Terms of Reference IoP

Introduction

The Institute of Physics (IoP) is one of the eight research institutes of the University of Amsterdam (UvA)'s Faculty of Science. The mission of the IoP is to carry out excellent research across a broad range of fields in both experimental and theoretical physics – spanning from fundamental to more applied; to provide inspiring education within the physics and adjacent curricula; and to transfer our knowledge and enthusiasm into society, both in the form of collaboration with industrial partners as well as in terms of boosting interest in physics in general. In 2022, IoP had grown to over 60 fte scientific staff members (assistant, associate and full professor; some of whom jointly appointed at other institutes within the Faculty), more than 40 postdocs, over 125 PhD candidates and about 12 fte support staff.

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 of Physics (IoP). The committee will be chaired by prof. dr. Gerard van der Steenhoven. 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 IoP. The time window of the research field comprises the research input and output of the 2017 – 2023 period.
You are asked to assess the strategic targets of the research unit 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 four 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.

The main assessment criteria and the 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 IoP.

Schedule of the assessment and reporting
The site visit at the IoP will take place from Tuesday 26 March 2024 (evening arrival and first gathering) until Thursday 28 March 2024 (afternoon departure). The contact person will contact you about logistical matters and other relevant issues related to the research assessment 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 IoP no more than eight working weeks after the site visit. IoP 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:
- Self-evaluation of the research unit, including participation in local or national research schools
- The Strategy Evaluation Protocol (version 2021 – 2027)
- These terms of reference for the assessment
- Short biosketches of the committee members and the secretary.