

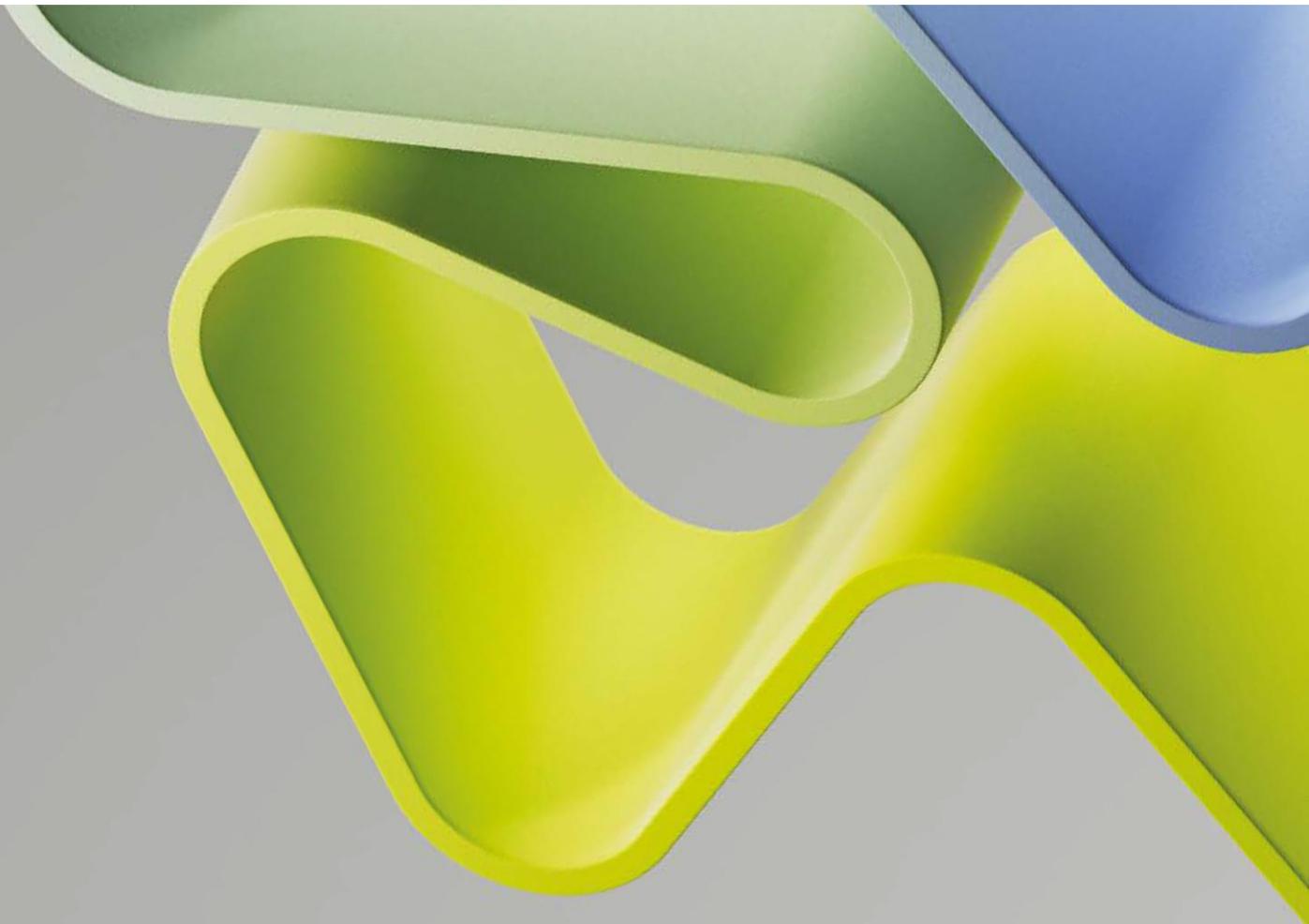
Evaluation of Medicine and Health 2023-2024

Evaluation report – Panel 5b

Research Group: Mental Health and Suicide

Administrative Unit: Division of Mental and Physical Health

Institution: Norwegian institute of Public Health



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Preface

The Research Council of Norway (RCN) is given the task by the Ministry of Education and Research to perform subject-specific evaluations. The primary aim of the evaluation of medicine and health (EVALMEDHELSE) 2023-2024 is to reveal and confirm the quality and relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education institutions, research institutions (the institute sector) and the health trusts, in an international perspective. Such knowledge is useful for the institutions that participate in the evaluation, for the Research Council who advise the authorities on how research should be developed further, and for the authorities, who set targets and frameworks for research and higher education. Research groups submitted by their administrative unit will be assessed by 18 expert panels organised by research subjects or themes. The expert panels will assess research groups across institutions and sectors based on research group's self-assessments and examples of scholarly output. These research reports will be part of the evaluation of their belonging administrative units.

Abstract

The Mental Health and Suicide group/department consists of 3 research groups, established in 2012 focusing on mental health including quality of life, mental health symptoms, common mental disorders, and suicide. Recently, the research was broadened to include a special focus on immigrants and coordinating knowledge about mental health in adults. The benchmarks are high quality scientific publishing, producing a relevant knowledge base for public health authorities and relevant services, having extensive collaboration, and comprehensive dissemination of research findings. The group has extensive support from NIPH, as well as external funding, both national and international. The research spans from using large mental health databases to performing intervention research. The level of the research group is high compared to national and international standards.

Overall assessment

Strengths of the Mental Health and Suicide research group are the use of large databases and the strong support from NIPH. Weaknesses are: The performed research needs to be closely linked to the expectations of NIPH, which might restrict the possibilities for external funding and limit the focus of the research; Due to the close link to NIPH the group might need to change focus quickly (e.g., COVID-19 response), this can be problematic in deprioritising other research; Considering the focus of the group's research, there is a need to use population-based data that can be difficult to achieve; and the research covers a wide field, which might make it difficult to achieve high-quality and novel findings.

Grading:

Dimensions	Score
Organisational dimension (How adequate the organisational environment is in supporting the production of excellent research).	5
Quality dimension (Research and publication quality/Research group's contribution)	4/4
Societal impact dimension (Research group's societal contribution/User involvement)	4/3

Recommendations

The group's research covers a wide field, this might make it difficult to achieve the highest quality and novel findings. Thus, the panel suggests that the group focus more. The panel is aware of that expectations and priorities from the Ministry of Health and Care services might limit this possibility. The group could also more clearly articulate the role of research users other than NIPH (e.g., patients and their families) in the research process from conceptualisation to dissemination).

1. Strategy, resources and organisation

1.1 Research group's organisation and strategy

The Mental Health and Suicide group/department, incorporating 3 research groups, was established in 2012 focusing on mental health including quality of life, mental health symptoms, common mental disorders, and suicide. Recently, the research was broadened to include a special focus on immigrants and coordinating knowledge about mental health in adults. The goals include the mentioned foci and to generate new knowledge and disseminate it. A specific focus is to reduce social inequalities in mental health. Goals also include development of a comprehensive data foundation and measurement system. Strategies to achieve this includes capacity and competence building, strengthening user perspective, extending collaborations, enhancing dissemination and production of knowledge.

The benchmarks are high quality scientific publishing, producing a relevant knowledge base for public health authorities and relevant services, having extensive collaborations and comprehensive dissemination.

The group members deliver external teaching, supervise master theses and PhD-students and are thus contributing to education.

The group receives extensive support in the form of financial, legal, communication and IT. They also receive library services and administrative support. The group has access to high quality data sources such as County health studies, MoBa, Twin registry and PsychHUNT study.

The organisation of the group is suitable for achieving the goals. The benchmarks align with the research and shows a clearly formulated vision. The support from the institution is very good and includes high quality data sources.

Recommendations:

The panel suggests that a narrower research focus might increase the possibilities for ground-breaking research.

1.2 Research group's resources

The group consists of 11 researchers, 1 vacant post doc, 4 PhD-students and 1 department director.

The group has substantial basic funding from NIPH, (7 to 8 million NOK per year) grants from RCN (3 to 6 million NOK per year), other national sources as well as international funding (NIH, NSF, EU framework programmes 400 to 1.7 million NOK per year). Funding includes financing 5 PhD-students and 2 post docs.

The research group/department consists of 3 main groups with different aims. Researchers participate in several groups. The groups are coordinated by the department director, so the leadership is centralised.

There is a clear strategy for training of young researchers. Several of the PhD students and early career researchers have had research stays abroad.

The group is active and has secure basic funding. The group also trains many PhD-students as well as post docs. They have several large grants both national and international. The organisation and funding seem to be adequate.

Recommendations:

The panel has no recommendations, the group should continue as they are doing.

1.3 Relevance to the institution

The group's strategies are in line with the institutional strategies. This is essential for this group; and it was probably formed initially to fulfil NIPH strategy. Thus, the group has contributed to the generation of new knowledge in the area of the mental health of adults with a special focus on immigrants. It has also contributed to the field of quality-of-life research. During the evaluation period the group had 300 scientific papers, some in high-ranking journals. Relevant knowledge and support have been directed to relevant users, such as public health authorities and government. The group has active collaborations with other researchers, both nationally and internationally. National collaboration also includes ministries and directorates, counties, municipalities as well as user organisations. External funding has been achieved. The research results have been highly visible in media.

The research conducted in the group follows the institutional strategies and contributes to fulfilling NIPH goals. The group use the institutional resources well to achieve their benchmarks. The panel recognize that the group has been successful.

Recommendations:

The panel has no recommendations, the group should continue as they are doing.

2. Research quality

2.1 Research group's scientific quality

The Mental Health and Suicide group works on the development of comprehensive mental health databases and measurement systems using national registers.

The listed projects all fall within the goals and benchmarks of the group as well as the institutional goals. They are diverse within the field of mental health covering treatment pathways, minority women, inequalities in informal caregiving, motherhood care, well-being, interventions for adolescents, and evaluation consequences of "Health and life skills" in the Norwegian school curriculum. Thus, the group's mental health research covers causes, course of disorders, treatments, interventions, and evaluations. All projects are well funded.

There are several publications in high-ranking journals. The research group has been actively involved in all phases of the studies that are presented in the papers. They involve large register-based data, and systematic reviews. Several studies are on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic using longitudinal data. Scientifically, the papers are of high relevance to academia as well as to the society.

Two scientific books in the field of quality of life are listed.

The ongoing projects are all in the field of mental health and span from causes to interventions. The publications cover a large field, and the group has been actively involved in all phases of the research. The sample publications selected for review by the research group were not in the strongest international journals but were very important research projects. The panel recognize that the group has a large number of high-quality projects ongoing.

Recommendations: The panel has no recommendations.

2.2 Research group's societal contribution

The group's research is highly relevant for policy and has been used for management of the refugee crisis, in the national action plan for suicide prevention in Norway, and a white paper to the parliament about well-being. The group has also been actively involved in invention of a national measurement system for quality of life and a digitized system to promote well-being. The researchers in the group serve as experts in international and national fora. Relevant users of the knowledge are reached through seminars and workshops. The public is reached through media using the institutional resources, making research results highly visible. There is no clear evidence presented in terms of whether the end users are active in formulating the research questions.

The group is based in NIPH and uses the resources provided to them well. Their research is highly relevant for policy, academia, as well as practice and they have reached their end-users in a sufficient way.

Recommendations:

The panel suggests a more active involvement of end-users (including patients and their families) in the whole of the research process wherever possible.

Appendices

Evaluation of Life Sciences in Norway 2022-2024

Evaluation of Medicine and Health 2023-2024

Mandate Expert panels

The Research Council of Norway (RCN) is given the task by the Ministry of Education and Research to perform subject-specific evaluations. The Portfolio board for Life Sciences in the Research Council of Norway has decided to carry out an evaluation of medicine and health in 2023-2024 as the second of two evaluations within Life Sciences. The evaluation of biosciences takes place in 2022-2023.

1. The objective of the evaluation

The primary aim of the evaluation of Life Sciences is to reveal and confirm the quality and the relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), by the institute sector and by health trusts.

The results of the evaluation will be used as recommendations to the institutions, the Research Council, and the ministries.

2. Tasks of the expert panels

The panels are requested to:

- evaluate the strategy, resources and organisation of/for the research groups.
- evaluate research production and quality of the research groups.
- grade and write a short evaluation text to the evaluated research groups.

Each of the expert panels will write a brief report with evaluations of the different research groups as well as specific recommendations.

3. Time schedule

Digital panel meetings will take place in the period March 15. - June 15. 2024.

Deadline for submitting panel report to the Research Council: June 15. 2024.

4. Miscellaneous

Other important aspects of Norwegian life sciences research that ought to be given consideration.

EVALMEDHELSE 2023-2024 – Panel group description – January 2024

Panel group	Description	Panel no.
Group 1 PHYSIOLOGY Physiology-related disciplines (human physiology), including corresponding translational research	Anatomy, physiology, embryology, nutritional physiology, pathology, basic odontological research, exercise physiology, neurobiology, toxicology, pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, chemistry, biology, pathology.	Panel 1a Panel 1b
Group 2 MOLECULAR BIOLOGY Molecular Biology, including corresponding translational research	Microbiology, bacteriology, inflammation and infection disease research, forensic medicine, genetics, immunology, vaccine development, microbiological diagnostics, pharmaceutical microbiology, cell biology, molecular medicine and -biophysics, medical biochemistry, omics, organoids, imaging, toxicology, pathology, drug development, cancer research, translational research, systems biology, personalized medicine, biomarkers, oncology, genetics, genomics, epigenetics, proteomics, bioinformatics-/statistics, computational science, AI, biology, virology, radiology, ionisation, molecular biology, microbiology, pharmacology, pharmacogenomics, regenerative medicine and related subjects.	Panel 2a Panel 2b Panel 2c
Group 3a CLINICAL RESEARCH	Clinical Research, including surgery and translational research within: paediatrics, women's health, gynaecology, otorhinolaryngology, head and neck surgery, oncology, haematology, radiology and medical imaging.	Panel 3a_1 Panel 3b_2
Group 3b CLINICAL RESEARCH	Clinical Research, including surgery and translational research within: general medicine, emergency medicine, anaesthesiology, neurology, geriatric medicine, rehabilitation medicine, cardiology, nephrology/urology, endocrinology, pulmonary medicine, orthopaedics, rheumatology, Infection, gastroenterology.	Panel 3b_1 Panel 3b_2 Panel 3b_3
Group 4 PUBLIC HEALTH Public Health and Health-related Research	Public health, community research, epidemiology, preventive medicine, mental health, behavioural research and ethics, medical statistics, environment, nutrition, preventive medicine, physiotherapy, sports medicine, implementation research, public health, health care services research, global health, nursing	Panel 4a Panel 4b Panel 4c

	sciences, rehabilitation sciences, public health systems, digital health care services, ICT, HTA, health competence, genetic and epigenetic epidemiology, non-communicable diseases, pharmacology, nursing research, professional research, occupational medicine.	Panel 4d Panel 4e Panel 4f
Group 5 PSYCHOLOGY Psychology and Psychiatry	Clinical psychology, personality psychology, developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, biological psychology and forensic psychology, psychiatry, including geriatric psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry and biological psychiatry, social-, community- and workplace psychology, organizational psychology, developmental psychology, behavioural and health psychology, health promotion and well-being.	Panel 5a Panel 5b

Panel group 5 PSYCHOLOGY

Expert panel 5b

Name	Title	Institution
Richard Hastings (chair)	Professor	University of Warwick
Anja Wittkowski	Senior Lecturer	Clinical Psychology, University of Manchester
Mads Uffe Pedersen	Professor	Center for rusmiddelforskning, Aarhus Universitet
Yvonne Forsell	Professor	Department of global Public Health, Karolinska institute
Anette Erlangsen	Professor	Danish Institute for Suicidal Prevention
Frances Rice	Professor	Cardiff University

Mads Uff Pedersen had a conflict of interest with the evaluation of KORFOR at Stravanger (report 16). Annette Erlangsen had a conflict of interest with the National Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (report 15). She also had a conflict of interest with the evaluation of the Mental Health and Suicide Research Group within the FHI (report 3). Lastly, Richard Hastings had a conflict of interest with Behavioural principles -from animal modes to human cultures at OsloMet (report 12).

This meant that for those evaluations they did not have access to the self assessments or survey data and they did not participate in the discussion of the research group, nor did they participate in the preparation and completion of the evaluation report.



Evaluation of Medicine and Health (EVALMEDHELSE) 2023-2024

Self-assessment for research groups

Date of dispatch: **15. September 2023**

Deadline for submission: **31. January 2024**

Updated: **13. October 2023**

Institution (name and short name): _____

Administrative unit (name and short name): _____

Research group (name and short name): _____

Date: _____

Contact person: _____

Contact details (email): _____

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Short version

Introduction

The primary aim of the evaluation is to reveal and confirm the quality and the relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the institute sector and the health trusts. These institutions will henceforth be collectively referred to as research performing organisations (RPOs). The evaluation report(s) will provide a set of recommendations to the RPOs, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and the responsible and concerned ministries. The results of the evaluation will also be disseminated for the benefit of potential students, users of research and society at large.

You have been invited to complete this self-assessment as a research group. The self-assessment contains questions regarding the group's research- and innovation related activities and developments over the years 2012-2022. All submitted data will be evaluated by expert panels.

Deadline for submitting the self- assessment to your administrative unit – 26 January 2024

The administrative unit will submit the research groups' completed self-assessments and the administrative unit's own completed self-assessment to the Research Council within 31 January 2024. Please submit completed self- assessment to the administrative unit no later than 26 January 2024.

Please use the following format when naming your document: [short name of the institution]_[short name of the administrative unit]_[short name of the research group], e.g. *UiT_DepPsy_Short name of the research group*.

For questions concerning the self-assessment or EVALMEDHELSE in general, please contact RCN at evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no.

Thank you!

Guidelines for completing the self-assessment

- Please read the entire self-assessment document before answering.
- The evaluation language is English.
- Please link to websites/documents in the self-assessment where relevant.
- Please be sure that all documents linked to in the self- assessment are written in English and are accessible.
- The page format must be A4 with 2 cm margins, single spacing and Calibri and 11-point font.
- The self-assessment follows the same structure as the [evaluation protocol](#). In order to be evaluated on the two evaluation criteria described in the evaluation protocol, the research group must answer all questions.
 - ⇒ Provide information – provide documents and other relevant data or figures about the research group, for example strategy and other planning documents, as well as data on R&D expenditure, sources of income and results and outcomes of research
 - ⇒ Describe – explain and present using contextual information about the research group and inform the reader about the research group.
 - ⇒ Reflect – comment in a reflective and evaluative manner how the research group operates.
- Data on personnel should refer to data reported to DBH on 1 October 2022 for HEIs and to the yearly reporting for 2022 for the institute sector and the health authorities. Other data should refer to 31 December 2022 if not specified otherwise.
- It is possible to extend the textboxes when filling in the form. **NB!** A completed self- assessment form cannot exceed 25 pages (pdf file). Expert panels are not requested to read more than the maximum of 25 pages. Pages exceeding maximum limit of 25 pages **might not** be evaluated.
- Submit the self- assessment as a pdf (max 25 pages) to the administrative unit within **26 January 2024**. Before submission, please be sure that all text are readable after the conversion of the document to pdf. The self- assessment should be sent from the administrative unit to evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no within **31 January 2024**.

Please note that information you write in the self assessment and the links to documents/websites in the self-assessment are the only available information for the expert panel.

In exceptional cases, documents/publications that are not openly available must be submitted as attachment(s) to the self- assessment (pdf file(s)).

1. Organisation and strategy

1.1 Research group's organisation

Describe the establishment and the development of the research group, including its leadership (e.g. centralised or distributed etc.), researcher roles (e.g. technical staff, PhD, post docs, junior positions, senior positions or other researcher positions), the group's role in researcher training, mobility and how research is organised (e.g. core funding organisation versus project based organisation etc.).

Table 1. List of number of personnel by categories

Instructions: Please provide number of your personnel by categories.

For institutions in the higher education sector, please use the categories used in DBH, <https://dbh.hkdir.no/datainnhold/kodeverk/stillingskoder>. Please add new lines or delete lines which are not in use.

	Position by category	No. of researcher per category	Share of women per category (%)	No. of researchers who are part of multiple (other) research groups at the admin unit	No. of temporary positions
No. of Personnel by position	Position A (Fill in)				
	Position B (Fill in)				
	Position C (Fill in)				
	Position D (Fill in)				

1.2 Research group's strategy

a) Describe the research group's main goals, objectives and strategies to obtain these (e.g. funding, plans for recruitment, internationalization etc.) within the period 2012-2022.

b) Please describe the benchmark of the research group. The benchmark for the research group should be written by the administrative unit in collaboration with the research group. The benchmark can be a reference to an academic level of performance (national or international) or to the group's contributions to other institutional or sectoral purposes.

Example: A benchmark for a research group is related to the research groups' aim which again is included in the strategy for the administrative unit. A guidance for the administrative unit to set a benchmark for the research group(s) can e.g. be: What do the administrative unit expect from the research group(s)?

c) Describe the research group's contribution to education (master's degree and/or PhD).

d) Describe the support the host institution provides to the research group (i.e., research infrastructure, access to databases, administrative support etc.).

1.3 Relevance to the institutions

Describe the role of the research group within the administrative unit. Consider the research group's contribution towards the institutional strategies and objectives, and relate the research group's benchmark to these.

1.4 Research group's resources

Describe the funding portfolio of the research group for the last five years (2018-2022).

Table 2. Describe the sources of R&D funding for the research group in the period 2018-2022.

	2018 (NOK)	2019 (NOK)	2020 (NOK)	2021 (NOK)	2022 (NOK)
Basic funding					
Funding from industry and other private sector sources					
Commissioned research for public sector					
Research Council of Norway					
Grant funding from other national sources					
International funding e.g. NIH, NSF, EU framework programmes					
Other					

1.5 Research group's infrastructures

Research infrastructures are facilities that provide resources and services for the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. [These](#) include major equipment or sets of instruments, knowledge-related facilities such as collections, archives or scientific data infrastructures, computing systems communication networks. Include both internal and external infrastructures.

- a) Describe which national infrastructures the research group manages or co-manages.
- b) Describe the most important research infrastructures used by the research group.

1.6 Research group´s cooperations

Table 3. Reflect on the current interactions of the research group with other disciplines, non-academic stakeholders and the potential importance of these for the research (e.g. informing research questions, access to competence, data and infrastructure, broadening the perspectives, short/long-term relations).

<p>Interdisciplinary (within and beyond the group)</p>	<p>About 1/3 page</p>
<p>Collaboration with other research sectors e.g. higher education, research institutes, health trusts and industry.</p>	<p>About 1/3 page</p>
<p><u>Transdisciplinary</u> (including non academic stakeholders)</p> <p><i>Transdisciplinary research involves the integration of knowledge from different science disciplines and (non-academic) stakeholder communities with the aim to help address complex societal challenges.</i></p>	<p>About 1/3 page</p>

2. Research quality

2.1 Research group's scientific quality

Describe the research profile of the research group and the activities that contribute to the research group's scientific quality. Consider how the research group's work contributes to the wider research within the research group's field nationally and internationally.

Please add a link to the research group's website:

Short version

Table 4. List of projects

Instructions: Please select 5-10 projects you consider to be representative/the best of the work in the period 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2022. The list may include projects lead by other institutions nationally or internationally. Please delete tables that are not used.

Project 1 -10: <i>Project title/Project period (year from – year to)</i>	Project owner(s) (project leaders organisation)	
	Total budget and share allocated to research group	
	Objectives and outcomes (planned or actual) and link to website	

Table 5. Research group's contribution to publications

Instructions: Please select 5-15 publications from the last 5 years (2018-2022) with emphasis on recent publications where group members have a significant role. **If the publication is not openly available, it should be submitted as a pdf file attached to the self-assessment.** We invite you to refer to the Contributor Roles Taxonomy in your description: <https://credit.niso.org/>.

Cf. Table 1. List of personell by categories: Research groups up to 15 group members: 5 publications. Research groups up to 30 group members: 10 publications. Research groups above 30 group members: 15 publications.

Please delete tables that are not used.

Publication 1 -15: <i>Project title/Journal/Year/DOI/URL</i>	Authors (Please highlight group members)	
	Short description	
	Research group's contribution	

Table 6. Please add a list with the research group's monographs/scientific books.

Please delete lines which are not used.

1	Title - Authors (Please highlight group members)- link to webpage (if possible)
2	

2.2 Research group's societal contribution

Describe the societal impact of the research group's research. Consider contribution to education, economic, societal and cultural development in Norway and internationally.

Table 7. The research group's societal contribution, including user-oriented publications, products (including patents, software or process innovations

Instructions: Please select 5–10 of your most important user-oriented publications or other products from the last 5–10 years with emphasis on recent publications/products. For each item, please use the following formatting. Please delete lines which are not used.

3. Challenges and opportunities

Information about the strengths and weaknesses of the research group is obtained through the questions above. In this chapter, please reflect on what might be the challenges and opportunities for developing and strengthening the research and the position of the research group.

Short version



Scales for research group assessment

Organisational dimension

Score	Organisational environment
5	An organisational environment that is outstanding for supporting the production of excellent research.
4	An organisational environment that is very strong for supporting the production of excellent research.
3	An organisational environment that is adequate for supporting the production of excellent research.
2	An organisational environment that is modest for supporting the production of excellent research.
1	An organisational environment that is not supportive for the production of excellent research.

Quality dimension

Score	Research and publication quality	Score	Research group's contribution Groups were invited to refer to the Contributor Roles Taxonomy in their description https://credit.niso.org/
5	Quality that is outstanding in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	5	The group has played an outstanding role in the research process from the formulation of overarching research goals and aims via research activities to the preparation of the publication.
4	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.	4	The group has played a very considerable role in the research process from the formulation of overarching research goals and aims via research activities to the preparation of the publication.
3	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	3	The group has a considerable role in the research process from the formulation of overarching research goals and aims via research activities to the preparation of the publication.
2	Quality that meets the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.	2	The group has modest contributions to the research process from the formulation of overarching research goals and aims via research activities to the preparation of the publication.
1	Quality that falls below the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.	1	The group or a group member is credited in the publication, but there is little or no evidence of contributions to the research process from the formulation of overarching research goals and aims via research activities to the preparation of the publication.

Societal impact dimension

Score	Research group's societal contribution, taking into consideration the resources available to the group	Score	User involvement
5	The group has contributed extensively to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally.	5	Societal partner involvement is outstanding – partners have had an important role in all parts of the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
4	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is very considerable given what is expected from groups in the same research field.	4	Societal partners have very considerable involvement in all parts of the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
3	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is on par with what is expected from groups in the same research field.	3	Societal partners have considerable involvement in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
2	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is modest given what is expected from groups in the same research field.	2	Societal partners have a modest part in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
1	There is little documentation of contributions from the group to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally.	1	There is little documentation of societal partners' participation in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.

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