

Terms of Reference

ILLC Research Evaluation 2024

May 6, 2024

Introduction

The Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC) is one of the University of Amsterdam's (UvA) research institutes. It is a unique inter-faculty, leading research institute in the interdisciplinary area dealing with the investigation of information, information exchange, and cognition with formal and mathematical methods. It is deeply rooted in the Amsterdam logic research tradition dating back to the early twentieth century and covers the disciplines of mathematics, computational linguistics, linguistics, computer science, philosophy and artificial intelligence with staff members from the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Humanities.

On the 1st of January 2024 the total amount of research fte was around 110fte, with 16 full professors, 14 associate professors, 33 assistant professors, 25 post-docs and 53 PhD candidates.

In the Netherlands, the governing boards of the universities, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Dutch Research Council (NWO), are responsible for the quality of research done at their scientific institutes. As part of their quality assurance cycle, all academic research in the Netherlands is evaluated every six years. The executive board of the relevant university and the board of NWO or KNAW commissions the research assessment and determines which research units are to be evaluated each year. For the coordination of the assessment, all research organizations associated with the Universities of the Netherlands (UNL), KNAW and NWO use the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP).

The main goal of a SEP evaluation is to evaluate a research unit in light of its own aims and strategy. In the self-evaluation, the unit reflects on its ambitions and strategy during the previous six years as well as for the future in a coherent, narrative argument, supported wherever possible with factual evidence. This fact means that there should be a direct relationship between the arguments with regard to the aims and strategy on the one hand and the type of robust

data underpinning the self- evaluation on the other. The SEP assessments help to monitor and improve the quality of the research conducted by the research unit. Additionally, the assessments of the research quality and societal relevance of research contribute to fulfil the duty of accountability towards government and society. The boards of the institutes may use the outcomes of the research evaluations for quality assurance purposes and institutional strategy development.

Assessment

The board of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) hereby issues the Terms of Reference to the evaluation committee assessing the Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC). The committee will be chaired by prof. dr. Louise McNally of the Pompeu Fabra University of Barcelona . The committee is requested to carry out the assessment according to the guidelines specified in the Strategy Evaluation Protocol. The evaluation includes a retrospective and a prospective component. Specifically, the committee is 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.

You are being asked to assess the quality, viability and societal relevance of the research conducted by ILLC. The time window of the research field comprises the research input and output of the 2018 – 2023 period (six years; 1-Jan-2018 up to 31-Dec-2023).

You are asked to assess the strategic targets of the research units and the extent to which they are equipped to achieve them. You should do so by judging the research unit's performance on the three assessment criteria of the SEP:

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

During the evaluation of these criteria, the assessment committee is asked to incorporate six specific aspects. These aspects are included as they are becoming increasingly important in the current scientific context and help to shape the quality of the research unit.

These aspects are as follows:

1. Open Science: availability of research output, reuse of data, involvement of societal stakeholders;
2. PhD Policy and Training: supervision and instruction of PhD candidates;
3. Academic Culture: openness, (social) safety and inclusivity; and research integrity;

4. Human Resources Policy: diversity and talent management.

In addition to these criteria specified in the Strategy Evaluation Protocol, the board requests the committee to pay attention to the following additional questions as well as to offer its assessment and recommendations:

1. New organisational structure of the ILLC and its growth;
2. The role the institute can play within two research themes that transcend traditional disciplines and have a major impact on society: the development of generative AI and the development of quantum computing and software.

The main assessment criteria and the first four specific aspects are described in detail within the Strategy Evaluation Protocol.

Please take into account current international trends and developments in science and society in your analysis. Please provide a written assessment on each of the three criteria in accordance with SEP guidelines. Please also provide recommendations for improvement.

Besides the indicators specified by the SEP protocol, indicators of research quality explicitly include the outputs developed by the research unit. As indicators of relevance to society, sources of funding (e.g., public-private partnerships, EU funding) and other valorization activities such as *spin-off companies* can be considered.

With respect to PhD education, you are asked to assess the relevance and quality of the PhD programs in the institute.

Statement of impartiality

The members of the committee are requested to sign a statement of impartiality before they conduct their assessment work. In this statement, the members declare that they have no direct relationship or connection with ILLC.

Schedule of the assessment and reporting

The site visit at the Institute for Logic, Language and Computation will take place from 1st of December until 3rd of December. On the 1st of December the committee members will arrive in Amsterdam and meet each other for dinner. The actual visit of the ILLC will take place on the 2nd and 3rd of December.

The contact person will contact you about logistical matters and other relevant issues related to the research assessment approximately two months prior to the site visit. The committee is requested to report its findings in an assessment report drawn up in accordance with the SEP guidelines and format. The committee is asked to send the draft report to ILLC no more than eight weeks after the site visit. ILLC will check the report for factual inaccuracies; if such

inaccuracies are detected, the committee will ensure that they are corrected. The committee will then send the final version of the assessment report to the board. The board publishes the final version of the assessment report.

Documentation

The necessary documentation will be available on a secure website no later than four weeks prior to the site visit. The documents will include at least the following:

1. Self-evaluation of the research unit, including participation in local or national research schools
2. The Strategy Evaluation Protocol (version 2021 – 2027)
3. These terms of reference for the assessment
4. Short biosketches of the committee members and the secretary