

CWTS response to the Report on the Research Assessment of CWTS (2015)

First of all, we would like to thank the committee for their balanced view of our performance and development, with respect to which the committee focused on the development since 2011. We appreciate both the compliments and the critical remarks and suggestions, and we see the overall judgement of the review committee as fair and to the point. We would also like to express that we enjoyed the site visit and the way the review committee engaged with the research staff members of our centre at all levels. The open discussion is stimulating in our work to further build the centre in the next six years on the basis of the results of the last five years.

The committee has reviewed our work according to the latest Standard Evaluation Protocol. This included the quality of our research, our societal relevance, the viability of the centre, as well as our PhD program and our policy with respect to research integrity.

The committee judges the quality of our research as "very good, internationally recognized". We agree with this assessment of our overall research portfolio. We are happy that the committee concludes that we have been able to maintain our "highly visible and internationally recognised leadership in the area of scientometrics / bibliometrics", and in particular, that the committee was "impressed by the recent research output in advanced bibliometric methodologies" which it considers to be "world leading". The report notes that we could have limited ourselves to the strength of our bibliometric tradition but that we instead took "the bold step" to reorient and broaden the scope of our research. The committee supports this decision in no unclear terms at several places in the report. For us, this is the key conclusion of the assessment of our work.

The committee is of the opinion that our strategy for re-orientation and the diversification "has huge potential for further enhancing our academic standing." We agree with the committee that this process is not yet finalized and needs to be further developed in the coming years. The committee advises us to see the complementarity of our quantitative and qualitative approaches as "the strongest pillar of the quality of the research in the Centre" as they form the context for each other. We fully agree and we see the theoretical, methodological and empirical integration of the various research lines in our centre as our main central strategic objective for the next five years. We will implement this both in our new research programme (2016 - 2020), in the way we organize our research and services, and in the structure of our centre. This will mean that we will re-orient and restructure parts of our research as well as commercial services and adapt the centre's organization.

The committee assesses our contribution to society as "outstanding", both through our contract services, applied research, teaching activities and our renewed efforts to reach out to the wider scientific community in the debates about research policies and evaluation practices, including, but not limited to, the use and abuse of performance indicators. The committee believes that "the potential for broad societal impact is even greater when the newly established research disciplines are integrated with their existing quantitative strengths". We feel encouraged by the support the committee has given to our efforts to pro-actively engage with the critiques of indicator use in research assessments and with our developing teaching activities for students as well as professionals. Again, the integrated approach is for us the key conclusion with respect to our societal relevance and impact.

The report concludes with respect to the third main dimension of the assessment of our centre, our viability, that we are "very well equipped for the future". The report identifies a number of challenges that will have to be met. We fully agree with the conclusions of the committee with respect to these key challenges.

The committee concludes its report with nine recommendations. We appreciate these recommendations. They show that the committee has succeeded in positioning our work in the broader framework of the development of the field of science, technology and innovation studies more generally, and of scientometrics in particular. We agree with the direction of these recommendations and below we indicate how we will implement each one (for full description of the recommendations we refer to the report of the assessment). We combine some closely related recommendations where we think that integrated initiatives are required.

Recommendation 1: Monitor the effectiveness of the working groups, incorporate the research themes, and fully integrate the chairs into a refined management structure. In particular, focus on the synergy between quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

In the course of 2016, we will design a new research program for to 2020. We will organize a number of brainstorming research seminars, to which we will also invite external peers, to further develop our priorities for the next five years. In parallel, we will discuss with all members of the chairs and working groups how we can adapt the organization of our research in order to maximize the integration of our research approaches and designs.

Recommendation 2: Reduce our reliance on our traditional client base and standard bibliometric reports + Recommendation 4: Broaden our client base on the basis of the new methods introduced in our centre.

We will develop a series of new evaluation services on the basis of the combination of bibliometric and qualitative methodologies, for instance in the areas of contextualized scientometric and performance analysis, societal use and relevance of research, and career advice portfolios. These services will be developed in a user-oriented innovation process.

Recommendation 3: Increase the share of second stream funding in our budget.

We have been very active in acquiring external funding for our research over the years. Nevertheless, we agree with the report that we should aim to increase the share of the second stream of external funding, especially since we have built up new research lines.

Recommendation 5: Reinvigorate negotiations with data providers, in particular Elsevier, to enable to use their database for commercial services.

We will further diversify the databases and other data sources for our research and services and propose to our bibliometric partners to intensify the collaboration in the framework of the development of an open science and innovation system in Europe and globally, including Thomson Reuters, Elsevier, and other commercial data providers.

Recommendation 6: Document our policies on career development, gender balance, research integrity and related issues + Recommendation 7: Address issues of long-term CWTS members to integrate into the "new CWTS".

We will professionalize and document our human resource management with special attention to gender and diversity and career advice for early, mid-, and late career staff members. We will strengthen the day to day management of the centre and the BV with special attention to internal and external communication.

Recommendation 8: Expand the teaching activities of CWTS. The university board is advised to be more flexible to enable CWTS staff to acquire BKO certificates.

We are already intensifying the collaboration with other institutes in the faculties of social science and of governance studies in Leiden and The Hague to increase our teaching activities. Teaching and instruction will also become more important in the services of our BV. We trust that the university board will adopt the recommendation of the evaluation committee with respect to the possibilities for CWTS staff to get BKO certification.

Recommendation 9: Adopt a more formalised structure for PhD training at CWTS and modestly increase the number of PhD students.

We will review the current supervision of PhD students and develop a CWTS sub-programme for PhD training in collaboration with the national graduate school WTMC and the local graduate school of the faculty of social sciences.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the evaluation report. We appreciate the helpful recommendations and trust that our actions will further strengthen our work in the coming years.

On behalf of CWTS,

Paul Wouters, director