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EINLADUNG ZUM KOLLOQUIUM

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Scientific Progress: ‘By Whom?’ vs. ‘For Whom?’

In one way or another, all accounts of scientific progress identify it with changes in the cognitive attitudes of some agents or groups of agents. But whose cognitive states are at issue? In so far as this question has been discussed at all, the agents or groups in question have been assumed to be the relevant scientists themselves, i.e. the agents by whom scientific progress is made. This paper explores a different way of approaching the question, with the aim of unsettling the received orthodoxy in this regard. The central idea is that scientific progress should be defined in terms of those for whom progress is made. This includes not only scientists themselves, but also members of the society at large that science is meant to serve. One of several virtues of this approach to scientific progress is that it explains why scientific progress is valuable to a society, and thereby why it's justifiable to spend the society's resources on funding scientific research.

Finnur Dellsén studied philosophy at the University of Iceland and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and received his PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2014 for his thesis on “The Epistemology of Science: Acceptance, Explanation, and Realism”. Subsequently, he held positions as a postdoc and associate professor in Norway and Dublin and, as from 2018, he has been an associate professor at the University of Iceland. His research interests concern questions around scientific progress, understanding in science, inference to the best explanation, scientific realism, scientific disagreement, and the social epistemology of science. He has published his work in a number of the most distinguished philosophical journals, such as *Synthese*, *Philosophy of Science*, *Philosophical Studies*, the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, and *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.

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