

January 30, 2008

A letter from the DI Council Chair to the Midterm Evaluation Committee

The Doppler Institute is in existence for about three years and during that time the Council watches its work closely. This task is made easy by the fact that the Council is well balanced topically. It is also well balanced geographically as a mixture of Czech and non-Czech experts; the last feature requires that a substantial part of the Council business is done electronically. In particular, at the end of each calendar year the Council discusses and evaluates the report about the DI activity which is after its approval submitted to the Czech funding authorities.

The DI has several very active groups working in different areas of mathematical physics and applied mathematics. What is important is that they seek common language and often manage to find problem in the intersection of interests. I will not describe specific results; I believe that highlights of the DI activity over the three year period will be shown during the midterm evaluation session. I will just point out generally that the publication output of the DI is large and solid, with most papers appearing in the leading journals in the field.

The system in which senior members work with postdocs and PhD students functions well. It is useful to mention that most postdocs given typically a one-year position in the DI are non-Czechs coming from various European and non-European countries. Such a system carries a risk at selection but represents a solid contribution to the development of international scientific collaboration.

In contrast, the PhD students were mostly Czechs. Eleven finished theses in three years is a good result, and from the published results it is clear that most of the graduates have prerequisites for a good scientific career.

Another successful feature of the DI activity is its internal and external collaboration system. There are four regularly working seminars the programme of mixes renowned foreign visitors with reports on DI works in progress, in particular, with DI students and postdocs involvement.

The DI organized many topical scientific meetings, altogether they were 16 in three years. Among them were several middle sized conference with a wide international participation as well as workshops and schools.

A big challenge which the DI faces now is the organization of the 16th International Congress of Mathematical Physics, the largest conference in the field which convenes triennially. The fact that the DI was trusted with its organization has to be regarded as a sign of recognition of this Prague of Mathematical Physicists and Applied Mathematicians has in the community.

Summary:

I have a very high opinion of the Doppler Institute activities. During the last years it has shown a very high quality productivity in all respects. This Institute has developed an environment that serves the Czech Mathematical Physics and Applied Mathematics community in a very substantial way. Therefore I highly recommend to continue support of the Doppler Institute.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Laptev', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ari Laptev