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### PANEL 3

## JUDGING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS: CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTING AND REJECTING MANUSCRIPTS

**Panel Chair:** Allen Lee, University of Cincinnati, USA

**Panelists:** Richard Baskerville, Binghamton University, USA, and Copenhagen Business School, Denmark  
Jonathan Liebenau, London School of Economics, UK  
Michael Myers, University of Auckland, New Zealand

As qualitative research has been gaining momentum and acceptance in the information systems research community in recent years, the general question about how to judge the validity of qualitative IS research has been presenting itself with greater urgency.

The criteria and conventions for judging research that is quantitative and positivist are so well established that shared knowledge and acceptance of them, by the manuscript's authors and the manuscript's referees, can be taken for granted. The same cannot be said of the criteria and conventions for judging research that employs a qualitative, case, or interpretive approach. The purpose of this panel is to discuss explicitly the criteria for judging qualitative, case, and interpretive research in information systems, in the context of the manuscript refereeing process.

All the panelists will articulate the criteria they have used to judge manuscripts submitted to journals and conferences in information systems. Each panelist will also offer remarks in a particular area.

Richard Baskerville, Associate Editor for *MIS Quarterly* and also for *Information Systems Journal*, will focus on the criteria and conventions used in judging manuscripts in the area of action research.

Michael Myers, Associate Editor for *Information Systems Journal*, will focus on the criteria and conventions used in judging manuscripts in the area of ethnography.

Jonathan Liebenau, Editor for *European Journal of Information Systems*, will focus on the criteria and conventions used in judging manuscripts where the thrust of the qualitative research involves taking context into account. He will draw on the perspectives of some disciplines other than information systems — in particular, anthropology, sociology, and history.

Allen Lee, Senior Editor for *MIS Quarterly*, will focus on the manuscript refereeing process itself. He will offer observations of difficulties that qualitative, case, and interpretive manuscripts have experienced in the refereeing process and he will offer suggestions for how authors can better prepare and present their manuscripts in ways that would encourage a refereeing process that is more efficient (that is, involving a quicker decision, whether acceptance or rejection) and more effective (that is, where such a decision is made for the right reasons).

For the first forty-five minutes of the panel, the members will present their positions. The remainder of the time will be dedicated to a discussion with the audience. Audience members will be asked to write questions on cards that the chair will collect, sort, and pass on to the panel members.