



**Universiteit Utrecht**

## **Response to Research Review Computer Science 2002-2008**

Recently the Executive Board has discussed the report as prepared by the Review Committee Computer Science on the research in computer science at Dutch universities over the period 2002-2008. In general the Executive Board is very pleased with the outcome of the review as given in the report.

The committee has reviewed the research of computer science at the Dutch universities by considering three levels of decision making. The report starts with an analysis of computer science research from a national perspective. Next the committee evaluates the research at the level of distinctive research institutes of universities, and finally the separate research programs are considered. On all three levels the committee gives advice in what directions improvements could be obtained.

We consider the national perspective of the computer science research as given by the committee as a very important part of the outcome of the evaluation. It is clear that the committee matches its observations with its own vision of what is important with respect to the contents of the scientific academic research in the field. For Utrecht University the strong combination of applied and fundamental research in Computer Science does have a clear added value. On the other hand the committee gives valuable remarks on processes on funding decisions in computer science and on the structure and personnel strategy of the Departments of Computer Science in the Netherlands. We endorse especially recommendations of the committee with regard to external funding of computer science research.

We are glad with the observations made by the committee about the presence of excellence in the computer science research in the Research Institute Computer Science of Utrecht University. The committee agrees with the approach taken in 2008 to reconsider which research programmes should be part of the Research Institute as well as the measures for quality improvement as mentioned in the self evaluation. We, as well as the Research Institute, will carefully consider the remarks and suggestions given by the committee, knowing that the success of decisions and measures are not guaranteed at this very moment, and requires attention of several decision making levels at the university.

In the report the committee gives for each research institute and research programme an explanation and numerical expression of its judgment, mostly accompanied with some sort of advice. The explanations are not always a clear motivation for the numerical judgment. This makes it difficult to compare the numerical judgment of several research programmes with respect to consistency.

Moreover, the given advice seems to be restricted to those aspects or numerical judgments that do receive at least some explanation. From this it is difficult to deduce what the committee suggests us to do to improve some non-excellent judgments.

The Executive Board, the Faculty Board of Science and the Department aim at further increasing the quality of the research programme in Computer Science and will use the relevant suggestions as made by the Review Committee. Therefore they will discuss a plan of activities and organise a mid-term review in 2013.

On behalf of the Executive Board.

Utrecht, November 2010