Response to the research review of the Hubrecht Institute 2015-2021 by
The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of the Hubrecht Institute, December 2021

The SAB is pleased to hear the extremely good outcome of the visitation committee and concurs with the evaluation that the science and leadership are excellent, the institute has a superb international profile and the turnover of staff allows excellent scientists to realize leadership ambitions in other universities and institutes outside the HI. The SAB also notes the impeccable evaluation of Dr van Oudenaarden as institute director and underwrites this in entirety.

Regarding the specific role of the SAB:
The SAB is indeed involved in tenure evaluations of existing junior group leaders but not in the recruitment process for new staff or in the present search for a successor to the current director whose term will finish in September 2022. The SAB would like to express its willingness to be part of the recruitment process and notes that the SAB chair is now part of the search committee for a new director. It also notes that all SAB members would be willing to suggest candidates for this and other positions.

The SAB is pleased to learn that the committee considered it would benefit retention of group leaders if pressure to publish primarily or only in leading journals were reduced to some extent. The committee is clearly well aware that excellent basic science research does take time and notes the pressure on PhD students that sometimes precludes international conference attendance and participation in career development programmes. The SAB is pleased with the suggestion that this should be rectified at institution level and not left to individual postdocs or PIs.

Regarding the specific recommendations of the visitation committee:

1. **Optimization of the interactions between the Institute and the UMCU researchers working in the Annex building, ideally by a role for Hubrecht management in the UMCU planning process for locating groups in the Annex.**
The SAB supports this recommendation since it is likely to benefit both parties: the HI in societal outreach/translation and application and the UMCU in the quality of researchers and research output. This will be optimized by selecting groups for the Annex most likely to benefit van complementarity and synergy.

2. **Providing more opportunities for trainees (graduate students, postdoctoral fellows) to participate in conferences outside of the Institute, and other aspects of career development.**
The SAB believes this is an important part of training that will ultimately benefit outreach of the HI. Most 3rd party funding has a budget allowance for this and it should be made for group members to take part in conferences and training visits. The SAB recognizes the need for this as trainees come on to the job market after their time in the HI. The SAB realizes the HI would need to make budget available for this.

3. **Awareness of work-stress related problems within the group of scientists, the group leaders in particular.**
The SAB recognizes this as a broader issue in research careers and appreciates the committee has raised it for the HI specifically in light of its high demands for tenure and
beyond. Recognizing this at an early stage is of great importance in order to develop interventional; strategies for the individual.

4. **Recruit and retain senior female group leaders, to balance the gender distribution among all ranks.**
The SAB also recognizes this as a general issue in the Dutch scientific research community with significant fall-out of female scientists in the transition assistant to associate professor (junior to senior group leader). Proactive measures, such as personal mentoring, promoting candidature of female staff to honorary positions/evaluation committees, prizes recognizing accomplishments etc are indeed among the measures that could and should be taken.

5. **Involve the Scientific Advisory Board in scouting for talent, in searches for new group leaders and in recruiting a new director.**
The SAB chair has now become part of the search committee and has already made suggestions for possible candidates but welcomes names from other SAB members. The visitation committee advice not to include the ability to be Dutch speaking among the search criteria, is supported by the SAB since this would indeed limit the choice. Regarding the role of the SAB in general, there seemed to be some overlap in functions of the SAB and a scientific review committee. Whilst appreciating that the requirements in the Netherlands for independent evaluation, some members of the SAB asked whether the Institute might benefit from having a unique body to which, on certain occasions, ad hoc members can be recruited.

6. **Come to a transparent and consensus policy on open-access publication and adoption of DORA principles.**
The SAB was surprised that this was not widely known in the HI and agreed it needed addressing. Whilst it is appreciated that the ethos of the Institute is high impact publications and this, often, implies journals with high visibility, the SAB agreed with the committee that it is important that staff and particularly students and postdocs know about it. Also, the arrangement of universities on OA and publishing fees with Elsevier/Cell Press etc could be made more widely known in the Institute.

Altogether, and along with the visitation committee, the SAB congratulates scientific and supporting staff and leadership on the excellent position of the HI as a world-leading institute.