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A social epistemology of scientific reasoning using qualitative methods

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When it comes to generating reliable results and communicating them adequately to peers, researchers perceive their routine challenges as a balance between making a contribution, ensuring accountability, and gaining recognition.

My current project combines philosophy with qualitative research to investigate the role and development of judgments throughout the research process, up to and including the communication of results. The actual empirical practices of inference, justification, and criticism are surprisingly under-investigated, considering the centrality for philosophy. Precisely because interpersonal interactions and knowledge production can be analyzed well with qualitative methods, my aim is to access social dimensions of cognition and scientific reasoning. "The empirical question is how belief, commitment, or theory and hypothesis acceptance are stabilized in the face of the openness of inquiry. The normative question is how they are stabilized in a non-arbitrary way that has probative value" (Longino, 2002, 205). Both the descriptive and the normative aspects can be bridged by the evaluative possibilities through qualitative analysis by explaining how descriptive and normative aspects of scientific reasoning contribute to generating knowledge.

Nora Hangel is PI for the DFG project: *The role of scientific judgment in generating knowledge: a qualitative study about interpersonal, collective, and collaborative belief formation in scientific practice* (2022-2025) at the Leibniz Center for Science and Society, LUH. She holds a Ph.D. in philosophy with a thesis in Kantian ethics (Uni Vienna). As a postdoc, she specialized in empirical philosophy of science, science studies, and medical ethics. Hangel collaborated in the projects *Scientific Integrity in the Context of Integration and Competition* (Uni Konstanz), the project *Understanding Scientists' Conceptions of Good Research Practice* (IUB), USA and worked on two projects: *Solidarity in times of a Pandemic* (SolPan) and on scientific, ethical, and translational aspects of *Biomarkers in Atopic Dermatitis and Psoriasis* (BIOMAP), at the TU Munich.

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