Reviewer’s report

Title: "Are you siding with a personality or the grant proposal?": observations on how peer review panels function.

Version: 0 Date: 01 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Ana Marusic

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very interesting and relevant research that investigates the peer review process in a qualitative way. There are not many reports of such research, which makes this one valuable and very insightful. While the results of the research are well presented and discussed, the methodological approach was not clear enough. While the study was a part of a larger evaluation of a new grant proposal, there is not enough information about the selection of the participants. It is not clear how the grant proposals we collected and what was the rationale for focusing on two fields (why were they considered to be "key fields"?). There is not sufficient explanation about the two review processes. Also, there seems to be too many objectives, and the primary objective is not clearly presented. Finally, the details on the selection of panel experts is also not sufficiently detailed.

Other comments are in order of their appearance and not in order of their importance:

1. Abstract: The purpose of the study is not clearly presented - it is too broad in relation to what was presented in the article. The aims of the study are mentioned in the Results section of the Abstract. The conclusion in the Abstract does not follow from the presented results.

2. There are only two references in the Introductions section. Despite the fact that there is little qualitative research on grant peer review, there is a lot of literature about problems with grant review, which could be summarized here.

3. Methodology section, particularly on the construction of the grant proposal sample and the choice of experts, is not detailed, as explained in my general comments.

Level of interest
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Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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