

## **Reply of the Lorentz Center to the recommendations of the NWO evaluation**

The Lorentz Center is impressed and enthused by the thoroughness and the dedication of evaluation committee. The evaluation process is experienced by the Lorentz Center as extremely stimulating, it has been crucial in shaping its plans and strategies for the upcoming years. Of course the Lorentz Center is honored by the main conclusions and scores.

The review contains four – constructive and well thought-out – recommendations, summarized by,

- 1.** The impact of the activities of the Lorentz Center.
- 2.** The composition of the Advisory Boards.
- 3.** The extension of the Lorentz Center to the social sciences and the humanities.
- 4.** Fundraising challenges.

The Lorentz Center appreciates the wisdom of all four recommendations:

- 1.** The Lorentz Center should indeed become more active in measuring the impact of its activities in a more quantitative way – tools and/or procedures by which this can be achieved will be developed.
- 2.** Both the system of combined Advisory Boards of the Lorentz Center, as well as the set-up of the individual boards, evolve in time. The Lorentz Center already has been constantly reconsidering the structure of its boards, and will certainly continue doing so in the future.

In fields in which the Lorentz Center is well-established, and thus has built up a strong connection with the full Dutch community of active scientists, it indeed is a natural next step to expand the boards into a more international setting – as suggested in the evaluation. This is already the case for the Astronomy Board, and is the course the Mathematics and Physics Boards are now taking. The suggestion to consider merging boards in the future is, again, very natural. Our approach is successful with the present eight boards. However, as the number of boards increases, it may become less efficient.

**3.** The Lorentz Center wholeheartedly agrees with all aspects of the recommendations on its extension to the social sciences and the humanities. Indeed, the SSH-initiative should become integrated in the present Center: it is central to the core of the Lorentz Center's activities to initiate, stimulate and facilitate free interactions among all scientific and scholarly disciplines. Together with Leiden University, the Lorentz Center will certainly *"move with caution"*.

**4.** Undoubtedly, the main challenge of the Lorentz Center is *"to develop a fundraising policy and procedures for the near future"*. This indeed is *"going to require a lot of effort"*. The Lorentz Center fully agrees with the committee that the structure proposed in the evaluation – 40%-40% by Leiden University and NWO, combined with 20% from other sources – is the most fertile financial foundation for the Lorentz Center in the upcoming years. Establishing financial security will require a significant effort – from all parties involved.

It should indeed be possible to obtain private funding – from industry or by donations. As the committee acknowledges, this only will have a chance of success if there is an opportunity to invest a serious amount of time and energy. Yet, it is a challenge to achieve this within the present *"lean and mean"* staffing of the Lorentz Center: a careful plan will have to be developed. It also will involve a balancing act between financial support and scientific freedom – as the evaluation committee is aware of. Scientific liberty is essential to the success of the Lorentz Center and may not be tampered with.

Finally, the Lorentz Center strongly agrees with the committee that it is an excellent opportunity to directly approach the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for a directed impulse to kick-start the extension of the activities of Lorentz Center. Such an impulse will provide the foundation of a national center that will *"play an essential role in the integration of the scientific and scholarly disciplines"* in the Netherlands, which is indeed *"key to the role of research in the future"*. The Lorentz Center has already shown that it is able to secure such an investment successfully in a structural, long term, funding scheme.