

# Hvordan jobber fageksperter med vurdering av søknader

En ny æra for  
forskningsadministrasjon?

SoMe: #NARMA2026

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# Forskningsspørsmålene

- Har panelbehandling merverdi i søknadsvurdering?  
Meetings that matter: the dual benefits of panel peer review | Research Evaluation | Oxford Academic
- Hvordan vurderer paneler impact?  
Variability and negligence: grant peer review panels evaluating impact ex ante | Science and Public Policy | Oxford Academic
- Hvordan vurderer paneler tverrfaglige søknader?  
Partial and particularistic: grant peer review panels evaluating interdisciplinarity | Research Evaluation | Oxford Academic
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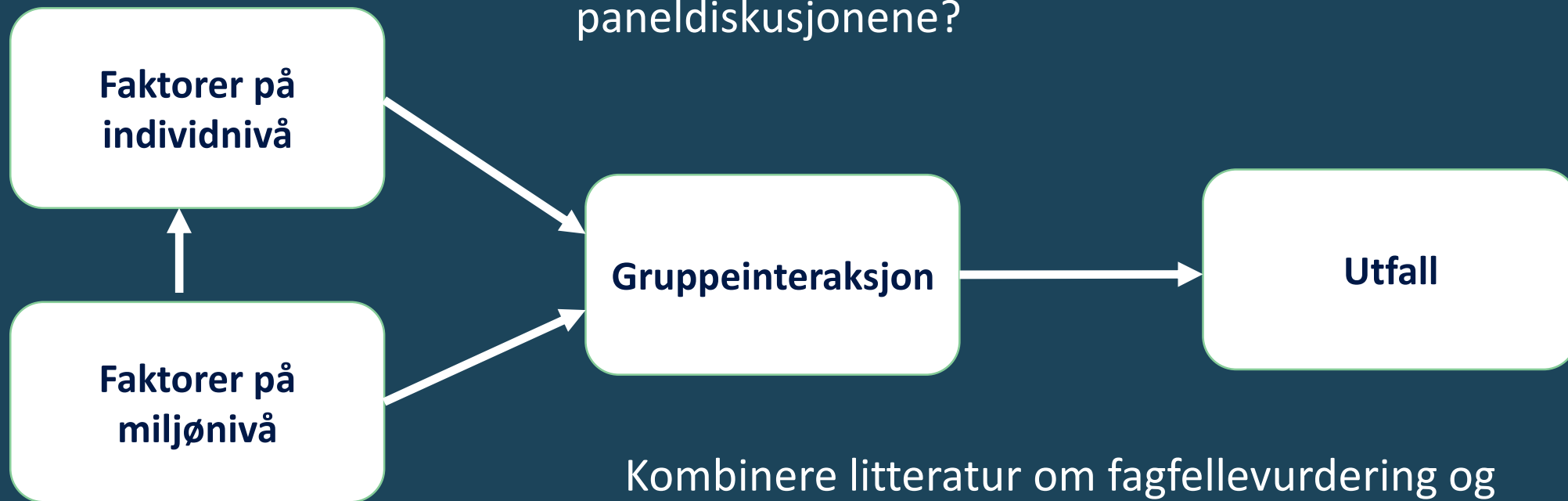
# Dataene

- 81 paneler i ni ulike utlysninger på nasjonalt, nordisk og europeisk nivå inkluderte i dataanalysen:
  - Norges forskningsråd
  - Stiftelsen Dam
  - NordForsk
  - EU Executive Agencies
  - EU forskningspartnerskap
- Forankrede intervjuer med eksperter (94)
- Analyse av relevant dokumentasjon knyttet til de observerte utlysningene



# Et systemperspektiv

Hvordan påvirker faktorer på miljønivå faktorer på individnivå, og hvordan interagerer disse gjennom paneldiskusjonene?



Kombinere litteratur om fagfellevurdering og psykologisk litteratur om kognitive skjevheter og beslutningstaking i grupper

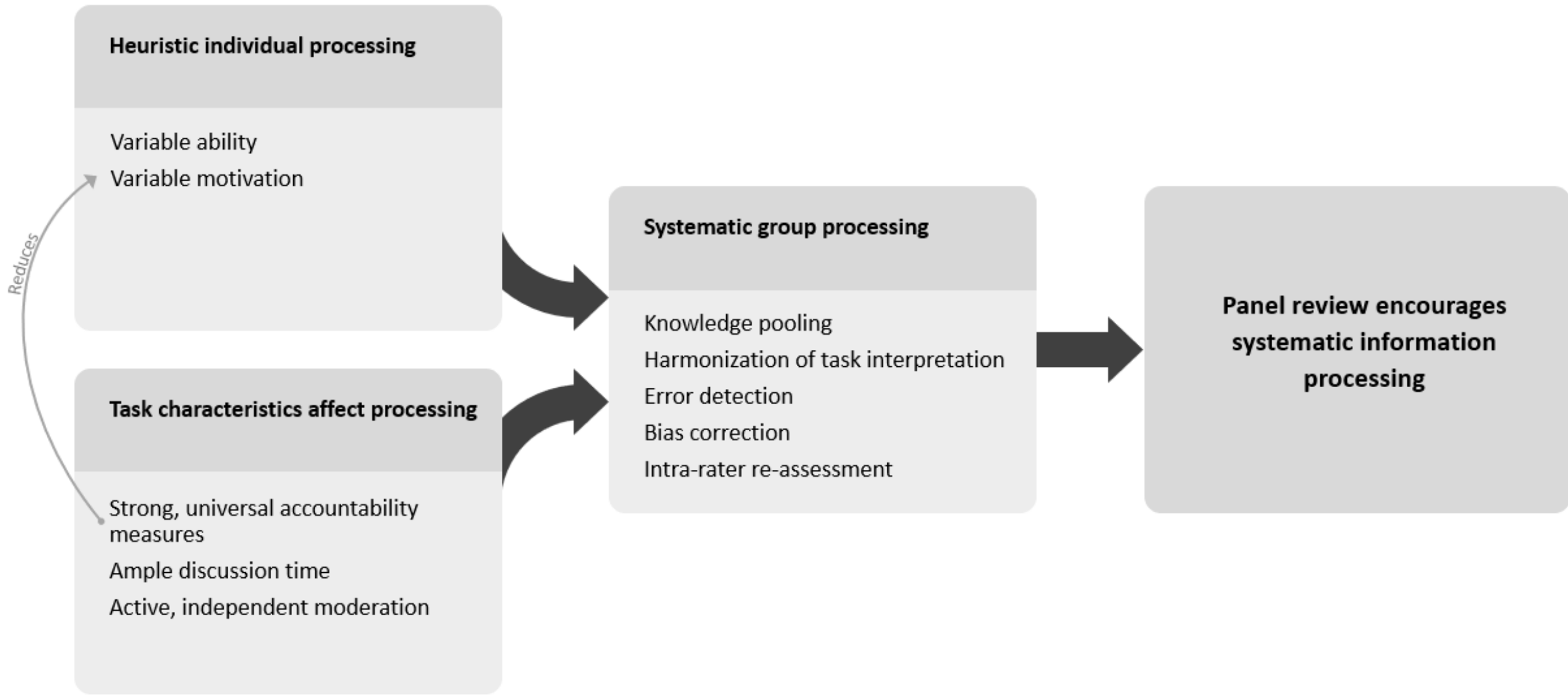
## Forskningsspørsmålene

- **Har panelbehandling merverdi i søknadsvurdering?**
- Hvordan vurderer paneler impact?
- Hvordan vurderer paneler tverrfaglige søknader?



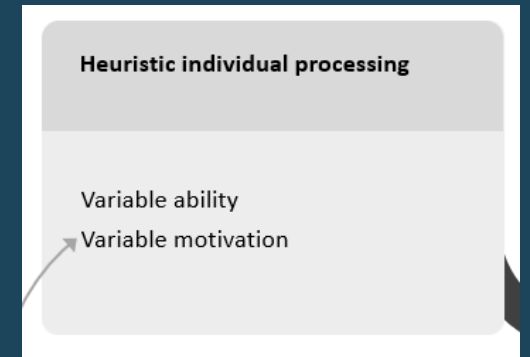
## Hva sier eksisterende litteratur?

- Hovedsaklig kvantitative bidrag, fokusert på å bestemme samsvarsraten mellom gjennomsnittet av paneldeltakernes karaktergivning før diskusjon og endelige panelkarakter
- Andel søknader hvor paneldiskusjon har påvirkning på utfallet = beskjeden
- Kvalitative bidrag har gitt rik innsikt i hvordan paneler fungerer, men har ikke eksplisitt undersøkt hvordan panelvurderinger tilfører verdi til vurderingene
  - Kan paneldiskusjon gi merverdi ved å bidra til mer systematisk (= anstrengende, analytisk) fremfor heuristisk (= rask, vurderingssnarveier) informasjonsbehandling?



# Grundigere individuelle vurderinger

Utsiktene til paneldiskusjon påvirker ekspertene ved at de, motivert av omdømmehensyn, tenderer mot systematisk fremfor heuristisk søknadsbehandling



*This morning, I got an automatic email updating me on the status of one of the applications from [X funding agency]. Presumably, I was one of the external reviewers, but I have no memory of it. But the RCN proposals I will remember because you are that much deeper into it because it involves a dialogical process, and you're exposed in front of colleagues, and you just take it more seriously. (Intervju FRIPRO)*

*I once woke up at 4 in the morning and went through all my grades and notes one more time before a panel meeting /.../ It means something to you, there are people who sit on the committees, and I know some of them, so I want them to think that I make smart judgments. I don't want to sit there with lots of smart people and just say stupid things. So it's a little scary. (Intervju Dam)*

# Paneldiskusjon gir mer systematisk prosessering

## Systematic panel processing

Knowledge pooling

Harmonization of task interpretation

Error detection

Bias correction

Intra-rater re-assessment

Paneldiskusjonen i seg kan bidra ytterligere til systematisk søknadsbehandling gjennom å:

- Poole medlemmenes kunnskap
- Mer enhetlig forståelse av vurderingsoppgaven
- Kvalitetssjekk de individuelle vurderingene og rette opp feil og individuelle skjevheter

*It allows you to access expertise from different evaluators and make use of it in these discussions and really be a little bit more robust in the evaluation collectively.” (intervju Teknologikonvergens)*

*Expert: [Presents negative assessment]*

*Moderator: But you scored 6 [where 7 is the top score]?*

*Expert: Yes, but I am one score above all the others, and I will be consistently. (Panel FRIPRO)*

*This is why it is very important to discuss it. It is very subjective when you read it in isolation. My four was based on what I just said, and that was just wrong, so I would be happy to go up to a six based on our conversation. (Panel FRIPRO)*

# Vurderingsprosessens utforming viktig

## Task characteristics affect processing

Strong, universal, individual-level accountability measures

Generous discussion time

Active moderation

- Bør legge til rette for:
  - aktiv moderering
  - tilstrekkelig diskusjonstid
  - utsette paneler for sterke «ansvarliggjøringsmekanismer» på både individ- og gruppenivå

A: We should speed up. For the next one, I am happy to mark down my six on interdisciplinarity as it was really difficult for me to get my head around it. I am happy to put it as a 4. It was really messy.

B: I agree. It was difficult to assess, messy.

A: Scientific quality was very unclear. I favour a 4.

C: I agree.

A: Overall for the same reason it cannot be above 4. C OK ?

C: That is fine.

A: OK – moving on to the next one. How about that. Fast ha? (Panelmøte Nordforsk)

““You are kind of reading through it probably much quicker than if you are first or second reviewer. I’m trying to capture the idea, and then, of course, it is also emotional. Do you like the idea, or do you do not? Do you understand the idea or not? And you’re probably making judgments rather on the non-technical things. So is the proposal put together in a proper way?” (Intervju, FRIPRO)

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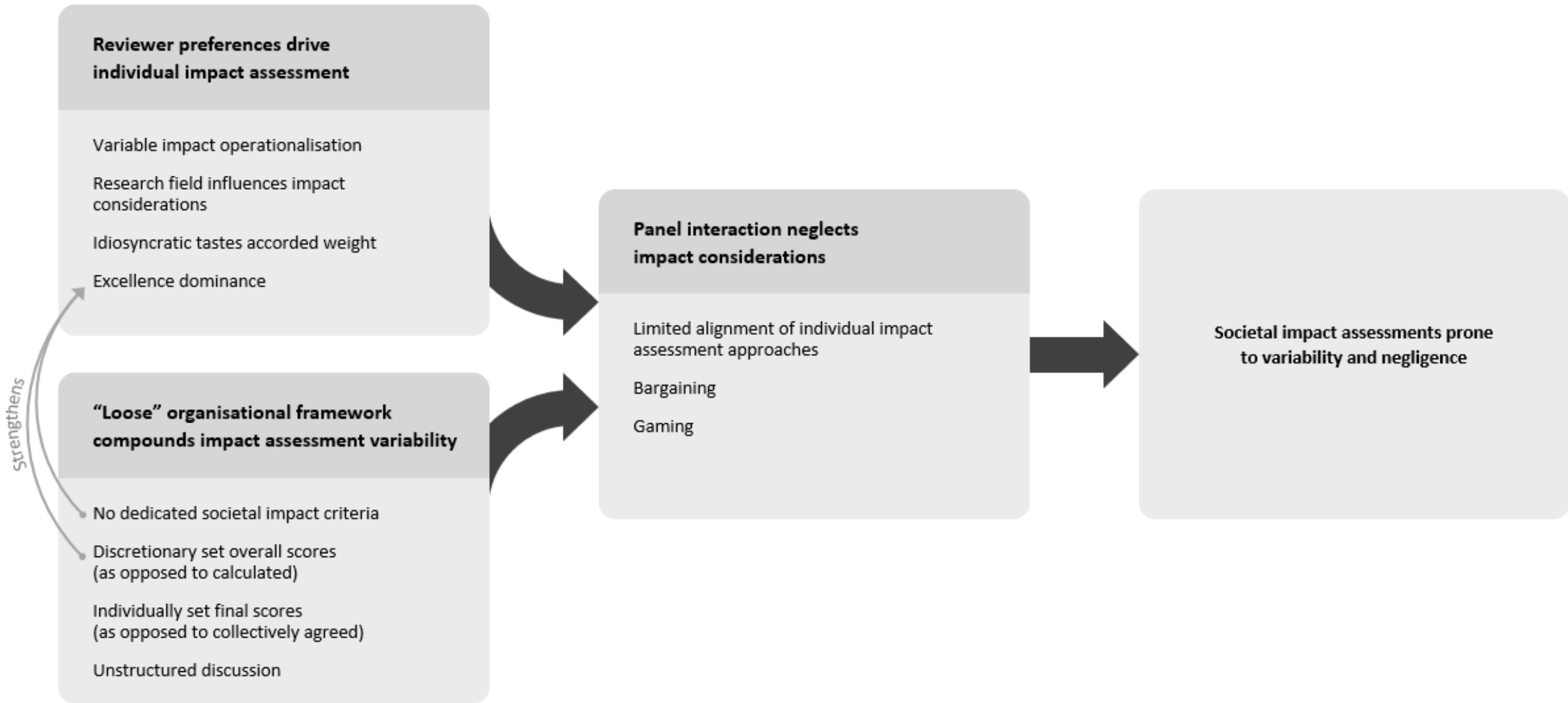
## Forskningsspørsmålene

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- **Hvordan vurderer paneler impact?**
- Hvordan vurderer paneler tverrfaglige søknader?



# Hva sier eksisterende litteratur?

- Rik litteratur om ex post impactvurderinger, men begrenset litteratur om ex ante vurderinger
- Forskjeller mellom eksperter mht tolkning og bruk av kriterier, samt i deres motivasjon og vilje til å gjennomføre impactvurderinger
- Kriterier og prosesser for impactvurderinger er ikke standardiserte og ofte tvetydige
  - Impactvurderinger tillegges begrenset vekt i helhetsvurderinger?
  - Impactvurderinger spesielt utsatt for reviewer variability?



# Individuell variabilitet



Forskernes faglige og personlige preferanser farger impact vurderingene:

- Ulikheter mellom fagfelt
- Personlige preferanser tillegges vekt
- Excellence dominerer

*I work with applied research, so I'm probably in a slightly different place than these people [in the panel] at the university [...] We are more concerned with impact. (Intervju Dam)*

*Regarding impact, I would ask if [x] is the best way forward. Rather than [x], maybe it would be better if we look into how we can eat more plants. Is the outcome desirable? (Panel Teknologikonvergens)*

*I wasn't sure... did I overstep my role there? Because they're sort of personal opinions... Of course, as a reviewer you should give your personal opinion, but your personal professional judgement of the quality of work rather than what is almost a political opinion regarding what I think is a good use of resources."*

*[The applicants] don't include all the elements listed under this [impact] criterion, but I think the scientific solidity trumps everything, so I have ended up with a six here. (Panel Dam)*

# Panelene neglisjerer impact

## Panel interaction neglects impact considerations

Limited alignment of individual impact assessment approaches

Bargaining

Gaming

- Impactvurderinger tillegges generelt liten vekt i diskusjonene
- Er mer utsatt for bargaining og gaming enn mer tradisjonelle kriterier
- Diskusjon dermed begrenset effekt mht. å oppnå enhetlige impact vurderinger

*A colleague told me that he had spent a lot of time on societal impact, and then no one else had done that [...] You end up just discussing the research questions, feasibility and so on. (Intervju FRIPRO)*

*Expert: I know the [Foundation's] priorities, and I know my own priorities which are not necessarily in contradiction. I am happy with my priorities, but that criterion is quite tricky [...] the Foundation could clear that up [...] but at the same time I think it's okay that it's not so clear.*

*Interviewer: So you don't ask for that clarification?*

*Expert: No, no, no. I won't ask to be told what to do [laughter]. (Intervju Dam)*

# Organiseringen påvirker vekt og variabilitet

- Påvirkes gjennom:
  - bruk av dedikerte kriterier for samfunnsimpact
  - Strukturerte diskusjoner
  - Regler og formler fremfor løse retningslinjer

*In this case it was relatively strange maybe, that it [societal impact] was a subcategory of scientific excellence. So therefore, this time it played a minor role if you would analyse all the discussions and the written comments, I think they were relatively minor on the social impact. (Intervju NordForsk)*

*Expert 1: Since it will not be successful in the other criterion, you are giving a low score here too? [...]*

*Expert2: I would be happy to go with six, I now feel bad about this double penalization [...]*

*Expert3: I agree with that. The four in excellence would kill the project anyway. Expert 1, what you said will haunt me for the rest of my life now [laughter]. I did probably deduct points because I didn't like the excellence. So I would be happy for you to say that it did not hit the nail on excellence but did well on the other aspects. (Paneldiskusjon Teknologikonvergens)*

**"Loose" organisational framework  
compounds impact assessment variability**

- No dedicated societal impact criteria
- Discretionary set overall scores (as opposed to calculated)
- Individually set final scores (as opposed to collectively agreed)
- Unstructured discussion

# Produktiv vs uproduktiv variabilitet

- To skoler i forskningen på ekspert-uenighet:
  - Naturlig og fortrinnsvis positivt, bidrar til mer robuste vurderinger, tiltak kan uansett ikke endre på det – unavoidable parts of the equation
  - Dagens nivåer på uenighet er uakseptable og gir tilfeldigheter for stor betydning. Tiltak må iverksettes - one of the grant peer review systems' most important weaknesses
- Lanserer en middelvei mellom disse to:
  - Produktiv variabilitet = bunner i ulike faglige vurderinger og ståsted - gir mer robuste vurderinger
  - Uproduktiv variabilitet = variasjoner i operasjonaliseringen av kriterier og karakterskala, personlige preferanser tillegges betydning, forhandlinger og gaming – bidrar til tilfeldigheter og skjevheter. Kan minimeres gjennom målrettede organisatoriske tiltak

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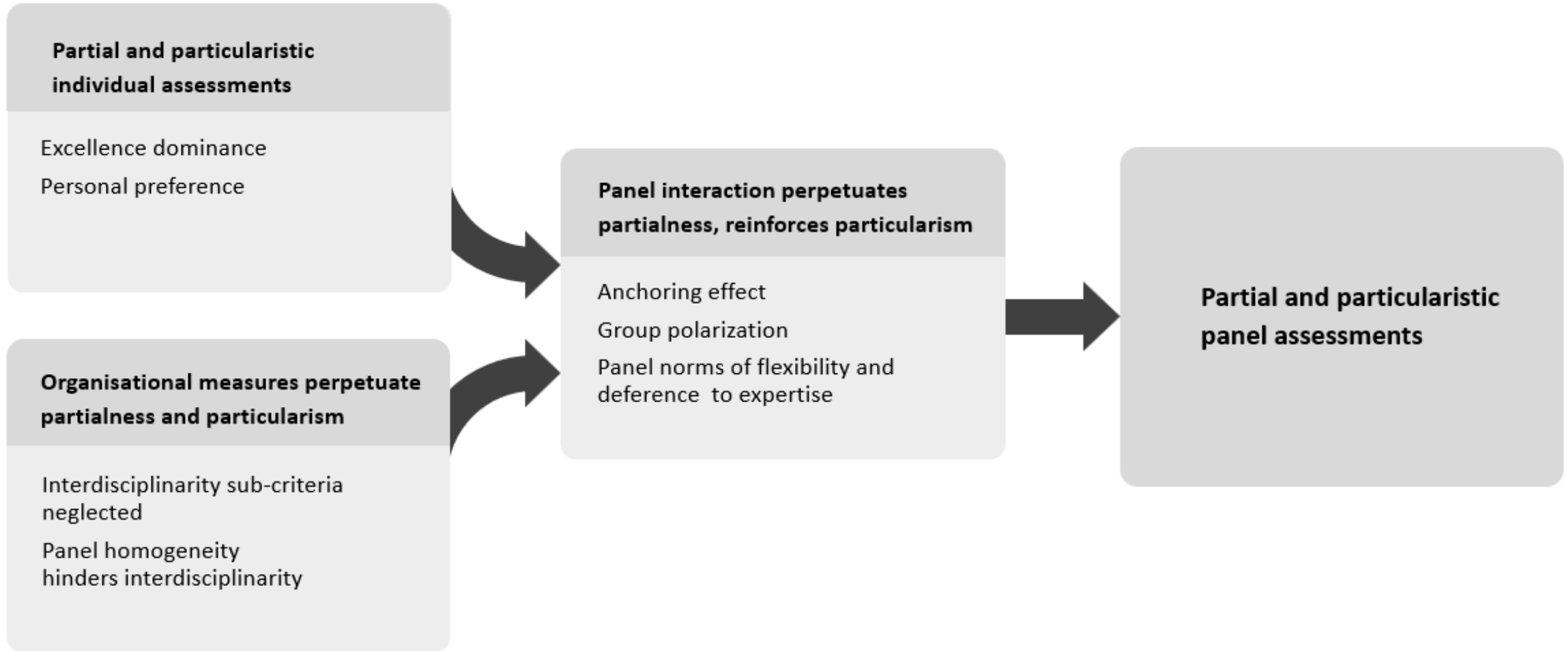
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# Hva sier eksisterende litteratur?

- Finansiører søker i økende grad å finansiere tverrfaglig forskning, men tverrfaglighet korrelerer negativt med finansieringssuksess
- Ekspertenes kompetanse farger vurderingene deres. Noen bidrag finner at de foretrekker søknader som matcher egen faglige ekspertise, mens andre finner at eksperter er mer kritiske til søknader innen eget fagfelt
- Panelvurdering er bedre enn aggregering av individuelle vurderinger, da det gir rom for å integrere ulike perspektiver, og slik gi balanserte og helhetlige vurderinger
  - Hvordan vurderer paneler tverrfaglige søknader?



# Individuelle vurderinger

- Individuelle vurderinger = vurdering av excellence av de disiplinære elementene som er i tråd med egen ekspertise.
- Helhetlige potensial og potensialet knyttet til felt som ikke er relatert til egen disiplinære profil belønnes i liten grad

## Partial and particularistic individual assessments

Excellence dominance  
Personal preference

*When it comes to assessing the excellence of the research proposal, and the potential scientific impact, personally, I would have abstained, if I had not worked in this research area, from forming a strong opinion (intervju FRIPRO)*

*"I have an interdisciplinary project. Half of it is in another domain I do not know. I am hesitant to put a maximum mark on it. I'm not sure how is the other domain [...] So you put it in between, and this results in an average score. (Intervju NordForsk)*

*None of those [Large-scale Interdisciplinary Researcher Projects] were funded I think, so in the end, if it was because of us or if they were not good enough, I don't know, but I couldn't find them interesting. (Intervju FRIPRO)*

**Panel interaction perpetuates partialness, reinforces particularism**

Anchoring effect

Group polarization

Panel norms of flexibility and deference to expertise

## Panelinteraksjon er løsningen?

- Panelinteraksjon kan sementere og til og med forsterke de individuelle tendensene gjennom mekanismer som:
- Anchoring
- Gruppepolarisering:  
“The average post-group response will tend to be more extreme in the same direction as the average of the pre-group responses” (Myers & Lamm 1976)

*Often people would even say that this is out of my research area, you can disregard my mark, but still the easiest thing would be to go through the whole list of marks and find some sort of average. (Intervju FRIPRO)*

*Panellist1: For this, scores ranged from 4 to 6. It is very interdisciplinary.*

*Panellist2: It is stronger on the science than the social science. There is so much money available for COVID research and it seems unreasonable for a social science panel to award funding to this. That is the main reason I scored it four across the board.*

*Panellist3: I scored it straight sixes, but listening to the discussion, it reads more like a science project in a social science wrapper, and our scores should echo that. Why was this proposal assigned to this panel and not a science panel? (Panel FRIPRO)*

# Organiseringen = stor betydning

- Eget kriterium for tværfaglighed
- Stor diversitet i panelets ekspertise og erfaring med tværfaglig forskning

*Need a dedicated criteria for interdisciplinarity. What would have happened otherwise is that all of the scientific experts would have gone “This is a great project and who cares if it’s not truly interdisciplinary (intervju NordForsk)*

*Panellist1: This is the only highly interdisciplinary proposals in this lot of proposals [...] Time and time again, I sit on panels like this, and I see them discounting this kind of interdisciplinarity as they do not see the disciplinary rigour they want in relation to their disciplines, but there is a trade-off there in terms of breadth and depth, and we do need to make efforts to do this kind of work.*

*Panellist2: Since we are a panel and we do need to come to a consensus, I think that there is no way we can get this higher than five...it has to do with the panel composition. (Panel FRIPRO)*

**Organisational measures perpetuate partialness and particularism**

Interdisciplinarity sub-criteria neglected

Panel homogeneity hinders interdisciplinarity

Organisational measures perpetuate partialness and particularism

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## Organiseringen = stor betydning

➔ Behov for egne arenaer for radikalt tverrfaglige prosjekter

*1: Clearly interdisciplinary. A bit questionable from [my disciplinary] point of view [...] The external reviews are extremely critical regarding scientific quality.*

*2: I thought this was excellent. The most interdisciplinary I reviewed. In trying to explain that it was less space for the disciplinary details*

*3: I agree. Its radically interdisciplinary nature is why it received poor scores from the experts. They are not just trying to advance the disciplinary scientific quality but also the interdisciplinarity. Therefore, the scientific advance in the different fields will be a bit less.*

*1: Not certain that this will operate as they say. A huge risk. 5 is a fair trade off in terms of scores. Taking into account these very negative reviewers.*

*2: The external reviewers are not a strong guide as they are coming at it from a disciplinary perspective. I suggest 7.*

*3. 6 + is a good compromise here.*

*1: OK – we do that (panel NordForsk)*

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# Fagfelle vurdering i paneler

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