 25%	0	1 / 25%	2 / 50%	0
	2016	2	3	5	0	1 / 20%	1 / 20%	1 / 20%	2 / 40%	0
	2017	0	4	4	0	0	2 / 50%	1 / 25%	1 / 25%	0
	2018	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1 / 100%	0
	2019	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	2 / 67%	1 / 33%
	Total	**4M**	**16 F**	**20**	**0 / 0%**	**2 / 10%**	**3 / 15%**	**4 / 20%**	**9 / 45%**	**2 / 10%**
Self-funded PhD candidates	**2014**	1	13	14	0	0	1 / 7%	3 / 21%	4 / 29%	6 / 43%
	2015	1	2	3	0	1 / 33%	0	1 / 33%	1 / 33%	0
	2016	1	6	7	2 / 29%	1 / 14%	0	1 / 14%	1 / 14%	2 / 29%
	2017	5	7	12	3 / 25%	0	2 / 17%	0	5 / 43%	2 / 17%
	2018	3	5	8	0	1 / 13%	0	0	5 / 62%	2 / 25%

	2019	5	7	12	1 / 8%	2 / 17%	0	0	7 / 58%	2 / 17%
	Total	**16 M**	**40 F**	**56**	**6 / 11%**	**5 / 9%**	**3 / 5%**	**5 / 9%**	**23 / 41%**	**14 / 25%**
Total		**20 M**	**56 F**	**76**	**6 / 8%**	**7 / 9%**	**6 / 8%**	**9 / 12%**	**32 / 42%**	**16 / 21 %**

ARTES

Table A – Main categories of research output

ARTES	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total in category
Refereed articles	63	60	60	51	49	74	357
Non-refereed journal articles	22	9	4	6	18	14	73
Books	24	19	18	11	21	12	105
Book chapters	97	49	40	34	53	31	304
PhD theses	3	3	7	6	6	4	29
Conference papers	8	3	2	4	1	1	19
Professional publications	21	19	14	18	12	14	98
Publications aimed at general public	23	17	11	23	13	10	97
Other research output	18	9	9	18	12	11	77
Total publications	**279**	**188**	**165**	**171**	**185**	**171**	**1159**

Table B – Input of research staff

ARTES	2018 # / FTE	2019 # / FTE	2020 # / FTE	2021 # / FTE	2022 # / FTE	2023 # / FTE
Scientific staff						
Full professor	7 / 3.36	7 / 3.17	4 / 2.52	5 / 2.98	6 / 2.82	5 / 3.11
Associate professor	7 / 3.39	8 / 3.4	8 / 3.15	10 / 3.73	8 / 4.05	9 / 4.16
Assistant professor	21 / 9.04	24 / 9.00	26 / 8.78	25 / 9.23	29 / 9.88	35 / 11.24
Postdoctoral researchers	6 / 3.30	4 / 2.8	5 / 4.59	5 / 4.19	10 / 5.20	11 / 7.72
PhD candidates*	13 / 11.14	11 / 8.14	12 / 7.22	14 / 11.44	12 / 10.41	11 / 8.08
Total research staff	**54 / 30.23**	**54 / 26.51**	**55 / 26.26**	**59 / 31.57**	**65 / 32.36**	**71 / 34.31**
Professors by special appointment**	5	5	6	5	5	5
Visiting fellows**	9	15	2	3	3	3
Self-funded PhD candidates**	34	32	32	26	24	23
*General support staff****	2	2	2	2	2	2
*Technical/Other support staff****	7	3	6	5	3	0
Total staff	**111**	**111**	**103**	**100**	**102**	**104**

* Numbers reflect funded (employed) PhD candidates only

** No FTE as these categories are not employees of the university

*** No specific FTE as these categories are employed at AIHR level

Table C – Funding

ARTES	2018 FTE / %	2019 FTE / %	2020 FTE / %	2021 FTE / %	2022 FTE / %	2023 FTE / %
Funding						
Direct funding	**16.56 / 52%**	**14.00 / 52%**	**13.55 / 47%**	**16.29 / 47%**	**15.83 / 48%**	**16.04 / 47%**
Research grants NL	**11.79 / 37%**	9.51 / 36%	5.60 / 20%	4.98 / 15%	3.70 / 11%	5.45 / 16%
Research grants EU	2.31 / 8%	2.26 / 8%	8.71 / 30%	12.08 / 35%	12.12 / 37%	12.49 / 36%
Contract research	**1 / 3%**	**1 / 4%**	**0.92 / 3%**	**1.05 / 3%**	**1.10 / 4%**	**0.48 / 1%**
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total funding	**31.66 / 100%**	**26.77 / 100%**	**28.78 / 100%**	**34.40 / 100%**	**32.75 / 100%**	**34.46 / 100%**
Expenditure						
Personnel costs (direct)*	€ 2,642,941	€ 2,826,558	€ 2,647,997	€ 3,216,026	€ 2,759,024	€ 3,115,261
Personnel costs (indirect)**	€ 419,664	€ 272,452	€ 193,190	€ 210,317	€ 506,286	€ 328,730
Other costs	€ 1,427,550	€ 1,527,017	€ 1,511,292	€ 1,623,398	€ 1,578,378	€ 1,819,127
Total expenditure	**€ 4,490,155**	**€ 4,626,026**	**€ 4,352,479**	**€ 5,049,741**	**€ 4,843,688**	**€ 5,263,118**

* Personnel costs (direct) refers to staff salaries.

** Personnel costs (indirect) refers to overhead costs.

Table D – PhD candidates

ARTES	Enrolment			Success rates					
	Starting year	**Enrolment (male/ female)**		**Total (M+F)**	**Graduated in year 4 or earlier**	**Graduated in year 5**	**Graduated in year 6**	**Graduated in year 7 or later**	**Not yet finished**	**Discontinued**
Funded PhD candidates	**2014**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**2 / 66%**	**1 / 33%**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2015	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1 / 100%**		**0**	**0**	**0**
	2016	**2**	**5**	**7**	**0**	**2 / 29%**	**2 / 29%**	**2 / 29%**	**1 / 13%**	**0**
	2017	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2018	0	1	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 100%**	**0**
	2019	1	2	**3**	**1 / 33%**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2 / 66%**	**0**
	Total	**6M**	**9F**	**15**	**1 / 7%**	**5 / 33%**	**3 / 20%**	**2 / 13%**	**4 / 27%**	**0 / 0%**
Self-funded PhD candidates	**2014**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2015	**0**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 33%**	**0**	**2 / 66%**	**0**
	2016	**2**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**2 / 50%**	**1 / 25%**	**0**	**1 / 25%**	**0**
	2017	**2**	**5**	**7**	**2 / 29%**	**2 / 29%**	**1 / 14%**	**-**	**2 / 29%**	**0**
	2018	3	7	**10**	**2 / 20%**	**0**	**1 / 10%**	**-**	**5 / 50%**	**2 / 20%**

	2019	4	4	**8**	**2 / 25%**	**1 / 12.5%**	**-**	**-**	**4 / 50%**	**1 / 12.5%**
	Total	**11 M**	**21 F**	**32**	**6 / 19%**	**5 / 16%**	**4 /12.5%**	**0**	**14 / 43%**	**3 / 9.5%**
Total		**17 M**	**30 F**	**47**	**7 / 15%**	**10 / 21%**	**7 / 15%**	**2 /4%**	**18 / 38%**	**3 / 6%**

ASCA

Table A – Main categories of research output

ASCA	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**Total in category**
Refereed articles	90	123	130	131	140	162	776
Non-refereed journal articles	22	49	39	27	10	34	181
Books	21	22	20	25	22	22	132
Book chapters	88	89	79	89	80	92	517
PhD theses	11	17	12	17	11	13	81
Conference papers	Not systematically registered.						
Professional publications	29	57	32	43	32	40	233
Publications aimed at general public	38	19	39	29	24	35	184
Other research output	Not systematically registered.						
Total publications	**299**	**376**	**351**	**361**	**319**	**398**	**2104**

ASCA average publications	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
Staff members (not incl. PhD candidates)	90	90	95	97	103	132
Average publications per person	3,3	4,2	3,7	3,7	3,1	3,0

Table B – Input of research staff

ASCA	**2018 # / FTE**	**2019 # / FTE**	**2020 # / FTE**	**2021 # / FTE**	**2022 # / FTE**	**2023 # / FTE**
Scientific staff						
Full professor	14 / 8.19	14 / 6.22	15 / 7.52	14 / 8.46	13 / 7.05	18 / 5.3
Associate professor	18 / 8.64	16 / 5.44	15 / 8.02	15 / 8.24	15 / 7.98	20 / 5.3
Assistant professor	54 / 23.82	56 / 18.85	57 / 18.4	58 / 19.51	57 / 22.58	75 / 36.4
Postdoctoral researchers	4 / 3.9	4 / 4	8 / 7.6	10 / 8.5	18 / 8.9	19 / 17.7
PhD candidates*	36 / 17.49	35 / 19.5	34 / 20.1	30 / 18.8	29 / 24.7	27 / 26.8
Total research staff	**126 / 62.04**	**125 / 54.01**	**129 / 61.64**	**127 / 63.51**	**132 / 71.21**	**159 / 91.50**
Professors by special appointment**	5	6	7	10	11	10
Visiting fellows**	12	16	15	9	10	15
Self-funded PhD candidates**	100	122	122	124	127	135
*General support staff****	2	2	2	2	2	2
*Technical/Other support staff****	6	8	3	6	13	10

Total staff	**251**	**279**	**278**	**278**	**295**	**331**

* Numbers reflect funded (employed) PhD candidates only

** No FTE as these categories are not employees of the university

*** No specific FTE as these categories are employed at AIHR level

Table C – Funding

ASCA	**2018 FTE / %**	**2019 FTE / %**	**2020 FTE / %**	**2021 FTE / %**	**2022 FTE / %**	**2023 FTE / %**
Funding						
Direct funding	37.5 / 59%	37.9 / 50%	35 / 49%	36.1 / 50%	38.2 / 47%	54.3 / 58%
Research grants NL	15.7 / 25%	15 / 20 %	20.1 / 28%	19.9 / 27%	22.1 / 27%	18 / 19%
Research grants EU	10.1 / 16%	21.6 / 28%	16.6 / 23%	16.8 / 23%	19.7 / 27%	19.7 / 21%
Contract research	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	0.5 / 1%	1.7 / 2%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	0 / 0%	2.4 / 3%
Total funding	**63.8 / 100%**	**76.2 / 100%**	**71.7 / 100%**	**72.8 / 100%**	**82.1 / 100%**	**94.4 / 100%**
Expenditure						
Personnel costs (direct)*	€ 5,229,562	€ 5,667,136	€ 5,385,337	€ 6,119,770	€ 5,954,899	€ 7,068,577
Personnel costs (indirect)**	€ 3,119,583	€ 3,276,869	€ 2,985,659	€ 3,552,745	€ 3,552,745	€ 4,237,649
Other costs	€ 269,198	€ 418,347	€ 176,209	€ 214,086	€ 349,287	€ 582,789
Total expenditure	**€ 8,618,343**	**€ 9,362,352**	**€ 8,547,205**	**€ 9,771,780**	**€ 9,856,931**	**€ 11,889,014**

* Personnel costs (direct) refers to staff salaries

** Personnel costs (indirect) refers to overhead costs.

Table D – PhD candidates

ASCA	Enrolment				Success rates					
	Starting year	**Enrolment (male/ female)**		**Total (M+F)**	**Graduated in year 4 or earlier**	**Graduated in year 5**	**Graduated in year 6**	**Graduated in year 7 or later**	**Not yet finished**	**Discontinued**
Funded PhD candidates	**2014**	2	4	6	**1 / 17 %**	**2 / 33%**	**1 /17%**	**2 / 33%**	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**
	2015	6	7	13	**2 / 15%**	**3 / 23%**	**4 / 31%**	**1 / 8%**	**1 / 8%**	**2 / 15%**
	2016	4	1	5	3 / 60%	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	**1 / 20%**	**1 / 20%**	**0 / 0%**
	2017	3	0	3	0	1 / 33%	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	**1 / 33%**	**1 / 33%**
	2018	0	0	0	0	0 / 0%	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**
	2019	3	4	7	2 / 29%	0 / 0%	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	5 / 71%	**0 / 0%**
	Total	**18 M**	**16 F**	**34**	**8 / 24%**	**6 / 18%**	**5 / 15%**	**4 / 12%**	**8 / 24%**	**3 / 9%**
Self-funded	**2014**	9	7	16	4 / 25%	3 / 19%	1 / 6%	1 / 6%	1 / 6%	6 / 38%
	2015	9	7	16	**5 / 31%**	**1 / 6%**	**0 / 0%**	**1 / 6%**	**1 / 6%**	**7 / 44%**

PhD candidates	**2016**	9	8	17	**3 / 18%**	**0 / 0%**	**3 / 18%**	**0 / 0%**	**6 / 35%**	**5 / 29%**
	2017	8	9	17	**2 / 12%**	**2 / 12%**	**1 / 6%**	**0 / 0%**	**5 / 29%**	**6 / 35%**
	2018	9	14	23	**0 / 0%**	**4 / 17%**	**1 / 4%**	**0 / 0%**	**13 / 57%**	**5 / 22%**
	2019	6	16	22	**3 / 14%**	**1/ /5%**	**0 / 0%**	**0 / 0%**	**9 / 41%**	**9 / 41%**
	Total	**50 M**	**61 F**	**111**	**17 / 15%**	**11 / 10%**	**6 / 5%**	**2 / 2%**	**35 / 32%**	**38 / 34%**
Total		**65 M**	**77 F**	**145**	**25 / 17%**	**17 / 12%**	**11 / 8%**	**6 / 4%**	**43 / 30%**	**41 / 28%**

ASH

Table A – Main categories of research output

ASH	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total in category
Refereed articles	55	65	81	54	78	50	383
Non-refereed journal articles	37	35	31	23	17	14	157
Books	33	24	22	25	32	25	161
Book chapters	95	83	74	67	97	60	476
PhD theses	13	20	16	10	14	10	83
Conference papers	22	20	15	12	15	7	91
Professional publications	58	50	49	42	33	30	262
Publications aimed at general public	35	27	31	32	32	31	188
Other research output	33	30	26	37	38	29	193
Total publications	**381**	**354**	**345**	**302**	**356**	**256**	**1994**

Table B – Input of research staff

ASH	2018 # / FTE	2019 # / FTE	2020 # / FTE	2021 # / FTE	2022 # / FTE	2023 # / FTE
Scientific staff						
Full professor	18 / 8.60	16 / 5.80	17 / 7.30	18 / 6.70	17 / 7.00	16 / 5.80
Associate professor	12 / 5.49	14 / 6.37	18 / 6.30	15 / 6.10	15 / 6.20	17 / 6.50
Assistant professor	57 / 20.11	47 / 15.24	48 / 14.20	49 / 14.60	45 / 15.10	55 / 16.70
Postdoctoral researchers	16 / 13.14	26 / 8.90	17 / 10.10	18 / 9.90	13 / 6.40	12 / 6.80
PhD candidates*	29 / 24.60	25 / 18.80	20 / 18.00	24 / 17.00	25 / 16.20	21 / 13.00
Total research staff	**132 / 71.94**	**128 / 55.11**	**120 / 55.90**	**124 / 54.30**	**115 / 50.90**	**121 / 48.80**
Professors by special appointment**	15	15	15	16	13	10
Visiting fellows**	No information available.					
Self-funded PhD candidates**	71	73	72	71	74	70
*General support staff****	2	2	2	2	2	2

*Technical/Other support staff****	6	8	8	8	10	7
Total staff	**226**	**226**	**217**	**221**	**214**	**210**

* Numbers reflect funded (employed) PhD candidates only

** No FTE as these categories are not employees of the university

*** No specific FTE as these categories are employed at AIHR level

Table C – Funding

ASH	**2018 FTE / %**	**2019 FTE / %**	**2020 FTE / %**	**2021 FTE / %**	**2022 FTE / %**	**2023 FTE / %**
Funding						
Direct funding	34.0 / 45%	25.1 / 42%	59.1 / 100%	23.8 / 42%	25.1 / 48%	28.8 /57%
Research grants NL	33.7 / 45%	27.5 / 46%	27.7 / 47%	24.4 / 43%	21.8 / 42%	18.0 / 36%
Research grants EU	7.3 / 10%	6.6 / 11%	7.2 / 12%	7.9 / 14%	4.6 / 9%	2.1 / 4%
Contract research	0.0 / 0%	0.0 / 0%	0.0 / 0%	0.2 / 0.36%	0.9 / 2%	1.8 / 4%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total funding	**74.9 / 100%**	**59.1 / 100%**	**58.8 / 100%**	**56.3 / 100%**	**52.4 / 100%**	**50.7 / 100%**
Expenditure						
Personnel costs (direct)*	€ 4,736,975	€ 4,965,516	€ 5,172,136	€ 5,037,452	€ 4,733,191	€ 4,512,957
Personnel costs (indirect)**	€ 2,756,475	€ 2,838,464	€ 2,902,967	€ 2,822,718	€ 2,642,956	€ 2,430,711
Other costs	€ 370,591	€ 340,565	€ 161,248	€ 243,510	€ 388,929	€ 305,942
Total expenditure	**€ 7,864,040**	**€ 8,144,545**	**€ 8,236,352**	**€ 8,103,680**	**€ 7,765,076**	**€ 7,249,610**

* Personnel costs (direct) refers to staff salaries.

** Personnel costs (indirect) refers to overhead costs.

Table C – Funding

ASH	**2018 FTE / %**	**2019 FTE / %**	**2020 FTE / %**	**2021 FTE / %**	**2022 FTE / %**	**2023 FTE / %**
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Direct funding	34.0 / 45%	25.1 / 42%	59.1 / 100%	23.8 / 42%	25.1 / 48%	28.8 /57%
Research grants NL	33.7 / 45%	27.5 / 46%	27.7 / 47%	24.4 / 43%	21.8 / 42%	18.0 / 36%
Research grants EU	7.3 / 10%	6.6 / 11%	7.2 / 12%	7.9 / 14%	4.6 / 9%	2.1 / 4%
Contract research	0.0 / 0%	0.0 / 0%	0.0 / 0%	0.2 / 0.36%	0.9 / 2%	1.8 / 4%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total funding	**74.9 / 100%**	**59.1 / 100%**	**58.8 / 100%**	**56.3 / 100%**	**52.4 / 100%**	**50.7 / 100%**
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Table D – PhD candidates

ASH	Enrolment			Success rates					
	Starting year	Enrolment (male/ female)		Total (M+F)	Graduated in year 4 or earlier	Graduated in year 5	Graduated in year 6	Graduated in year 7 or later	Not yet finished	Discontinued
Funded PhD candidates	**2014**	**2**	**8**	**10**	**0**	**1 / 10%**	**4 / 40%**	**3 / 30%**	**1 / 10%**	**1 / 10%**
	2015	**0**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**1 / 20%**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 20%**	**3 / 60%**
	2016	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1 / 33%**	**0**	**1 / 33%**	**1 / 33%**
	2017	**7**	**0**	**7**	**1 / 14%**	**2 / 29%**	**0**	**1 / 14%**	**3 / 43%**	**0**
	2018	1	3	4	**0**	0	**1 / 25%**	0	3 / 75%	0
	2019	2	3	5	**0**	1 / 20%	-	-	4 / 80%	0
	Total	**15 M**	**19 F**	**34**	**1 / 3%**	**5 / 15%**	**6 / 18%**	**4 / 12%**	**13 / 38%**	**5 / 15%**
Self-funded PhD candidates	**2014**	5	6	11	1/ 9%	0	2 / 18%	2 / 18%	1 / 9%	5 / 45%
	2015	10	7	17	2 / 12%	2 / 12%	0	2 / 12%	2 / 12%	9 / 53%
	2016	9	3	12	4 / 33%	0	2 / 17%	1 / 8%	1 / 8%	4 / 33%
	2017	7	7	14	3 / 21%	1 / 7%	2/ 14%	0	6 / 43%	2 / 14%
	2018	4	4	8	0	1 / 12.5%	1 / 12.5%	0	6 / 75%	0
	2019	7	1	8	2 / 25%	0	-	-	6 / 75%	0
	Total	**42 M**	**28 F**	**70**	**12 / 17%**	**4 / 6%**	**7 / 10%**	**5 / 7 %**	**22 / 31%**	**20 / 29%**
Total		**57**	**47**	**104**	**13 / 12%**	**9 / 9%**	**13 / 12%**	**9 / 9%**	**35 / 34%**	**25 / 24%**

COLOPHON

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the committee tasked with evaluating the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR) and its underlying research schools for the period 2018–2023.

It was commissioned by the Executive Board of the University of Amsterdam.

The report was written by the evaluation committee members, with editorial support from the secretaries.

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