

Assessment of grant application submitted to the Research Council of Norway

Grant application

Project number	262833
Project title	Improving the Quality of Health Care Services for Patients with Medically Unexplained Physical Symptoms (MUPS) through Medical Education
Project manager	Lian, Olaug Synnøve
Project Owner	Institutt for samfunnsmedisin
Programme/Activity	Gode og effektive helse-, omso
Case officer	Siv Øverås

Confirmation

By completing and submitting this form, I / we confirm the following (applies for the individual referee or the referee panel):

- I am /We are qualified to assess this application. See Regulations on Impartiality and Confidence in the Research Council of Norway.	Yes
- I/We have read and understood both the criteria I/we have been asked to use for assessing the application and the description of the scale of marks. The scale of marks is to be applied as an absolute scale, i.e. marks are to be determined for each grant application independently and not relative to other applications that the panel/referee is assessing.	Yes
- I/We understand and accept the guidelines for assessing applications for the Research Council of Norway. See Guidelines for referees/panels who assess applications for the Research Council of Norway.	Yes
- I am/We are qualified to conduct this assessment.	Yes

Summary of marks

Criterion	Mark
Scientific merit	6
User involvement	A
Benefits of the project	B
The project manager and project group	6
Implementation plan and resource parameters	A
National cooperation	A
International cooperation	A
Dissemination and communication of results	A
Overall assessment of the referee/panel	6

Criteria

Scientific merit

How would you rank the project's scientific merit?

This criterion gives an indication of the essential, fundamental aspects of the research project. The scientific merit of a project will be assessed in relation to the following points:

- * Originality in the form of scientific innovation and/or the development of new knowledge.
- * Whether the research questions, hypotheses and objectives have been clearly and adequately specified.
- * The strength of the theoretical approach, operationalisation and use of scientific methods.
- * Documented knowledge about the research front.
- * The degree to which the scientific basis of the project is realistic.
- * The scientific scope in terms of a multi- and interdisciplinary approach, when relevant.

An extremely good proposal - theoretically strong (utilising Bourdieusian concepts), methodologically and conceptually interesting and with potential for top journal articles. The researchers are fully embedded in their field and are dealing with a top that is of growing concern - the extent to which patients with medically unexplained symptoms and their GPs have shared understandings and means of communicating about illness and care.

Selected mark : 6 - Excellent

The project's objectives, research questions and hypotheses are very clearly presented and are based on an excellently formulated and highly original project concept. The project is in the forefront of its field and will contribute to scientific innovation as well as generate important new knowledge. The project is of excellent quality, with no significant weak points. Publications in leading scientific journals in the field are highly likely.

User involvement

How would you rank the user involvement in the project?

This criterion gives an indication of the degree to which the project incorporates user perspectives and user involvement, or how well the absence of user involvement is explained. User involvement will be assessed based on the description of:

- Appropriate users for the project.
- Involvement of users in the planning of the project.
- Involvement of users in the implementation of the project.
- Involvement of users in the utilisation of project results.

Patient representatives and health care professionals have been involved in study planning and will be included in analysis and dissemination phases (including writing academic journal articles). They will be involved in an international and interdisciplinary project advisory group and, innovatively, problems of power in such groups will be addressed through role swap strategies. Patient representative travel needs are also taken into account.

Selected mark : A - Very good

The user perspective and user involvement are very well incorporated in all phases of the project.

Benefits of the project

How would you rank the benefits of the project?

This criterion gives an indication of the significance and benefits that the results of the project will have for the services, the users of the services, the research field and society at large.

The benefits of the project will be assessed on the basis of the following points:

- Benefits for the users, the services, and the research field.
- Benefits for society at large.
- Conditions that must be in place to realise the benefits of the project

Benefits will almost certainly flow to the international research community, to health educators, to professionals. The study itself does not test whether the educational materials that will be developed through the project will make an actual difference to patient experiences and outcomes. That question is for another research study.

Selected mark : B - Some

The project has som benefits.

The project manager and project group

How would you rank the qualifications of the project manager and project group?

This criterion gives an indication of the qualifications of the project manager and project group. The project manager and project group will be assessed in relation to the following points:

- * Project management
- * Expertise and experience within the field of research
- * Publication record
- * Experience with national and international collaboration on projects
- * Experience with supervision of students and younger researchers
- * The degree to which the project manager and project group are part of a research environment that has the competence and resources needed to ensure the success of the project

This is a small team but includes the top researchers supported by an excellent advisory group (researcher, professional and users all named). Publications demonstrates expertise; PhD and post docs should have an excellent development experience.

Selected mark : 6 - Excellent

The project manager and/or research/project group is/are qualified at a high international level, has/have contacts within the foremost national and international research environments and will be able to play an important role in ensuring the success of the project.

Implementation plan and resource parameters

How well-suited are the implementation plan and resource parameters in relation to the project?

This criterion gives an indication of whether the plan for project implementation is satisfactory, and whether the planned use of resources in the project is well-suited for the tasks in the project, based on assessment of the following elements:

- * Plans for project implementation, including breakdown into work packages/sub-projects, milestones and deliverables.
- * Need for personnel resources, as listed in terms of work time distributed by work packages, sub-projects or milestones.
- * Need for other resources (such as equipment, data collection, field work), distributed by work packages/sub-projects or milestones.

The assessment is not to be linked to any scientific risk.

Very well thought through and very detailed in terms of milestones and deliverables as well as resources.

Selected mark : A - Very good

The project plan and planned use of resources are very clearly described and

are well-suited to the tasks in the project.

National cooperation

To what degree will the project promote national cooperation?

This criterion gives an indication of the extent to which the project will make use of national research expertise and help to promote national network-building.

The team is very well placed to do this work because of its existing networks which are highly likely to be developed in terms of capacity over the course of the project.

Selected mark : A - Very good

The project will make comprehensive use of national research expertise and will contribute greatly to promoting national network-building.

International cooperation

How would you rank the international cooperation set out for the project?

This criterion gives an indication of the extent and quality of the international cooperation activities set out for the project.

The team has a meaningful set of international collaborators either directly as co-applicant or as part of the advisory team. The high quality internationally attractive journals that are likely to emerge will also help to cement and extend such collaborations.

Selected mark : A - Very good

The international cooperation activities set out for the project have a wide scope and are of high quality.

Dissemination and communication of results

How would you rank the quality of the dissemination and communication plans?

This criterion gives an indication of the quality of the dissemination and communication plans for the project. Dissemination and communication of results will be assessed in relation to the following points:

- * Plans for scholarly publication, dissemination and other communication activities.
- * Plans for popular science dissemination and communication activities vis-à-vis the general public as well as users of the project results, including planned use of channels and measures.
- * Plans for ensuring that important users (in industry, community life and public administration) are incorporated into/take part in dissemination activities for the project.

When assessing dissemination and communication plans, importance should be attached to the level of detail provided and how realistic the plans are.

Detailed setting out of academic papers across range of disciplines, user networks, medical students (through innovative curriculum development. Organisation of international conference

Selected mark : A - Very good

The project's dissemination and communication plans provide a thorough level of detail and are of high relevance.

Overall assessment of the referee/panel

How does the project rank in terms of the referee's/panel's overall assessment?

This criterion indicates the overall view of the referee/panel, based on the specific criteria which they have been asked to assess.

An exemplary proposal - thoughtful, theoretically strong and with potential for direct impact on medical practice as well as highly regarded journal articles. Whilst it won't test the impact of new educational materials on patient experiences and outcomes, it will provide a very strong grounding for an assessment of that in the future.

Selected mark : 6 - Excellent

A project at a very high international level and of great national and international interest. Publications in leading journals are expected. The researchers are among the leaders in their field.

Special points to consider

Comments to special points to consider