

Introduction

ESE received the research review report 2015-2021, written by the external peer review committee, chaired by Prof. dr. Maarten Lindeboom. The report includes several conclusions, suggestions and recommendations that are based upon the committee's examination of written documentation provided by the ESE and a three-day onsite visit in June 2022. In this reply, ESE shares its initial perspective on the report. In the next few months, the ESE will draft a more detailed plan of action that is in line with the EUR and ESE Strategy.

The research review report reveals satisfaction about the research at ESE and confirms the School to be excellent. According to the committee, ESE has "an excellent academic reputation and ESE lives up to this reputation". The report also reveals that the committee largely endorses the ESE strategy for the future. The report gives few concrete suggestions and recommendations beyond the plans we already have described in the self-assessment and elsewhere, including our Strategy. While we had hoped for more concrete input to improve our strategy and its implementation, we also take it as a compliment that the committee endorses our strategy. The remainder of this document will highlight the main suggestions and recommendation of the committee and ESE's plans to act upon them.

Organisation of the five research programmes

The ESE management team aims to increase the role of its research programmes as vehicle to implement the ESE Strategy. The Strategy envisions more collaboration and teamwork inside the School, with other schools, and with other parties. As implementation of this Strategy, each research programme will be asked to critically reassess its identity and to articulate its connections with, and explore synergies with, other research programmes. A next step will be to reconsider the governance of the research programmes. Currently, the research programmes are aligned with the departments for good reasons, such as administrative efficiency. Yet, this alignment can be further improved through a closer collaboration between department directors and research programme leaders. Together with the research programme leaders, the ESE management will also consider ways to stimulate synergies across research programmes, with the aim to more effectively align the strategies of the research programmes with the ESE Strategy.

- ESE will critically reassess the identities of its research programmes and their connections with other research programmes.
- The ESE management will reconsider the governance of the research programmes and consider ways to stimulate synergies across research programmes, with the aim to improve alignment of strategies and activities of research programmes with the School's strategy.

Signature of ESE

The committee advises ESE to "reassess its relationship with RSM and explore further synergetic opportunities". One of the main differences between ESE and RSM for research fields that are covered both at ESE and RSM, is that research at ESE focusses more on quantitative research methods. Yet, there are also many synergies between ESE and RSM. In January 2022, ERIM launched ERIM 2.0, which is exactly meant to make use of these synergies. Under ERIM 2.0, all practical research support for ESE researchers, besides the support provided by Erasmus Research Services (ERS) and our own Research Office (including the ESE PhD officer and the ESE funding officer), is organized by ERIM. One can think of funding for data collection, for inward and outward research visits, for submission fees to journals, etc. ERIM is also a channel through which ESE and RSM align their research policies if desired. An example of such alignment is the current initiative to jointly explore alternatives for our Tenure Track

systems. In the years to come, ESE and RSM will further develop ERIM to strengthen synergies while keeping room for their own identities.

- As of January 2022, ESE has intensified its collaboration with RSM through ERIM, also referred to internally as ERIM 2.0. In the years to come, ESE and RSM will further develop ERIM to strengthen synergies while keeping room for their own identities.

Impact and Open Science

The committee endorses ESE's Open Science approach and related measures, such as those for Scientific Integrity and Research Data Management, that we consider a fundamental element of performing high quality research. Based on the committee's feedback we feel further reassured to continue along our current trajectory and to keep stimulating Open Science.

The committee encourages us to measure societal impact more systematically. We agree with the importance of measuring, serving the broader purpose to measure progress and effects. ESE recently appointed its first Director of Engagement, who will play a key role in developing and implementing guidelines to encourage more efforts to increase societal impact.

- The ESE Management will develop and implement guidelines to track societal impact activities and outcomes and to encourage more external visibility of ESE.
- The ESE management will consider whether further incentives are required to invest in topics high on the social policy agenda, such as health and sustainability of health care, and sustainable development goals, while retaining sufficient room for fundamental research that is the basis for future applied research.
- The ESE management will steer for intensified dedication to and practice of Open Science. We aim for Open Science practices to become part of "business as usual" in the next five years. One example of an initiative is the addition of the requirement of Open Science for our research awards.

Second and third-stream funding

The committee recognizes the importance of increasing external funding and signals that the quality of our research and the size of our School has the potential for obtaining extra funds. ESE will indeed continue to increase its efforts to obtain external funding.

- ESE wants to continue its successful, tailor-made approach for personal grants.
- ESE wants to increase its efforts to obtain collaborative and interdisciplinary grants. Here collaboration with Erasmus Research Services will be essential. Building stronger ties with Erasmus University Holding companies that are affiliated with ESE will also be instrumental.

HR policy

The committee recommends ESE to "be more creative in attracting and retaining female staff and staff from minority groups" and to "consider using flexible HR practices to attract high-profile (international) talent". Moreover, while the committee also suggests that ESE's aim to develop "diversified career tracks should not be a goal in itself", they also provide several good reasons for more career differentiation and we agree with those reasons. ESE will proceed as we have described in the self-assessment and elsewhere, including our Strategy.

- The ESE Management intends to reconsider its HR policy in several dimensions of which Room for Everyone's Talent and Recognition & Rewards, and the future of the Tenure Track system

are the most pressing ones. This also is a good opportunity to rethink strategies to retain high profile senior researchers and to improve the diversity of our staff to better reflect the student population.

PhD programme

The committee recommends to “appoint a PhD programme coordinator, whom students can turn to when they encounter problems and who guides and monitors the job market placements”. ESE already has a PhD officer and a Director of Doctoral Education who share both roles. ESE also has confidential counsellors, who are part of the EUR confidential counsellor network. We acknowledge, though, that the COVID years may have made them less visible than optimal. Moreover, currently the ESE Director of Doctoral Education is mainly responsible for the ESE PhD students who are affiliated with the Tinbergen Institute and less so for those affiliated with ERIM. ESE wants to make its Director of Doctoral Education responsible for all ESE PhD students, including those affiliated with ERIM. Although this information has been shared with the committee, they unfortunately do not seem to have taken this into account. Nevertheless, we are currently also putting efforts into better visibility of the PhD officer and Director of Doctoral Education. Moreover, under ERIM 2.0 they will also intensify their collaboration with the ERIM team, which will enhance synergies and lead to a more uniform policy for ESE PhD students. Finally, to establish stronger support for junior staff including PhD students, we also want to stimulate cooperative teams throughout the School.

- ESE wants to make its Director of Doctoral Education responsible for all ESE PhD students, including those affiliated with ERIM.
- The ESE Research Office is currently working on improving the guidelines for, and communication to, PhD students and supervisors regarding whom to turn to for what.
- In 2022 ESE started a PhD programme funded from the School’s budget, which guarantees a minimum of 6 PhD positions for students with a TI (Tinbergen Institute) or BDS (Business Data Science) Research Master degree.