



Evaluation 2017 - 2022

NWO institute NSCR

Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement

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www.academion.nl
info@academion.nl

Project code P2228

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1. Foreword by the Committee Chair

In 2023, a committee of diverse scholars in the field of criminology and criminal justice convened at the request of the Dutch Research Council (NWO) to complete the assessment and evaluation of NSCR. This evaluation of NSCR was carried out as part of the six-yearly evaluation of the nine research institutes of the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

Our goal as a committee was to evaluate NSCR based on its *Strategy Evaluation Protocol 2021 -2027* (SEP). Our goal was not to find things to criticize. Rather, we engaged in these efforts to learn about the work of NSCR and to provide constructive suggestions for moving forward. Thus, the committee spoke with people in all layers of the organization to better understand what they do and how NSCR is doing.

Overall, the committee was impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of people at all levels of the organization. We think part of this enthusiasm was born from a strong, positive academic and work culture. The committee got the sense that leaders within NSCR promoted high-quality research, but not at the expense of employees' mental health. Those leading NSCR made space for all who work there to have a voice, and when issues did emerge, they were addressed, and policy changes were implemented as needed.

This strong, positive academic culture was reflected in the high-quality research that is being conducted at the institute. What stood out to the committee was the commitment to quality research in terms of theoretical development, methodological rigour, and practical application. Stakeholders, collaborators, and advisory board members all praised the work that has been done at the institute. One stakeholder said that NSCR is the "premier research centre devoted to crime and justice in Europe." We praise NSCR for its efforts, especially during challenging times, for its forward-thinking not only regarding having greater social impact, but also for advancing young people learning in this area.

We did have some recommendations for the centre, including suggestions on how to consolidate its research, articulate the social impact of its work, and be creative and proactive in advancing diversity. As the chair of this committee, I speak for all members in expressing our gratitude for this opportunity to learn more about NSCR and work with each other toward a common goal of ensuring that NSCR remains the premier research centre on crime and justice in Europe.

Prof. Heith Copes

Chair of the evaluation committee 2024

2. Executive summary

The Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) conducts independent research on crime and its responses. NSCR employs researchers as well as collaborates with universities for research. Its income sources include funds from the Foundation for Dutch Scientific Research Institutes (NWO-I), the Victim Support Fund, the National Police, and external grants from grant organizations (e.g., Horizon Europe, Science Foundations). Its long-term aims and strategies include (1) advancing scientific progress in criminological science through deepening its empirical studies, linking focus areas together, and broadening its reach to partners; (2) establishing the ability to collect new and sensitive data through a new data centre; (3) strengthening its (inter)national role by increasing its links with universities, developing a PhD programme and further developing platform functions and facilitators; and (4) stabilize its financial position.

In recent years, the institute has worked to advance the coherence of its research by reorganising its research areas into five research programmes per 2020 (Offenders, Context, Victims, Societal Consequences, and Evidence-Based Policing), establishing the Secure Analytics Lab (SAL) for data storage and analysis, developing an evidence-based policing programme, and aiming for national and international impact through dissemination activities. The evaluation committee commends NSCR's ambitious goals, mission, and efforts to advance research and infrastructure as well as the holistic aspect of its mission to educate future criminologists while at the same time generating cutting-edge research and policy recommendations for the field.

Research quality

NSCR is renowned for its meticulous empirical and quantitative research. It divides its research into three main questions: understanding (1) who becomes involved in crime, (2) where, when, and how crimes occur, and (3) the societal consequences and responses to crime. The reduction from eleven research clusters to five was viewed positively by the evaluation committee, fostering more coherent opportunities for researchers, students, the public, partners, and consumers of NSCR's work to engage across research lines. Although the institute has been historically strong in criminological theory and methodology, recent developments include an evidence-based policing programme and research on victims and societal consequences. NSCR shows a strong and growing influence on the criminological field through a variety of scientific output, ranging from reports and publications to translational materials and public dissemination of its work through lectures, conferences, workshops, and efforts with justice practitioners. The institute is aware of challenges in its interdisciplinary work. The committee encourages the groups to continue this, and if necessary, invest in additional training for its researchers to support this.

The committee observed diverse and impactful research projects at NSCR utilizing cutting-edge methodologies. NSCR's reorganization into more cohesive clusters, along with workshops and mentorship programmes, underscores its commitment to research quality. The committee applauds the ambition of the institute to focus on quality over quantity in research output. It recognizes the balancing act between trying to produce high-impact publications and results with showing productivity in the quantity of its work. The committee encourages the institute to continue diversifying how it measures the impact of its scientific output, and to track this over time. Overall, NSCR is encouraged to maintain its ambitious goals of high-quality research and productivity while aiming for impactful outcomes in practice and policy.

NSCR enhances its reputation in criminological sciences and criminal justice policy impact through productivity, visibility, social impact activities, international collaboration, and cutting-edge methods. Investments from the Victim's Foundation and National Police, along with endowed chairs and expanded

affiliations, bolster its national and international standing. Leadership and reputation are also visible through NSCR's impact on policy and practice matters. Translational activities and presence in conferences demonstrate this. The committee advises NSCR to continue to accelerate its efforts to disseminate and increase awareness of its research products, as well as to facilitate synergistic activities that place NSCR at the centre of important policy and research discussions in this area. Suggestions include hosting a criminology journal and conducting meta-analyses to shape research agendas and policy recommendations.

Societal Relevance

The committee observed NSCR's strong motivation to advance its impact on criminal justice and societal reform, alongside its commitment to high-quality research. While NSCR's orientation toward societal relevance is evident, the committee recommends more explicit articulation and operationalization of this orientation. It suggests strategic planning for social impact at all stages of research projects, including dissemination and translation efforts. NSCR should track and monitor its impact on policymaking and practice and consider strengthening its advisory board to aid in these endeavours. Additionally, the committee proposes exploring direct social impact activities and developing a detailed strategy to build demand for its research through targeted communication and institutionalization efforts. Overall, NSCR's commitment to societal relevance is commendable. To further enhance societal relevance, the institute should develop a more systematic impact strategy and ensure consistent implementation.

Viability

The institute is highly viable in terms of its scientific future as well as its potential for societal impact. In the past years, the institute has taken several steps to professionalize its work environment and create infrastructures to ensure it can sustain its efforts in the future. At the same time, the institute is at a crucial turning point in its development. Therefore, the institute's viability depends on its ability to maintain and balance high research quality and social impact while continuing to develop as a highly functioning professional organization where top scientists, new researchers, and essential administrators want to be employed. With its recent growth and increased professionalization, NSCR has taken critical steps to strengthen its organizational infrastructure. In the next six years, it will be critical for NSCR to maintain organizational and financial stability to be able to realise its goals.

Additional aspects

NSCR actively participates in various aspects of **open science**, including data accessibility and transparency. It operates an innovative Secure Access Lab (SAL) for controlled data access and aims to establish a national data repository. The institute offers courses on open science principles and practices, fostering a culture of data transparency and open-access publishing among researchers. NSCR has managed to publish 75% of its academic articles as open access. Limited funding for open-access publication remains a challenge, affecting the institute's ability to increase this percentage.

NSCR's **PhD programme** is vibrant, with plans for supporting a national PhD programme in Criminology to enhance collaboration and research quality. Initiatives like regular supervisor training address concerns raised in PhD surveys. Interviews show strong social cohesion among PhD candidates, although workload pressures impact mental health, necessitating continued mental health support and regular check-ins.

NSCR fosters an open and inclusive **academic culture**, promoting collaboration internally and externally while valuing multidisciplinary work. Efforts to maintain this culture amidst remote work post-pandemic are recommended, with attention to balancing individual needs and institute requirements. Gender and different nationalities are well represented, and the institute aims for better gender balance among senior staff and seeks to increase ethno-racial diversity. The committee suggests measures to attract

underrepresented talent, including scholarships and summer schools. Research integrity is upheld, although co-authorship remains a point of discussion, particularly in PhD supervision. The committee recommends empowering Ph.D. students to address concerns, as well as proactive discussion between supervisors and PhD candidates to ensure fair allocation.

The committee found several commendable aspects in NSCR's **HR policies**. The diversity in research topics and researchers was highly praised. NSCR's hiring practices prioritize maintaining theoretical and methodological rigor, which is essential for the institute's continued success. While onboarding received high praise for its effectiveness, there is room for improvement in internal communication to ensure that departing staff feel properly acknowledged and appreciated. The committee thinks that such challenges might be related to the limited size of the support staff and recommends exploring whether this can be strengthened. Staff highly value the contributions of the Works Council and appreciate the efforts to recognize and reward success. The committee suggests ensuring that this recognition is broad enough to include for instance efforts in grant submissions and partnerships.

Overall, the committee feels that NSCR is a strong foundation in place and is well equipped to face future challenges related to opportunities for further enhancement and consolidation of the success of the institute.

3. Procedure

3.1 Scope of the evaluation

This evaluation of NSCR was carried out as part of the six-yearly evaluation of the nine research institutes of the Dutch Research Council (NWO). NWO asked evaluation committees of external peers to perform an evaluation of its research institutes over the period 2017-2022. The evaluation bureau Academion acted as an independent intermediary to safeguard the quality of assessment, providing secretaries for the site visit, and helping the institutes and evaluation committees prepare and execute the site visits together with NWO-I, the institute organization of NWO.

The evaluations were carried out according to the Strategy Evaluation Protocol 2021-2027 (SEP), the protocol for research evaluations in the Netherlands, agreed upon by NWO, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), and the Universities of the Netherlands (UvNL). The committees were requested to carry out the evaluations according to a list of questions derived from the main assessment criteria of SEP (see Appendix 1). The assessment was to include a backward-looking and a forward-looking component. The committees were asked to judge the performance of the institute based on the list of SEP questions and to offer written conclusions as well as recommendations based on considerations and arguments. The main assessment criteria are:

- Research Quality;
- Societal Relevance;
- Viability.

During the evaluation of these criteria, the committees were asked to incorporate four specific aspects relating to how each institute organizes and actually performs its research, its composition in terms of leadership and personnel, and how the institute is run on a daily basis. These aspects are:

- Open Science;
- PhD Policy and Training;
- Academic Culture;
- Human Resources Policy.

For more information on the SEP questions, see Appendix 1.

3.2 Composition of the Committee

The committee for the evaluation of NSCR was appointed by the Board of NWO, and consisted of the following members:

- Prof. Heith Copes, University of Alabama at Birmingham – chair;
- Prof. Wim Hardyns, Ghent University;
- Prof. Clemens Kroneberg, University of Cologne;
- Prof. Cynthia Lum, George Mason University;
- Prof. Sean Redmond, University of Limerick;
- Prof. Danielle Reynald, Griffith University.

The committee was supported by Liza Kozłowska, MA – Odion Onderzoek, who acted as secretary on behalf of Academion. Drs. Iris Koopmans was present during the site visit to support the committee on behalf of NWO-I.

3.3 Independence

Before the site visit, all members of the committee signed the NWO Code of Conduct, by means of which they declared that their assessment would be free of bias and without regard to personal interest, and that they had no personal, professional, or managerial involvement with the institute or its research programmes. It was concluded that the committee had no conflicts of interest. The NWO-I coordinator present during the site visit did not take part in the evaluation but provided the committee with background information and context on the position of the NWO institute upon request.

3.4 Data provided to the committee

The committee received the self-evaluation report from NSCR, including all the information required by the SEP. The committee also received the following appendices to NSCR's self-evaluation report:

- Brief history of NSCR
- Organogram
- Staff Development and composition
- Scientific Advisory Board
- Tenured staff members and postdocs per research group
- Fellows and PiRs of NSCR 2017-2022
- Exemplary cases of NSCR Research
- Overview of scientific highlights
- Datasets collected during the evaluation period
- Finance and funding
- Endowed and regular chairs established during assessment period
- Completed and ongoing PhD-projects and position of NSCR graduates
- Coordinates of policy regarding PhDs at NSCR
- PhD survey
- Coordinates of grant policy
- Gender equality Plan
- Career paths at NSCR

In addition, the committee received NSCR Strategic report (2023-2028), as well as additional materials (presentations during the committee's visit; additional responses to the committee's inquiries).

3.5 Procedures followed by the committee

The committee proceeded according to the SEP 2021-2027. The secretary instructed the committee chair on his role in the evaluation. In its first meeting in July 2023 the committee was briefed by the secretary on research evaluations according to the SEP 2021-2027, and by the NWO-I coordinator on the Dutch research landscape and position of the NWO institute therein.

Prior to the site visit, all committee members independently formulated a preliminary evaluation based on the written information that was provided before the site visit. During its preparatory meeting in October

2023, the committee discussed the preliminary evaluations and identified questions to be raised during the site visit. Committee members agreed upon procedural matters and aspects of the evaluation. The site visit took place on 28 and 29 November 2023 (see the schedule in Appendix 2). After the interviews the committee discussed its findings and comments to allow the chair to present the preliminary findings and to provide the secretary with argumentation to draft a first version of the evaluation report. The final evaluation is based on both the documentation provided by NSCR and the information gathered during the interviews with representatives of the institute during the site visit.

The draft report by the committee was presented to NSCR for factual corrections and comments. In close consultation with the chair and other committee members, the comments received were reviewed to draft the final report. The final report was sent to the institute and NWO-I on 15 May 2024.

4. Evaluation of NSCR 2017-2022

4.1 About NSCR

NSCR was established in 1992 as a national research institute by the Dutch Research Council (NWO) and the Netherlands Ministry of Justice and Security. NSCR was meant to be the fundamental scientific counterpart of the more applied and policy-oriented Research and Documentation Centre (WODC), which was entirely funded by the Ministry.

Formally, NSCR began as a tripartite institution with funds from the Dutch Research Council, the Ministry of Justice and Security, and Leiden University. However, the institute has always been independent in the choice of research topics and the way it communicates to a wider audience.

NSCR was hosted in Leiden until 2009. When funding terminated in 2007, a contract with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam was signed, and the institute moved to Amsterdam. Additionally, funding from the Ministry of Justice and Security ceased in 2015. Since 2015, NSCR has had a model based primarily on the acquisition of grants. While this worked well at first, the financial situation became tight from 2018 onward. From 2023 onward, the Foundation for Dutch Scientific Research Institutes (NWO-I) enhanced NSCR's funding in order to restore the balance between external funds and basic funding.

4.2 Mission, Vision, and Strategy

NSCR conducts independent research on crime and social and legal responses to crime. In 2020, it reorganized itself into five research programmes: Offenders, Context, Victims, Consequences, and Evidence-Based Policing. To carry out these programmes, NSCR employs full- and part-time researchers and collaborates with universities in the Netherlands and abroad. Support staff members are responsible for the daily operation of the institute, including human resources, financial, data management, and grant management. The business model of NSCR operates by receiving income primarily from the NWO and supplemented with programme funding from the Victim Support Fund and Foundation and the National Police, as well as many external research grants and contracts.

NSCR describes its long-term aims and strategies in the documentation provided to the committee. These aims include (1) advancing scientific progress in criminological science through deepening its empirical studies, linking focus areas together, and broadening its reach to partners; (2) establishing the ability to collect new and sensitive data through a new data centre; (3) strengthening its (inter)national role by increasing its links with universities, developing a PhD programme and further developing platform functions and facilitators; and (4) stabilize its financial position.

During the 2017-2022 period, the institute aimed to advance “coherence” of its research. Although its first and primary goal is to carry out high-quality research, during this period, NSCR recognized that its research achievement could be strengthened by consolidating its efforts into five research areas (instead of eleven areas previously). It also aimed to advance both theoretical and methodological elements of these research lines and engage in studies on currently relevant topics (e.g., cybercrime). NSCR has recently set up the SAL to store sensitive data that others can access and analyse, as well as an evidence-based policing research programme to advance evaluation research. NSCR also seeks to have a national and international impact

with its research. It engages in dissemination and translational activities that reflect this goal, including seminars, webinars, conferences, guest lectures and visits, media responses, and other activities.

The committee believes that NSCR plays an essential role in criminological science and practice for the Netherlands. Overall, the committee lauded the ambitious goals and mission of NSCR and the tangible efforts it has made in the last assessment period to advance this mission and improve its infrastructure. The committee also appreciated the holistic aspect of its mission to educate future criminologists while at the same time generating cutting-edge research and policy recommendations for the field. While ambitious, the committee feels that the mission, vision, and strategies for achieving that mission and vision are commendable.

4.3 Research Quality

Contributions to the body of scientific knowledge

The institute is well known for its empirical and quantitative work in the areas of crime and law enforcement, which the committee considers to be careful, meticulous, and cutting-edge. Several of the committee members were well aware of NSCR's research and have used and cited NSCR's research. To design research in line with its mission, NSCR divides its inquiries into three overarching questions:

- 1) Who? How can we explain who becomes an offender or a victim of a criminal act?
- 2) Where, when, and how? In which spatial, temporal, and situational contexts does crime occur, and how can we explain this?
- 3) With what effect? How do we respond to crime, and what are the consequences of crime for both society and law enforcement institutions?

As noted in NSCR's self-evaluation, the primary organizational approach by which NSCR contributes to the body of knowledge in criminology is through its thematic clusters. Previously, between 2017 and 2020, the institute was organized along eleven thematic clusters that reflected many of these questions. Although effectively representing the research themes of NSCR, the clusters often comprised relatively small teams, which, to those external to the institute, could give the impression of a somewhat scattered focus. Thus, in 2020, NSCR reorganized itself into five research clusters around the fundamental questions above. These research clusters, reflecting the current organization of NSCR include:

- 1) Offenders – who commits what crime and why;
- 2) Context – where, when, and how do criminal acts happen;
- 3) Victims – who becomes a crime victim and what predicts resilience and recovery;
- 4) Societal consequences – how do society and law-enforcing institutions respond to crime; and
- 5) Evidence-based policing – what works in policing.

The committee thought that the reduction and transition to five research clusters, as opposed to its initial eleven, was beneficial for the institute. The combination of the activities of the various research groups also offers numerous opportunities for researchers, students, the public, partners, and consumers of NSCR's work to engage in organized ways. Additionally, by working together across research lines, more complex topics can be tackled more holistically. Some committee members noted that the strength of the institute's research has primarily been in criminological theory and methodology, especially in its "offenders" and "context" research lines. However, NSCR's recent development of an evidence-based policing research

programme and the research lines focused on “consequences” and “victims” have significant potential for the institute to expand and apply its theoretical and methodological strengths to programme evaluation in these areas. Additionally, the establishment of a research group centred on victimization and policing underscores the growing significance of these areas (and recognizes the potential for future funding), thereby positioning NSCR as more actively engaged in this domain. Strengthening those lines of research could strengthen NSCR’s contribution to scientific knowledge and its use.

NSCR produces a variety of scientific outputs, ranging from reports and publications to translational materials and public dissemination of its work through lectures, conferences, workshops, and efforts with justice practitioners. The productivity statistics in the self-assessment report show that peer-reviewed publications grew between 2017-2022 from 65 to over 100 publications per year. In recent years, non-peer-reviewed publications have also grown, such as online reports and research summaries created for non-academic audiences. From the statistics provided in NSCR’s self-evaluation report, the committee noted with appreciation that the institute has been successful in remaining productive during the COVID pandemic. Furthermore, the committee noted from the bibliographical analysis provided that the institute’s output has a strong and growing influence on the criminological field, which the committee commends.

NSCR also seeks to collaborate and contribute to several disciplines and fields connected to the study of crime and criminal justice. This collaboration is especially evident in the institute’s recent foray into cybercrime, a complex social phenomenon that touches many different academic and policy disciplines. NSCR already engages in synergistic and collaborative efforts (publishing, grant writing, advisory boards, societal impact activities, conferences, exchanges, etc.) and is working on strengthening these efforts for cybercrime and other research agendas. At the same time, disciplines have different terminology and research/professional approaches, which can lead to misunderstandings, oversimplification of research, or challenges related to performance metrics for different disciplines when teams from varied backgrounds work together. The committee noted from the meetings with the research groups that the institute is aware of these challenges in its interdisciplinary work. It encourages the groups to continue this, and if necessary, to invest in additional training for its researchers to support this.

Quality and scientific relevance of the research

The committee was able to directly observe and hear about several research projects conducted by researchers at NSCR, from those who are still graduate students to the most senior researchers in the institute. These projects were scientifically relevant, advanced, and impactful, often using methodological approaches that were cutting-edge in the field. Furthermore, the reorganization of the institute into more cohesive clusters, the training and workshops carried out within the institute to improve the quality of research (especially amongst newer researchers), and the improvement of both scientific and practice-based mentorship speak to the infrastructure that NSCR has developed to maintain high levels of quality of its research products.

The committee applauds the ambition of the institute to further focus on quality over quantity. It recognizes the balancing act between trying to produce high-impact publications and results with showing productivity in the quantity of its work. Several activities of NSCR address this balance. For example, the institute requires at least two published articles from its PhD candidates for them to advance toward completion of their degree. This creates a standardization, which is important when working with many researchers and different supervisors. At the same time, students may feel pressured to publish in any outlet, and the quality of publications could suffer. NSCR has mitigated this by strengthening the mentorship of students within the research clusters (more on PhD training below).

The committee recognizes the value in the traditional metrics the institute used to assess research quality and productivity. At the same time, given the very policy-relevant and practical nature of criminological research, the committee encourages NSCR to continue diversifying how it measures the impact of its scientific output. Such measures might include alternative metrics (“altmetrics”) like social media mentions, policy document citations, and media coverage. Additionally, long-term impact assessments would be beneficial for establishing impact. These assessments would involve tracking how research contributes to changes in policy, practice, or further scientific advancements over time, not just immediate citations or acknowledgments. Tracking these metrics over time will be important. The committee encourages NSCR research team and executives to assess the metrics it uses to gauge quality and quantity yearly and align those metrics with how it assesses the performance of all staff members (from the most senior researchers to the most junior).

Overall, NSCR is encouraged to continue to achieve its ambitious goals of both high-quality research and research productivity by attending to--and strategizing toward--a healthy and diversified balance of publishing in high-quality journals and finding ways to translate rigorous research into impactful and useful products for practitioners and policymakers.

Academic reputation and leadership in the field

NSCR advances its reputation and leadership in the field of criminological sciences and criminal justice policy impact through its productivity, visibility, social impact activities, international collaboration, the strength of its training of up-and-coming scientists, and its engagement in cutting-edge methods and relevant social concerns. The reputation of NSCR is also evidenced by new investments in NSCR by the Victim’s Foundation and the National Police Service. Additionally, the institute is affiliated with several universities and capitalizes on the reputation of its affiliated academics and fellows. It has recently installed several endowed chairs to strengthen its national reputation and has expanded its affiliated scholars and fellows to expand its international reputation.

The committee emphasizes that leadership and reputation by centres such as NSCR—whose purpose is both generating high-quality research and impacting criminal justice policy—is not only based on the quality of the knowledge it generates. That reputation is also reliant on the institute’s ability to translate its research into policy and practice uses. The institute shows some of this through its external activities and presence at external conferences, but mostly through its translational and synergistic activities, as listed in the appendices of its self-assessment.

As it continues its journey to be one of the top criminological institute in the Netherlands, Europe, and the world, the committee advises NSCR to accelerate its efforts to disseminate and increase awareness of its research products, as well as to facilitate synergistic activities that place NSCR at the centre of important policy and research discussions in this area. One committee member suggested that the institute could consider becoming the home to a top criminology journal in the Netherlands, or another international journal. Additionally, conducting meta-analyses and systematic reviews in its research areas also provides NSCR with opportunities to comment on the larger state of fields of research in criminology, and making suggestions to researchers and policymakers with regard to how research might be further advanced.

4.4 Societal Relevance

It was clear from the committee's visit that NSCR is highly motivated and interested in advancing its impact, not only in building knowledge and its academic reputation, but its social impact and how the institute could inform and drive change and reform in criminal justice, crime, and victimization. Given NSCR's reputation for high-quality fundamental research, the committee was pleased to see that research designed to grow scientific knowledge and more applied research goes hand in hand at NSCR. It was clear that the orientation of the institute at all levels was toward a healthy balance of methodological innovation and knowledge development in parallel with application to real-world problems. The staff members the committee interviewed engaged with this 'contribution' trajectory of their own volition, which added to the observation that this is a cultural aspect of the institute. The committee applauds the various ways that the institute is trying to increase its impact, public engagement, and uptake of its products.

The committee also had several suggestions based on their observations during their visit that might be helpful to NSCR in advancing these goals. Most prominently, the institute could articulate its efforts related to social impact and relevance more directly and obviously in its external communication. The committee's perception of NSCR's commitment to societal relevance became even more positive and clarified only after detailed interviews with institute staff, PhD candidates, and stakeholders. If anything, this pointed to a finding that the substance and day-to-day practice of the institute was at least as good or better than its reported engagement in the area of societal relevance, as noted in its self-evaluation report.

Additionally, despite NSCR's orientation towards the societal relevance of its research efforts, the committee believed that NSCR could provide greater clarity about how such an orientation is operationalized. For example, the institute should strategically discuss and plan for social impact for each of its projects at all stages of projects. This includes at project conception, during engagement with stakeholders, during research implementation, when preparing for the presentation of data and findings, and during the dissemination of recommendations to potential beneficiaries of that research. The committee found a very persuasive view from one senior staff interviewed, who said that every research project, however fundamental or abstract, should have a compelling narrative about how it could contribute to improving society. Articulating that as a regular aspect of all NSCR research projects will strengthen the practice of NSCR researchers in these goals. The committee also suggested that for every significant research publication that it puts forth, it also creates related translational publications (short magazine pieces, blogs, press releases, etc.) to widen the influence, awareness, and use of this high-quality research.

Working towards this goal could also include thinking through the "next steps" of translation and dissemination once a project is completed. The committee especially emphasizes this type of strategic thinking for more theoretical or "traditional" research projects that are not outcome evaluations or that have less-than-obvious immediate uses or impacts. For example, the work that NSCR does on place-based criminology, offenders, and crime patterns may generate strong interest from the public or other research groups, even if the findings may seem like they do not have direct use in policymaking or justice practices. Additionally, placing such research into context may help justice agencies understand why that research is important to their goals and interests. In the committee's discussion with research staff and PhD candidates, there was always strong hope that research findings from these types of studies would gain traction in either academic or policy circles. However, given the emphasis and reputation of NSCR, a more intentional approach to thinking through the meaning, use, translation, and dissemination of research findings—even the most theoretical—should be a regular exercise of the institute's various research groups and its executive staff. NSCR researchers should also consider soliciting the help and partnership of other organizations, community partners, public relations/media colleagues, and even board members with relevant expertise

who could assist in thinking through these strategies for each research project. The committee notes the loss of some individuals on the external Institute Advisory Board (e.g., prosecutors) who might have been helpful in this regard. Thus, NSCR should consider strengthening its advisory board with more individuals who can advise on these matters.

The institute was advised to “disseminate more” in a previous assessment. However, the current evaluation committee recommends that the institute should consider *strategic and intentional* dissemination efforts so as to solidify its reputation and status while at the same time making its value to society clear. Consistently providing direct statements on the institute’s website and materials about exactly how research projects led to tangible outcomes, actions, policy/procedural changes, and impacts is one example to realize this. Another strategic approach to improving NSCR’s articulation of its social impact is for the institute to systematically track and monitor its effects on policymaking, practice, media, etc. While related to the metrics and alt-metrics discussed above for research impact, these are specific instances where NSCR’s research was mentioned, used, or debated in policy and practice. NSCR may also consider soliciting feedback about the use of its research from its justice partners (the police, courts, etc.). Finding ways to identify, document, track, and also highlight instances of others using the institute’s research would prove fruitful in developing a more strategic and intentional approach to achieving its social impact goals. Beyond the annual report to NWO, the institute should consider an external-facing annual report that sharply describes its impact, focus, and needs to potential funders, recipients, and users of its products.

Given the stature and maturation of the institute, NSCR might also consider moving towards more direct social impact activities. Specifically, given NSCR’s strong position of having a body of research that it has already developed and an infrastructure for developing high-quality research in the future, the institute could consider strengthening its 2023-2028 plan by including more detailed strategy of how it might build demand for its research through specific translation, receptivity, and institutionalization activities beyond dissemination. As this will require funding and investment, the committee offers it only as an idea and not as a binding recommendation. However, this could involve developing more tools, translational products, and seminars and strategically communicating its findings to targeted groups and individuals. This could also include developing a business model that includes training and technical assistance focused primarily on implementing research findings into practice. Such an approach would reflect a marked shift in the institute’s primary focus on research generation but can be done strategically and in ways that leverage the institute’s already-existing research. The evidence-based policing cluster might be a good place to start.

In sum, the committee found that NSCR’s commitment to societal relevance exceeded expectations and is deep and broad within the institute. The operationalization and intentionality of translation and dissemination of research projects could be further developed to strengthen this further.

4.5 Viability

Current Infrastructure and Viability of NSCR

NSCR has worked diligently to achieve its current status through its rigorous science and efforts to impact society and the criminological discipline. The institute has also taken several steps to professionalize its work environment and create infrastructures to ensure it can sustain these efforts in the future. At the same time, the institute is at a crucial turning point in its development. Consolidating its current position in the number of staff members and in the demands for its knowledge from society and other researchers, sustained investments by NWO and other funders supporting NSCR’s work are necessary. Therefore, the

institute's viability depends on its ability to maintain and balance high research quality and social impact while continuing to develop as a highly functioning professional organization where top scientists, new researchers, and essential administrators want to be employed.

NSCR's work is highly viable in terms of its scientific future. During the last six years, it also has established infrastructure to ensure the long-term success of its research goals. Most importantly (and as noted above), the focus on five research areas creates a more coherent approach to criminological inquiry while also allowing ample room for growth. During the committee's visit, presentations by researchers indicated that each of the five pillars is broadly defined to create flexibility and space for new projects and ideas. Additionally, each pillar is led by a senior researcher guiding the research agenda and, in some cases, providing mentorship to less experienced researchers. The institute is also trying to secure its scientific viability by seeking ways to encourage open science; developing database storage and access infrastructure to encourage others to engage with data collected; ensuring PhD candidates are well trained, mentored, and guided in their work; providing training for personnel on supervision of graduate students; developing grant support services within NSCR; and establishing endowed professorships with universities. The international inclusion of fellows and affiliates, especially with colleagues in Europe, the US, Australia, and the UK, is also important to expand its scientific and social impact reach. The director also noted the institute's interest in engaging more with meta-analyses so that NSCR can serve as a consolidator (and thought leader) of large bodies of research and knowledge.

The institute's efforts to strengthen its social impact are closely connected to its scientific and overall viability. For example, the institute has added the evidence-based policing research cluster, which, in combination with the "consequences" research line, could encourage more programme evaluation research in NSCR. It has also established a strong working partnership with two funders who use NSCR's products—the National Police Service and the Victim's Foundation. The institute's goals are also closely aligned with the NWO's goals, in particular, the NWO's focus on social challenges, international collaboration, science utilization, improving research culture and inclusivity, stronger research infrastructure, and open science. All of these point to the institute's efforts to maintain and improve its sustainability and viability in the long term. Many of these efforts have already paid off. Several stakeholders interviewed by the committee remarked how NSCR has established itself as the "go-to" research firm for policy and practitioners, a centre marked by "excellence" and "impact," given the already existing research it has developed. As one interviewee noted, NSCR is in a "superior league" of other high-quality, high-impact institutes.

Finally, the institute has worked to improve its professional organization, developing human resource elements to ensure equity, representation, inclusiveness, and good mental health; building training and mentorship services to ensure standardization and civility in the academic culture and work environment; and creating or building staff positions that provide a variety of technical support services to researchers. Developing a PhD programme and training younger researchers on research design and grant acquisition are also critical investments that NSCR is making to increase its scientific and social relevance. The efforts that the institute has engaged in show that it is developing into a significant organization and taking care of its holistic health and environment, which are as strong as its research components.

Challenges, Opportunities, and Considerations to Improve NSCR's Viability

The growth and development of NSCR in the past years has presented the institute with a number of challenges. Mentoring, managing, and supervising a large group of PhD candidates working on both NSCR projects and their own dissertations will take a significant amount of time and investment, which is challenging for researchers whose time is primarily taken by grant funding and working on their own

academic profile. The consolidation of research areas will continue to require intentional activities that create synergies between research groups as well. In this regard, the committee notes that the size of support staff (grants support, financial/accounting, human resources, etc.) for the institute is small for an institute of this size, and believes that the institute would benefit from increased investments in support staff.

The aspirations of the institute's research and social relevance agendas given its current size and limited resources, will put a great deal of pressure on the institute that cannot be alleviated without increasing core funding for the institute, especially supporting services and programmes (including the PhD programme). Thus, a significant challenge to NSCR (and similar institutes) is financial. However, this challenge is closely linked to how well it can achieve its future aims. Currently, the institute relies on a combination of direct income (NWO-I), funding (Victim Support Fund, Victim Foundation, and the National Police), programme funding (NWO and others), and research grants and contracts. In total, 62% of its funding comes from non-NWO-I sources. While the increased reliance on external grants and contracts is necessary in the light of NSCR's financial situation, it is also more challenging and can be less stable. Increased needs for non-NWO-I funding will result in research staff being increasingly pressured to seek out, apply for, and manage grants, potentially on topics or research areas that may not be quite the institute's or their interest. The pressure to apply for and satisfy project requirements may impact scientific rigor and quality. Having direct sources of funding, like from the National Police, is a good idea but may require the institute to take on additional training, technical assistance, and translational roles. The committee notes that finding ways to leverage its existing research portfolio, findings, and resources to develop its translational, implementation, and technical support side may be needed to support the institute's finances in the future. Collaborating and sharing resources with universities may also be another route to limit extra costs.

In summary, NSCR is in a good strategic and scientific position and has high aspirations to continue to be impactful and scientifically rigorous. With its recent growth and increased professionalization, NSCR has taken critical steps to strengthen its organizational infrastructure. In the next six years, it will be critical for NSCR to maintain organizational and financial stability to be able to realise its goals.

4.5 Four Additional Aspects Contributing to Institute Success

Open Science

The committee found that NSCR and its researchers were actively engaged in open science, especially in how NSCR opens its work to other researchers and stakeholders. The research at NSCR has varying levels of data sensitivity, ranging from general surveys that are low sensitivity to body-worn camera video footage of crimes and interviews with victims, offenders, and witnesses of crime. Some of this data cannot be made openly accessible and is highly sensitive. However, to compensate for this, NSCR has created a Secure Access Lab (SAL). The SAL is an innovative data repository that allows others to access the data, but in secure, controlled conditions, making some of NSCR's data collections more accessible to external researchers to some degree. The increase in research using virtual reality and videos will require considerably more storage. NSCR also aspires to develop a large data repository in the Netherlands to house not only their data but also that of others (similar to the ICPSR at the University of Michigan in the United States, for example). The committee points out that these ambitions will add to the need for more resources for infrastructure and support staff and advises to be aware of this concern, given the challenges mentioned in the previous section.

In addition, NSCR has classes devoted to open science, which include discussing the philosophy of open science, how to make data transparent, how to publish in open-access journals, and how to archive data used in publications. The researchers are encouraged to publish their findings in open-access journals and to make data available either in NSCR repository or in other repositories. This has created a culture of valuing open access and data transparency. Evidence of this is in the increase in pre-registered studies, placing data in repositories, and use of open software. With regard to data reuse, NSCR regularly practices reusing data when possible. This is reflected in multiple publications from the same datasets and in the data being made available for others to access.

NSCR has published approximately 75% of its academic articles as open access. One limitation is the lack of resources to publish green or gold access. For journals that are not open access, publishing open access can be expensive. Some researchers affiliated with universities can rely on resources from those universities to pay for the cost; however, not all have such resources. The committee thinks that providing funding to publish open access will help raise this percentage.

PhD Policy and Training

NSCR has a vibrant PhD programme with a large number of current PhD candidates. One of the main strategic goals of NSCR moving forward is the launch and development of the national PhD programme aimed at bringing together PhD candidates in Criminology from universities across the Netherlands. The PhD programme is an ambitious and promising initiative that has potential to advance research quality among NSCR PhD cohorts and will help position NSCR at the centre of PhD education and training in the Netherlands. Developing such a national PhD hub also has the potential to encourage cross-university collaboration, strengthen existing collaborations, and create new opportunities for collaboration between PhD candidates (as well as supervisors).

NSCR implemented a survey of its PhD candidates in 2022 (also fielded again in 2023). That survey provided insight into some of the pressure points within the PhD programme at NSCR and have already triggered initiatives to help address several concerns, including regular training of PhD supervisors and mental health training for PhDs. Alongside the PhD survey, the appointment of PhD representatives, confidential counsellors for PhDs, and regular meetings between the PhD candidates and the institute director, all serve as a diverse array of outlets through which PhD candidate issues can be raised (openly or confidentially) and subsequently addressed by institute leadership.

The committee's interviews with the PhD candidates revealed a strong sense of cohesion among the PhD cohort, which was credited as a significant source of support for the candidates. The PhD mentors and confidential counsellors were also identified as being instrumental in strategically helping to develop that sense of community among the NSCR PhD cohort. The fact that these mentors are separate and detached from their academic supervisors seemed vital to their effective functioning. The PhD candidates seemed to feel a strong sense of independence and ownership over their research, even when they were part of larger projects funded by grants and led by senior researchers. Importantly, the students generally seemed to feel highly valued.

During the interviews, PhD candidates highlighted workload pressures related to publishing and work-life balance. Many acknowledged that this was self-imposed, rather than institute imposed. Nevertheless, some noted that these pressures were having negative impacts on their mental health. They also highlighted that they observed mental health issues caused by similar pressures among their supervisors and senior staff. The work of confidential counsellors was important in helping to manage these issues. However, candidates

highlighted the time constraints that were becoming evident in the capacity of the confidential counsellors. The committee recommends guarding the time these important counsellors have to spend on their role supporting the PhDs.

It will be useful for NSCR to continue the great work in taking a proactive approach in managing the mental health concerns of PhD candidates and supervisors by continuing to organize regular mental health courses and work-life balance training each year (as the students found this very helpful). NSCR could also consider standardizing routine mental health check-ins (every three months, for example) to add to this. Creating other opportunities where PhD candidates and supervisors can openly discuss mental health issues with each other, including challenges and strategies for coping with stressors and other mental health concerns is something PhD candidates found desirable. Ongoing attention to mental health and the provisions of additional supports for staff mental health as stressors in the workplace continue to mount will be important in the coming years.

Academic Culture

A core element of NSCR's academic culture is its *openness to cooperation*, both internally and externally with societal stakeholders and the national and international research community in criminology. Multidisciplinary work is valued, and there is a shared sense that NSCR is a catalyst for criminology in the Netherlands. Intellectual and social life at the institute seems to be very vibrant and characterized by flat hierarchies and easy accessibility. At the same time, there is potential to promote this open atmosphere even more, because the COVID-19 pandemic caused a switch to remote work that can still be felt in the limited on-site presence of a subgroup of researchers. The committee recommends giving attention to the issue of remote work, particularly balancing the needs of individuals with the needs of the institute. If NSCR promotes on-site work, it will need to actively seek the required additional office space.

In terms of *diversity and inclusivity*, NSCR succeed with inclusiveness of gender and different nationalities. Given the strong overrepresentation of women among more junior researchers, it is clear that NSCR's ambition should be to have at least an equal representation of women among the permanent and senior staff. The increasing share of non-Dutch staff members (currently representing 15 nationalities) has strengthened NSCR as an international centre of criminology, which also is reflected in internal changes (e.g., the switch to English in internal communication). However, at this time, people of colour and Dutch immigrant minorities are hardly represented at NSCR. To a large extent, this mirrors the low representation of these groups in criminological study programmes more generally. Still, in light of the research topics of the institute, it would be desirable to achieve higher levels of ethno-racial diversity in the future. The committee recommends that NSCR form a task force or group to devise measures to attract talent from underrepresented groups intentionally. This could include presenting scholarships for underrepresented groups or setting up international summer schools that target underrepresented students and international students, who could thereby increase their chances of drafting competitive applications for PhD positions at NSCR.

The academic culture at NSCR clearly promotes and safeguards good *research integrity*. This was evident in the conversations with the different groups at the institute as well as in the results of the PhD survey. For example, the team science approach is generally implemented in a way in which data preparation and analysis are shared tasks. The only aspect of research integrity that deserves even more attention is transparency regarding the determination of co-authorships, which was mentioned by PhD candidates in the interview with committee members. In the last PhD survey, 25 percent (n = 7) of respondents reported having experienced unjustified co-authorship. While these experiences may have also included co-authors outside

of NSCR, they certainly deserve to be taken seriously. This is particularly important as some PhD candidates feel the need to also have sole-authored publications to be competitive for Veni grants and similar funding lines.

NSCR already demonstrated its high level of responsiveness in this regard. Specifically, they organized workshop meetings on scientific integrity on authorship in 2022 and by introduced mandatory trainings for supervisors on how to guide PhD candidates. Still, it has proven to be hard to formulate principles in such a way that they feel fair for all parties involved. A complicating factor is that the norms of different universities and disciplines regarding co-authorship make it difficult to fully standardize it. The committee suggests that NSCR could request from supervisors that they proactively bring up the topic of co-authorship in the first meetings with their PhD candidates and provide opportunities for discussing co-authorships at different stages of research projects. These discussions could focus on such topics as the norms of the disciplines, a proposal for how to approach this, what kind of feedback is part of supervision, and what contributions imply co-authorship. One possibility is also to decide together in advance which papers are going to be written in what kind of co-authorship constellation, specifying the implied contributions.

Human Resources Policy

In reviewing the talent management and hiring at NSCR, the committee was impressed by the diversity of research topics and researchers with varying research expertise in the teams. The teams display a good mix of senior staff, junior staff, and PhD candidates, although the committee understood that this is not so much a part of strategic decision-making but rather a consequence of the configuration of grant project successes and research teams that were assembled around these. With this in mind, the hiring practices of NSCR clearly prioritize the ability to sustain and develop NSCR's core brand of theoretical, methodological, and analytical rigour. The onboarding document guidelines were highlighted as being important, particularly for the PhDs who found these particularly helpful. Generally, staff reported onboarding something NSCR does very well.

In terms of talent management, the PhD candidates identified many opportunities to develop new skills and get advice about career development after PhD completion from the grant advisor in particular. The PhD candidates reported that the coaching and mentoring they received to aid in their career development was a strong point at NSCR. Other groups of junior researchers (including post-docs), on the other hand, reported the opposite, highlighting a lack of opportunities for career growth and development at the institute. The committee recommends considering a more structured career development opportunities for junior researchers to help with career mentoring and the exploration of opportunities.

While onboarding was highlighted as something NSCR does well, communication about staff changes was flagged as more challenging. Staff mentioned an instance where a staff member had left NSCR, and members from other research groups were neither aware of, alerted to, nor able to thank or see this person off properly. The committee recommends improved communication about individuals who leave NSCR. This appeared to the committee to be related to the abovementioned limited size of the support staff, as there is only one person responsible for both internal and external communications for the organization, who was also responsible for managing the website, media engagements, and social media. This person also has other responsibilities around PhD counselling and mentoring for a large PhD cohort. This does not seem sustainable over the longer term, and the committee recommends exploring how this can be strengthened.

Staff highlighted the great work being done by the Works Council and the ways in which they function effectively to help improve NSCR's operations. However, it was discussed that the rapid growth of the

institute in the past years means that some important suggestions or plans for initiatives made by the Works Council can take a long time to implement because there are so many other things happening.

The staff at NSCR emphasized the strengths around the “recognition and reward” culture at NSCR. They highlighted the value in the regular communications within the institute that draw attention to publication and grant successes, media engagement, and impact. Some staff suggested the recognition of success could be extended to include acknowledgment of the submission of grants (before decisions are made and irrespective of successful outcomes) because of all the hard work and effort that goes into these submissions and building partnerships for these submissions. The committee recommends NSCR ensure that the recognition and reward structure also includes broad recognition of the effort that staff put into initiatives, particularly those with inherent challenges that needed to be overcome, such as successful submission of grants; establishing new partnerships; successfully completing major fieldwork; and developing new initiatives like trainings, the implementation of new courses or programmes.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

NSCR conducts independent research on crime and social and legal responses to crime. In 2020, it reorganized itself into five research programmes: Offenders, Context, Victims, Consequences, and Evidence-Based Policing. To carry out these programmes, NSCR employs full- and part-time researchers, and collaborates with universities in the Netherlands and abroad. Support staff members are responsible for the daily operation of the institute, including human resources, financial, data management, and grant management. The business model of NSCR operates by receiving income primarily from the Foundation for Dutch Scientific Research Institutes (NWO-I) supplemented with programme funding from the Victim Support Fund and Foundation and the National Police, as well as external research grants and contracts.

The institute not only focuses on advancing its research and social impact, but also strengthening its internal capacity for research and human resources. All of its efforts indicate that NSCR is working to secure and strengthen its **viability** as one of the premier research organizations in the Netherlands. It engages in dissemination and translational activities that reflect this goal, including seminars, webinars, conferences, guest lectures and visits, media responses, and other activities. NSCR's future goals, as noted in their self-evaluation, include (1) advancing scientific progress in criminological science through deepening its empirical studies, linking focus areas together, and broadening its reach to partners; (2) establishing the ability to collect new and sensitive data through a new data centre; (3) strengthening its international role by increasing its links with universities, developing a Ph.D. programme and further developing platform functions and facilitators; and (4) stabilize its financial position. The committee believes NSCR is working diligently to achieve these goals through its efforts related to **open science, PhD policy and training, academic culture, and human resource policies**. The evidence for these activities has been documented throughout this report.

Overall, the committee lauded the ambitious goals and mission of NSCR and the tangible efforts it has made in the last assessment period to advance this mission and improve its infrastructure. The committee also appreciated the holistic aspect of its mission to educate future criminologists while at the same time generating cutting-edge research and policy recommendations for the field.

5.2 Recommendations

Given these achievements, the committee had several recommendations for NSCR that might further help it achieve its goals.

1. Maintain the ambitious goals of high-quality research and productivity while aiming for impactful outcomes in practice and policy. Continue to diversify the measuring of the impact of scientific output, using alternative metrics ("altmetrics") and tracking these over time.
2. Consider strategic and intentional dissemination efforts as to solidify the reputation and status of NSCR while at the same time making the institute's value to society clear. Examples tracking and monitoring effects on policymaking, practice, media, etc, and highlighting these in external communication.

3. Develop a more systematic impact strategy and ensure consistent implementation for the social impact of projects at all stages, including at project conception, during engagement with stakeholders, in preparation for the presentation of data and findings, and during the dissemination of recommendations to potential beneficiaries of that research. While this can apply to all projects, it may be especially needed for projects in which social impact is less direct or obvious. NSCR should solicit help from partners and its advisory board for expertise in this area.
4. Keep the pressure between the high ambitions of the institute in relation to its funding high on the agenda. This pressure, caused by the aspirations of the institute's research and social relevance agendas given its current size and limited resources, cannot be alleviated without increasing core funding for the institute, especially supporting services and programmes. Finding ways to leverage the existing research portfolio, findings, and resources might be necessary to support the institute's finances in the future.
5. Continue efforts to improve the wellbeing and mental health of its staff and students through the confidential counsellors' efforts, mentorship programmes, and training.
6. Discuss the issue of remote work, particularly balancing the needs of individuals with the needs of the institute. If NSCR promotes on-site work, it will need to actively seek the required additional office space.
7. Devise measures to attract talent from underrepresented groups internationally.
8. Empower PhD candidates to address concerns regarding co-authorship, and facilitate and encourage proactive discussion between supervisors and PhD candidates to ensure fair allocation.
9. Explore whether the support staff, which has a modest size compared to the size of the institute, can be increased.
10. Ensure that recognition and reward are broad enough to also include efforts in grant submissions and partnerships.

Appendix 1: SEP Questions Evaluation NWO institutes

The 3 main criteria:

1. Research quality:

- How does the evaluation committee assess the scientific quality of the institute, in light of its own aims and strategy? Central in this assessment are the contributions to the body of scientific knowledge. The evaluation committee is asked to reflect on the quality and scientific relevance of the research. Finally, the academic reputation and leadership within the field is assessed. Looking ahead into the future, which recommendations can the committee give to the institute regarding their research quality?
- How does the committee assess the institute's place in the national and/or international research landscape? Is the institute a frontrunner or a follower in its field? Does the committee see untapped opportunities?

2. Societal relevance:

- How does the committee assess the societal relevance in terms of impact, public engagement and uptake of the institute's research in economic, social, cultural, educational or any other terms that may be relevant? The evaluation committee is asked to reflect on societal relevance by assessing an institute's accomplishments in light of its own aims and strategy. Looking ahead into the future, which recommendations does the committee have for the institute regarding its societal relevance?

3. Viability:

- How does the committee assess the extent to which the goals for the coming six-year period remain scientifically and societally relevant? It is also asked to assess whether its aims and strategy as well as the foresight of its leadership and its overall management are optimal to attain these goals. Finally, the evaluation committee is asked to assess whether the plans and resources are adequate to implement their strategic plan. The evaluation committee is also asked to reflect on the viability of the institute in relation to the expected developments in the field and societal developments as well as on the wider institutional context of the institute.
- How does the committee assess the way the institute fulfils their national role and does the committee have any recommendations regarding this?¹
- How does the committee assess the way the institute contributes to the vision on 'Dutch research in 2030' as is written down in the NWO Strategy 2023-2027 and does the committee have any recommendations?

¹ With respect to the reports from the PCNI, the portfolio committee and (where relevant) the exploration reports.

In addition, there are also 4 important aspects contributing to the success of the institute:

4.1 Open Science

The evaluation committee is asked to consider to which extent the institute opens up its work to other researchers and societal stakeholders in the context of its strategy and policy. Furthermore, the committee is asked to consider whether the institute reuses data where possible; how it stores the research data

according to the FAIR principles; how it makes its research data, methods and materials available; and when publications are available through open access. The committee is specifically asked to give the institute and NWO-I recommendations on their Open Access and FAIR data and software policy. The evaluation committee is asked to reflect on the current policies, and the practices with regards to the open availability of the publications, research data and methods and assess them in light of NWO's high ambitions (e.g. is the institute a frontrunner in its field with regard to Open Access and FAIR data and software?).

4.2 PhD policy and Training

- The evaluation committee is asked to consider the supervision and instruction of PhD candidates. Furthermore, the committee is asked to consider whether the quality assurance system is functioning properly. The committee is asked for recommendations on how to enhance the supervision and education of PhDs (together with the universities), also in light of the three main criteria.

4.3 Academic Culture

- *Openness, (social) safety and diversity & inclusivity:* The evaluation committee is asked to consider the openness, (social) safety and diversity & inclusivity of the research environment. The evaluation committee is also asked to evaluate the actions and plans for the future of the institute with regards to (social) safety, diversity & inclusivity.
- *Research integrity:* The evaluation committee is asked to consider the institutes policy on research integrity as well as the way the institute facilitates the relevant actions and requirements formulated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. For both themes: Looking ahead into the future, which recommendations does the committee have for the institute regarding their academic culture, also in light of the three main criteria?

4.4 Human Resources policy

- *Talent Management:* The evaluation committee is asked to consider the institute's policies on talent selection and development in relation to its aims and strategy. More specifically, it is asked to evaluate the institute's recruitment policies, opportunities for training and development, coaching and mentoring, as well as career perspectives for researchers and research support staff in different phases of their career. An important aspect of this is the (inter)national cultural change regarding recognition and rewarding in academia that NWO-I is implementing. What are the institute's plans to further the desired cultural change and which recommendations does the committee have for the institute and NWO-I?

Appendix 2: Programme of the site visit

Tuesday 28 November 2023 | Pre-meeting of the Evaluation Committee

15.30 – 17.15	Committee Kick-Off (closed session): • Welcome and introduction by chair and secretary • Details of the site visit programme • Discuss assessment procedure and impressions based on the material received, synchronize, and prepare tasks during the site visit and for the writing of the assessment report
17.30 – 18.15	Meeting of the Committee with the head of Dutch Research Council (NWO): • Official installation of the evaluation committee • Short presentation about NWO and the governance of the NWO-institutes

Wednesday 29 November 2023 | 1st day of the site visit

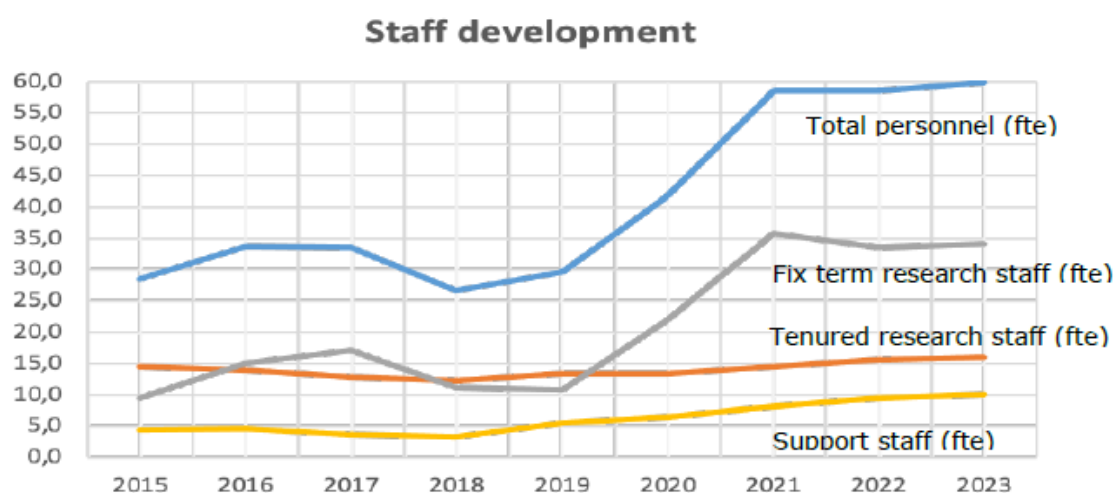
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome and short tour through the institute
09:15 – 10:45	Interview with the Director and Management Team
10:45 – 11:00	Short break
11:00 – 12:30	Pitches by the five research groups
12:30 – 14:00	Interactive demonstrations: Debunking myths in criminological research (with lunch)
14:00 – 15:00	Interview session with senior researchers
15:00 – 15:15	Short break
15:15 – 16:15	Interview session with researchers of the institute
16:20 – 16:40	Interview with the chair Institute Advisory Board (via zoom)
16:45 – 18:00	Closed session: panel members and secretary

Thursday 30 November 2023 | 2nd day of the site visit

09.15 – 10:15	
10:15 – 10:30	Short break
10:30 – 11.45	Three sessions of 25 minutes: • Interview with the confidential counsellors • Interview with Works Council • Interview with support staff
11:45 – 12:00	Short break
12:00 – 12:35	Interview with a NSCR fellow, a stakeholder, and a cooperation partner
12:40 – 12:55	Interview with chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee
13:00 – 16:30	Lunch and closed session for panel members and secretary
16:30 – 17:30	Presentation of preliminary findings to NSCR and closing reception

Appendix 3: Quantitative data

Quantitative data on the institute's composition and funding:



Staff development and composition 2017-2022

Staff development (in FTE)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Scientific staff	14,66	10,91	12,39	15,95	19,61	19,28
Post-docs	6,55	5,69	2	2,29	4,15	5,1
PhD students	8,77	9,73	8,89	15,51	22,91	21,12
Junior researchers	4,18	3,11	3,33	7,08	8,9	5,98
Total research staff	34,16	29,44	26,61	40,83	55,57	51,48
Support staff	5,34	5,35	5,45	7,81	8,66	9,75
Visitors	0,4	1	1	1	1	1
Total staff	39,9	35,79	33,06	49,64	65,23	62,23

a) Grants and NWO-lumpsum

Income 2017-2022 in k€	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
NWO	2.184	1.973	2.245	2.316	2.243	2.192
VU Amsterdam, cash & in-kind contributions	468	573	547	551	562	565
Direct funding	2.652	2.546	2.792	2.867	2.805	2.757
Victim Support Fund	0	0	0	206	226	250
Victim Support Foundation NL	0	0	0	4	68	126
National Police	0	0	0	202	836	1.029
Program funding	0	0	0	412	1.130	1.405
NWO	443	403	417	764	606	634
Other subsidy providers	194	164	156	273	582	502
Research grants	637	567	573	1.037	1.188	1.136
Contract research	262	444	253	572	552	380
Other	190	217	127	113	168	139
Total	3.741	3.774	3.745	5.001	5.843	5.817
Not-NWO	1.557	1.801	1.500	2.685	3.600	3.625
% Not-NWO	42%	48%	40%	54%	62%	62%
Expenditures in k€	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Personnel costs	2.997	3.128	2.951	4.121	5.416	5.633
Other costs	661	639	630	623	692	783
Total	3.658	3.767	3.581	4.744	6.108	6.416

Grant Success Rate NSCR

all applications

Total 2017-2022						
Type of grant:	applications	Means applied for (k€)	pending	honored	Means granted (k€)	Success rate
Personal grants	57	30.608	4	13	5.778	23%
Consortium grants	52	56.035	5	19	3.348	27%
Applied grants/assignments	81	7.179	4	53	2.762	65%
Facilities	16	511	0	12	390	75%
Program finances	5	9.393	1	4	6.745	80%
Via VU cooperation	10	503	0	10	262	100%
Honors and nominations	4	10	0	1	-	25%
Total	225	104.239	14	112	19.286	50%