

Evaluation report

Evaluated point	Grade	Comments
Scientific impact of research	Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the R&D outcomes are of a high international standard and generate considerable international interest in the field. Research outputs have been issued by leading international publishers and through the Museum's publishing house to a high quality, such as the Folklore journal. The number and quality of publications per research staff member indicate a high level of intellectual and creative engagement. <p>There is good evidence of a well-organised research infrastructure that has enabled both high quality research outputs and grant success in the Museum's three priority research areas. National and international collaboration is a strength, but might be further strengthened to increase the scientific impact of the Museum's research activities.</p>
Sustainability and potential of research	Very good	<p>The Institution has a clear and focused vision, which strengthens the sustainability and potential of the field. The organization and management of R&D in the Museum is clear and effective and takes into account the specifics of the field, as evidenced by its national and international recognition. Measures for assuring funding and the amount and structure of funding are evidence of the sustainability of the R&D from a future perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Museum could usefully refine its strategic approach to and implementation of its specific role in basic and applied research. The digitalization of its collection has enhanced its leading role in this field. The Museum has a leading role in the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies. Its infrastructure is in very good condition and provides a very good base for R&D, including the support and opportunity for doctoral training.
Societal importance of research	Good	<p>The R&D of the Museum provides a complementary scholarly environment to that of the Estonian Universities and supports the preservation and evolution of Estonian language and culture. The Museum's significant archives and the physical environment have together enabled the research community to create societal impact by providing support for public commissions to create memorial landscapes, the development of life writing, the influence of folk music and the study of humour as well as analysing contemporary visual culture e.g. twitterstorms.</p>

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		The Museum has been successful in leading the Centre of Excellence for Estonian Studies. It brings together an impressive partnership of the major university communities and research organisations bringing together cultural histories and issues of societal importance, e.g. on narrative and belief. The Museum conducts a wide range of influential publicly beneficial activities that include the development of textbooks, training for kindergarten teachers, and provide expert opinion and advice on issues of nature, cultural integration, regional and national policies. Of particular note was collaboration with the commissioner of the Republic of Estonia in developing policies for gender equality. The Museum should realize the potential of these activities in a more proactive and systematic manner.
Scientific basis in the field is sufficient to conduct doctoral studies. (This question should be answered only if: a) Institution being evaluated is conducting doctoral studies and; b) The field being evaluated is proposed to grant positive evaluation. If these conditions are met then: a) If the level of scientific basis is sufficient for conducting doctoral studies in every structural unit being evaluated, then the answer should be „yes“; b) If the scientific basis is not sufficient in some structural units, then those units should be listed.)		N/A

Summary assessment

Evaluated point	Grade	Comments
Areas of special note as appropriate (Where necessary indicate sub-fields, assessment criteria, and/or structural units which, in the committee's opinion, were of a notably high level.)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Museum is unique in terms of the close connection between its research and its various archival collections.• The Estonian Folklore Archive is particularly impressive and has provided a strong base for the development of an international reputation in the field.
Areas in need of improvement as appropriate (Where necessary indicate sub-fields of the field being evaluated, assessment criteria, and/or structural units which, in the committee's opinion, revealed significant shortcomings.)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the lead institution in the recently established Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies, the Museum has the opportunity to formulate a clear and coherent forward plan to ensure sustainability of R&D beyond the funded period, and beyond its own institutional borders.
Assessment proposal to the Minister of Education and Research	To grant positive evaluation	No special comments

Feedback

Evaluated point	Comments
Feedback for institution (This question should be answered only if the institution asked for feedback from the evaluation committee in the self-report (about up to three specific areas of R&D which it finds to be currently important, e.g., related to its development plan).)	Not requested
Suggestions for unit, institution, state etc (As appropriate, committee can give additional feedback for the structural unit, the institution, or the State (please specify whom feedback is directed to according to the directive assessment criteria for regular evaluation (article 7).	<p>Self-Evaluation: The self-evaluation report should be redesigned in order to prioritise analysis over description. The employment of descriptors such as ‘add facts’ is counterproductive and tends to lead to an emphasis on product over process throughout. The inclusion of a final section on strategic forward planning would be a more coherent summation of the self-evaluation exercise, while also providing continuity from one evaluation exercise to another.</p> <p>Evaluation of Scientific Impact: The panel has encountered wide-spread problems concerning the evaluation of publications in the humanities. The academic community of arts and humanities clearly lacks confidence in the criteria for scientific impact as presently formulated. What is needed for a more equitable and effective evaluation is:(i) Appropriate credit should be given for research undertaken in the production of monographs, the editing of and contributions to multi-authored work. (ii) The evaluation system should take account of the scientific quality of a publication irrespective of the language in which it is written. A multi-lingual system of evaluation is a matter of balancing three variables: (1) the scope (2) the subject and (3) audience. (iii) The current system fails to capture the range of research and the various modes in which it is produced. This is particularly evident in the absence of criteria for non-text based research [‘artistic’, ‘practice-based’]. A bench-marking exercise against other European models would be useful.</p> <p>Societal Impact: The academic community requires a more lucid definition of what is understood by societal impact; this should be substantiated by exemplars drawn from a much broader range of domains than the impact of research on the economy. It is clear that enterprise and entrepreneurial approaches do not appear to be at the forefront of most institutions visited. There is also a need to outline the relationship between scientific and societal impact for research in these fields such that the criteria may provide an appropriate and effective framework for quality assessment of the research.</p>

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	<p>Doctoral Programmes: While the research base for doctoral programmes is generally satisfactory, there are widespread issues around completion rates that are linked to extremely low funding levels. The current provision in Estonian is out of line with other European countries. Many students are by necessity in full-time employment, and carrying out their doctoral research part-time.</p> <p>Academic leadership: There is a lack of strategic leadership in (almost) all institutions. In many cases, the dean of the faculty or the director of a non-university research institute have a clear vision about the future of their unit, but are not successful in conveying it to the heads of department and the (senior) researchers. Therefore, appropriate professional training and development in strategic management for researchers at various stages of their career is necessary.</p>