

# SUKIP

*Collaboration on developing competence for inclusive practice in kindergarten and school.*

An ongoing project 2019-2023  
financed by The Research Council of Norway

*Marit Mjøs, Kristian Øen, Marion Stava Bjørgan,  
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# SUKIP

*A complex innovative project in two Norwegian municipalities.*

*Dilemmas and challenges in the mutual collaboration between researchers and practitioners.*

*Marit Mjøs, NLA University College  
Kristian Øen, NLA University College*



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## Agenda

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SUKIP in relation to current educational policy guidelines in Norway

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SUKIP - a brief overview

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**The research role in SUKIP**

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**Some experienced challenges related to the research role.**

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## A new educational policy strategy

*The competence boost for special education and inclusive practice in order to offer all children and pupils good adapted and inclusive education.*

- Subsidy scheme for local development work in partnership with universities and colleges based on local mapping.
- Seeing general and special education in context
- Developing competence for collaboration to build a cooperativ team around the children and pupils.
- Taking advantage of EPS's mandate to support competence- and organizational development in schools and kindergartens.

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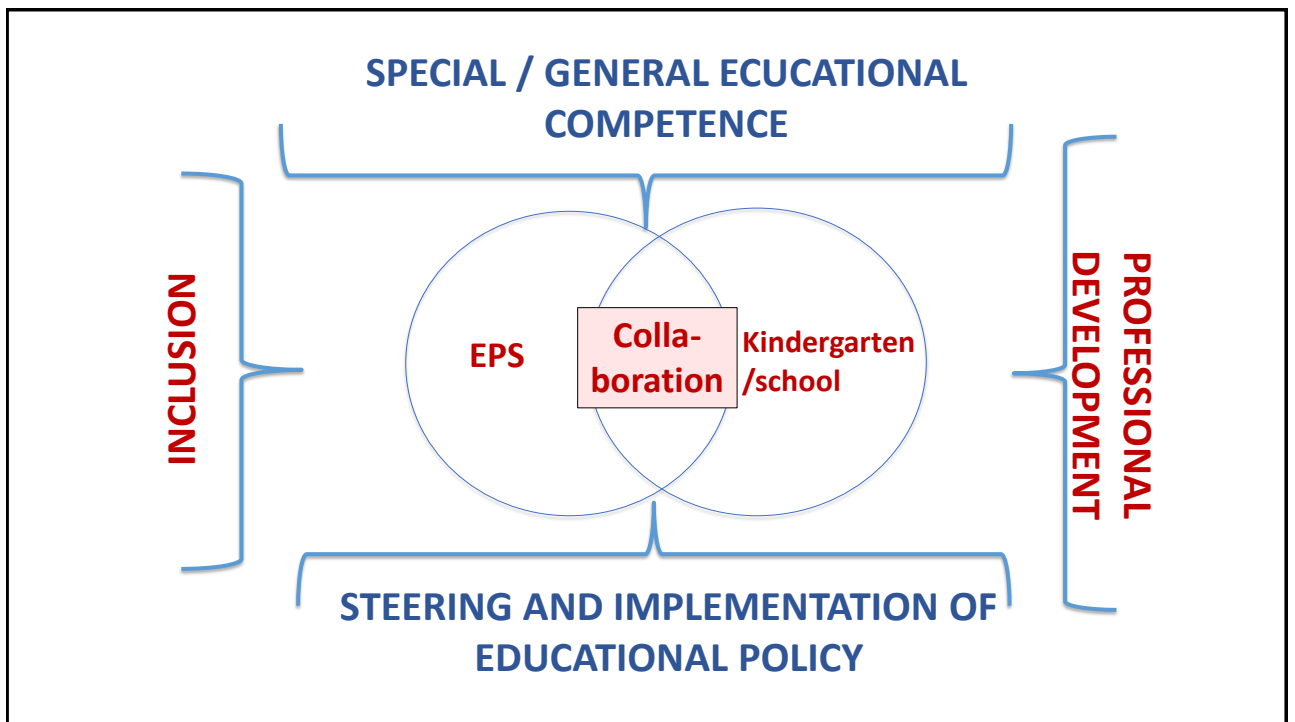
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## SUKIP - goal / purpose

Establish an infrastructure for collaboration on pedagogical practice between EPS and kindergarten/school and within kindergarten/school aimed at developing competence for inclusion.

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## ‘Collaborative action research’ (Ainscow et al, 2004)

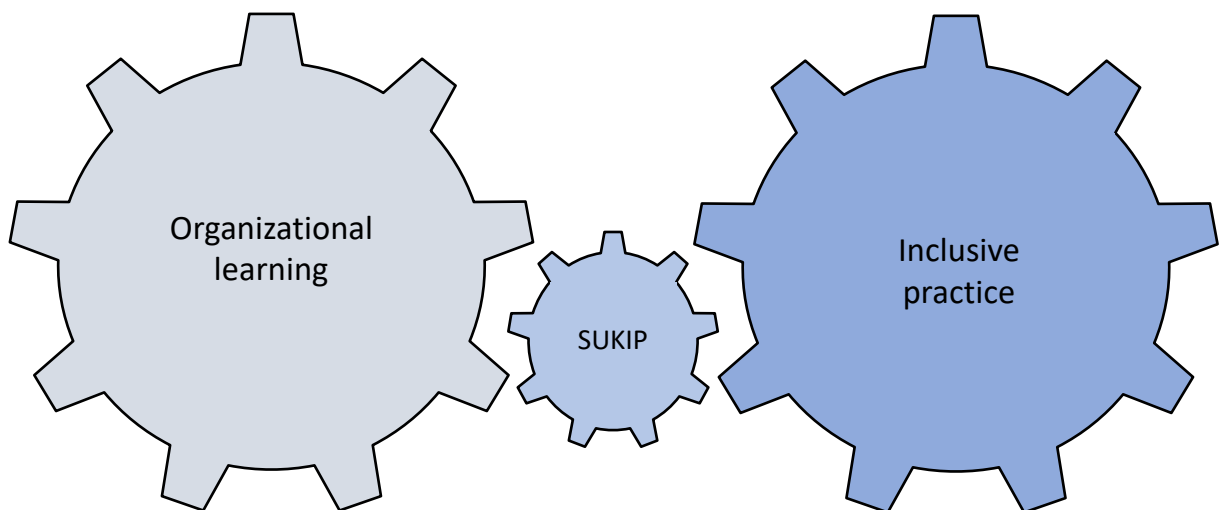
‘Interactive research: a joint learning process’ (Bennich et al., 2018), which involves

- To support a normatively led change
- To develop new knowledge
- An equal collaboration between researchers and practitioners
- To take part in common learning processes
- To develop practice relevant knowledge

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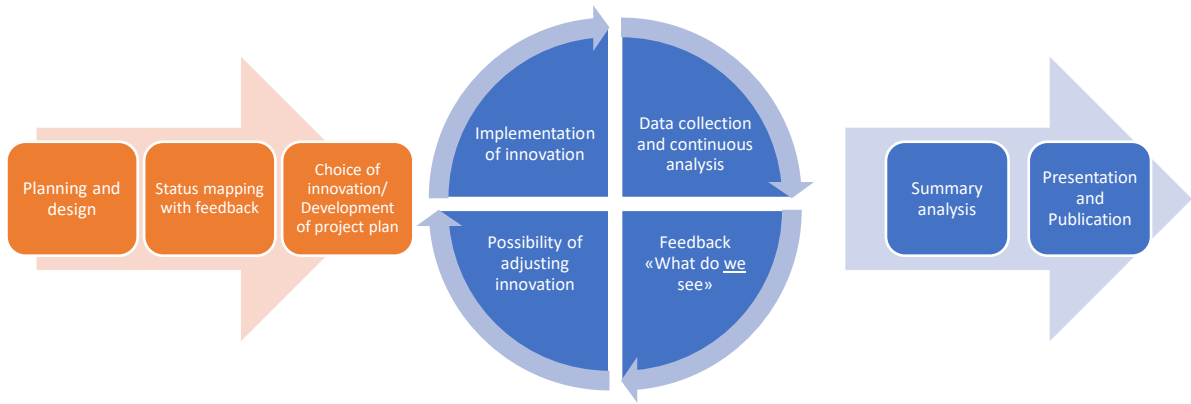
## Theoretical perspectives



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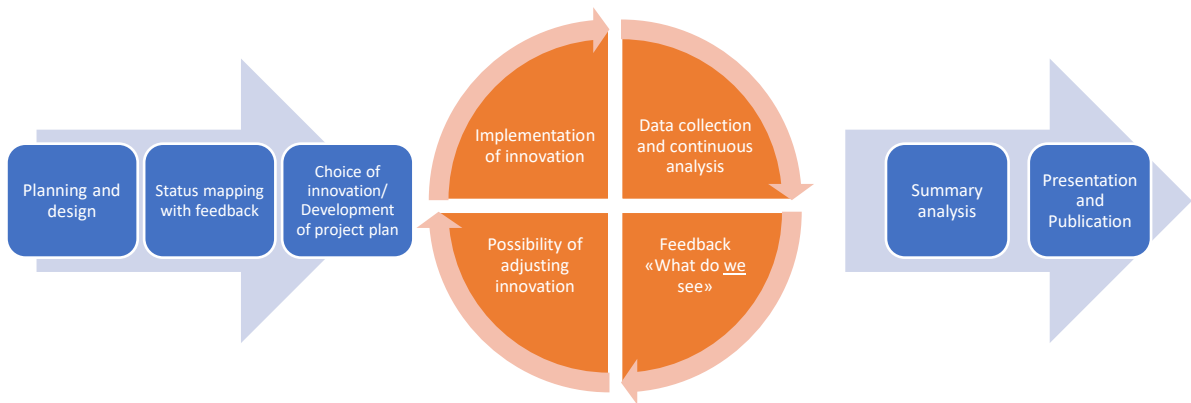
# Collaboration - Who, What, Where?



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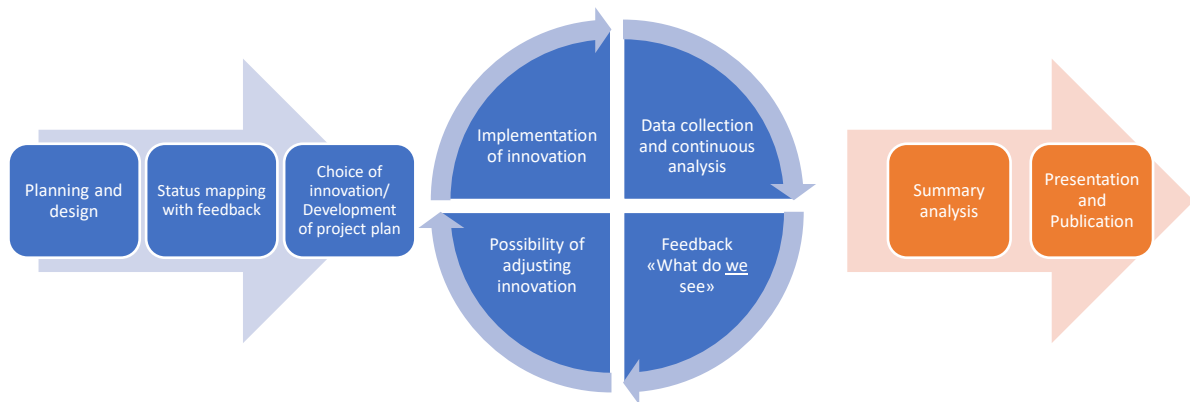
# Collaboration - Who, What, Where?



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## Collaboration - Who, What, Where?



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## To summarize

- Collaborative research can consist of a variety of forms
- Varies through the different phases in the research project
- Varies between the subprojects
- Must take into account the complexity of the field of practice
- Is demanding for both researchers and practitioners

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# SUKIP

*The local project manager (LPM)  
- a link between the practice field and the  
researchers*

Marion Stava Bjørgan, Bergen Municipality  
Simona Jonassen, Randaberg Municipality

NLA  
Høgskolen



BERGEN  
KOMMUNE

 Statped



Randaberg  
kommune

  
Universitetet  
i Stavanger

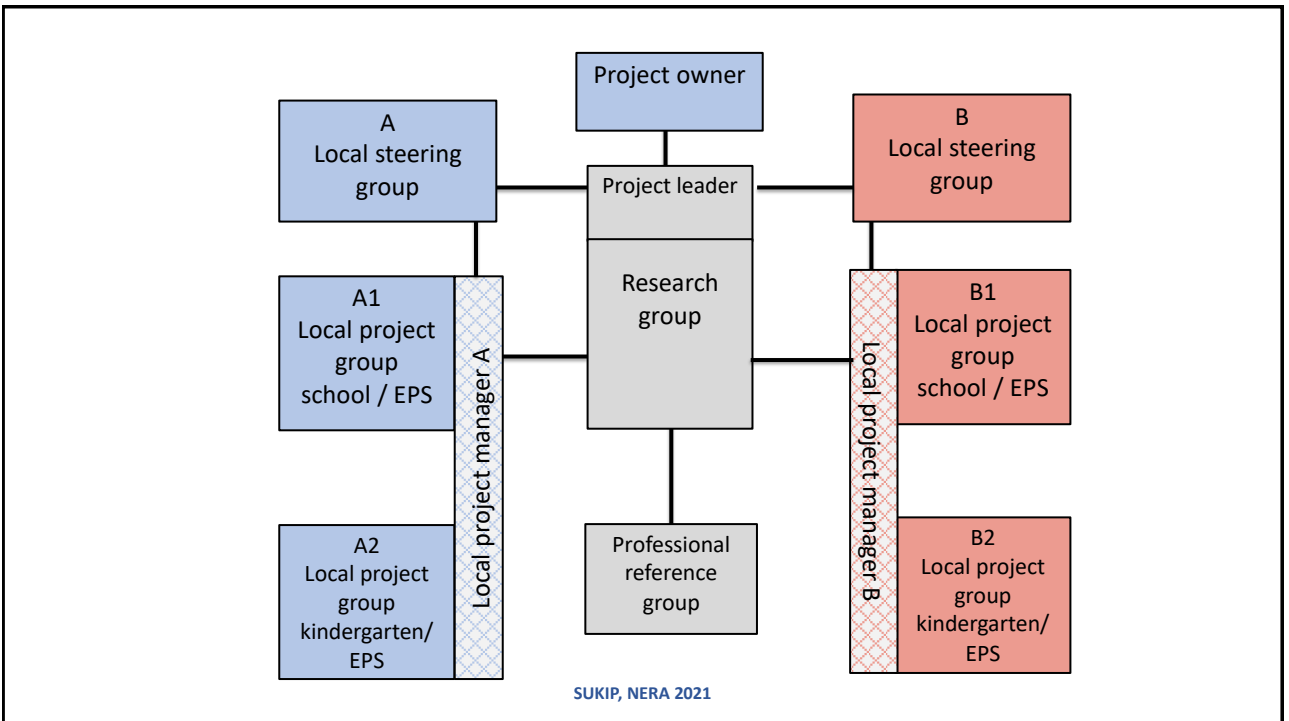
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What is a Local Project Manager (LPM)?

How has the role changed through the project?

The double role;  
Challenges and possibilities







## The startingpoint

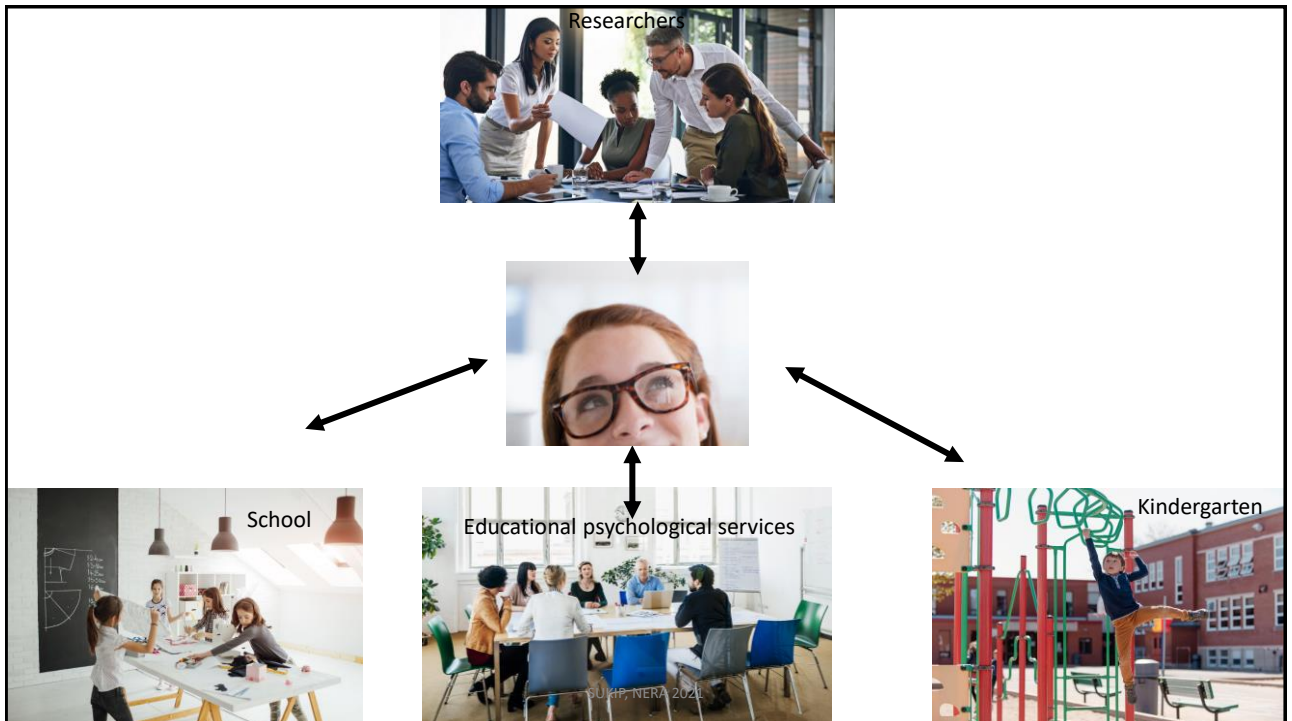
For the innovations: Coordinator and organizer-Write project plans-support the process

For the researchers: Help to interpret the data. Give local knowledge and knowledge about the system

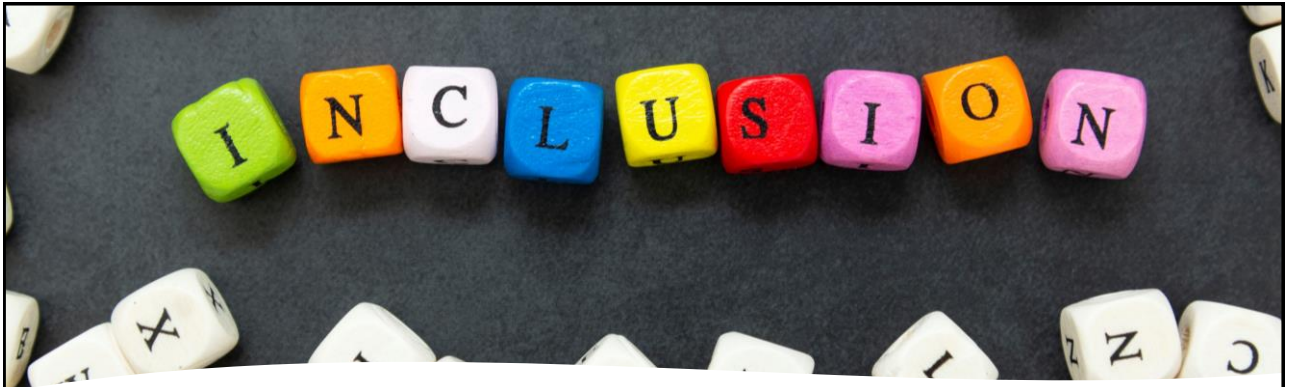
**Connector between the researchers and the practice field.**

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## LPM as part of the research-group

- The start: LPM was only partially member of the research-group with limited access to discussions and data
- After a while: LPM fully included in the research group.
- Now: LPM is cooperating with the researchers on the analysis, the article-writing and presenting data like at the NERA conference.
- This has contributed to a stronger feeling of ownership to the project and a better understanding of the data collection.

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## The LPM role in the innovations

**The role developed over time. It was a demanding process until we realized that there is no standard way.**

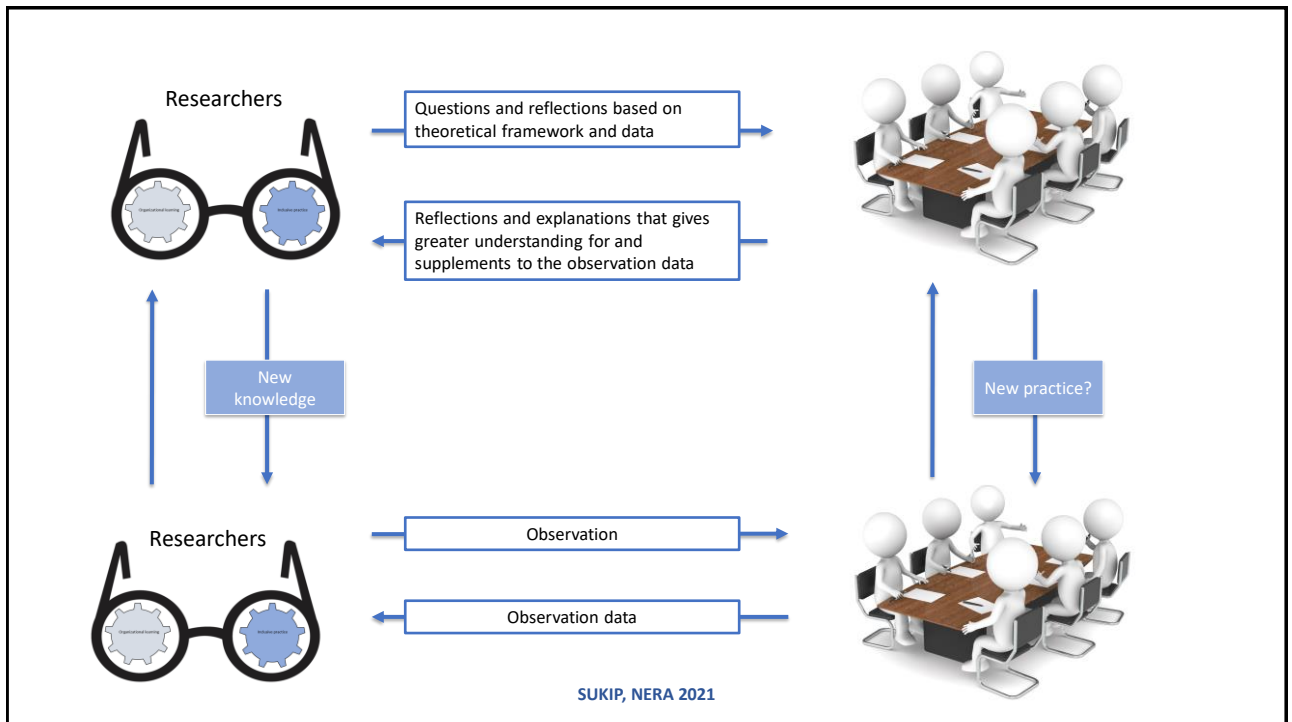
- Observation in the meetings.
- Responsible for taping the meetings and deliver to the transcripator
- Lead the metareflection at the end of the meeting.
- Writing reflection-notes



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- LPM gives advice, knowledge and guidance
- LPM motivates and support
- LPM builds bridges

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The double role as both LPM and Educational Psychological counsellor (EPS)

**-**

**+**

**LPM as a EPS employee:**

- Impossible to be neutral and objective.
- Not meeting the anticipations from the kindergarten and school in the new role.
- Easier to give support to colleagues in EPS (who are «alone» in the meetings).
- LPM stays at the workplace while SUKIP leaves.

**LPM as a support in the internal development-processes in EPS and the municipality:**

- Gives information about the project and the focus on inclusion in the organisation.
- LPM gets experience and guidance in project management that the municipality use.
- New projects emerge from the SUKIP experiences.

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# SUKIP

## *Collaboration EPS – Kindergartens Preliminary results from two innovation projects.*

*Siv Hillesøy, Statped  
Stein Erik Ohna, University of Stavanger*



NLA Høgskolen

BERGEN KOMMUNE

Statped

Randaberg kommune

Universitetet i Stavanger

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## Results from the mapping (documents, survey, focus-group interviews)

- Approval to the vision on inclusive practices / communities for all children
- Documented challenges
  - Collaboration kindergarten – EPS, primarily on individual level, less on systemic level, due to
    - Different tasks and responsibilities
    - Limited (time-) resources and capacity
    - **EPS's limited knowledge on the kindergarten's activities**

## The topic of the presentation

- Taking a point of departure in the EPS's limited knowledge on activities and challenges in the kindergarten –
- How the two innovation projects contributes to an improved mutual understanding between kindergarten and EPS on inclusive practices

## Previous Norwegian research

- There is a need for rethinking the individual – system dichotomy (Moen, 2019)
- Facilitating inclusive communities on kindergarten requires close collaboration between kindergarten and EPS (Fasting, 2019)
- EPS calls for possibilities for system-oriented work, however they lack initiatives from the kindergartens to make this possible (Tveit, Cameron & Kovac, 2019)
- A need for an organisational infrastructure supporting kindergarten .- EPS collaboration (Work Research Institute/OsloMet 2021)

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## The aim of the projects in the kindergartens

**Kindergarten A:** All children shall experience being included in the kindergarten's everyday life

- *Closer dialogue with EPS on everyday life in the kindergarten PPT*
- *How develop inclusive practices in all areas of the kindergarten*
- *How to use EPS for supervision on organisation- and competence development in the kindergarten*

**Kindergarten B:** The collaboration shall contribute to improving inclusive practices in the kindergarten

- *The collaboration shall improve the kindergartens abilities for using its own resources and competence efficiently*
- *Develop competence closer to the children*
- *The collaboration between kindergarten and EPS is based on equal terms*

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## Kindergarten A: Innovation – a cyclic structure

### “Monthly Meeting”

Pedagogical leader  
present case /situation  
(reflection &  
supervision)

#### Participants

Kindergarten director  
Pedagogical leaders (6)  
EPS-counsellor  
Special pedagogue  
Researcher  
KPL

Follow-up

Report

### Unit Meeting

Results from monthly  
meeting introduced at  
the department the  
following week

#### Participants

Pedagogical leader  
Kindergarten teacher  
Child care worker (3-4)  
EPS-counsellor

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## Kindergarten B: Innovation - a cyclic structure

#### Project group:

- Pedagogical consultant
- Pedagogical leader (1)
- EPS counsellor
- Counsellor from External Special Pedagogue Services (ESPS)
- Local project manager (LPM)
- Researcher



#### Extended pedagogical leader meeting:

- Pedagogical leader (8)
- Kindergarten director
- Pedagogical consultant
- EPS counsellor
- Counsellor from ESPS Education Centre
- (LPM and researcher)

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## Results: Different models - similar experiences

- Improving the EPS-counsellor's knowledge of the activities and challenges in the kindergarten
  - *From my perspective, now I know what you are dealing with (EPS counsellor, B)*
  - *EPS is more visible for everybody in the kindergarten (director, A)*
- Discussing issues in the kindergarten everyday life aimed at improving practices.
  - *The everyday life in the department is in focus, and the staff experience being listened to (Pedagogical leader, A)*
- Personal relations between staff and the EPS counsellor
  - *Now it is easier to use the telephone and talk freely, without thinking on how much I shall say, ... because when you know me, ... than the threshold for collaboration is lower.» (Pedagogical leader, B)*

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## Different models – different experiences

### Kindergarten A

- Pedagogical leader decide topic for discussion at Monthly-meeting (an actual challenging situation at the department)
- Monthly-meeting followed up by meeting at actual department: focus on issues discussed
- EPS-counsellor meet all staff at the department in focus

➤ Practice oriented model

### Kindergarten B

- The project group: monitors and leads the processes
- Extended ped-leader group focus on development of competences (topics based on previous mapping/ discussions in the departments)
- EPS-counsellor meets representatives of the staff<sup>8</sup> at the meetings every second week

➤ Competence oriented model

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## Implications

Regarding:

- Knowledge – Making situated knowledge explicit
  - Relations – Change the relation EPS (expert) – Kindergarten staff
  - Culture – Organisation learning, in kindergarten as well as EPS
  - Context – Improving basis for supervision and support
- A possible infrastructure for developing local competence for inclusive practices and kindergarten – EPS collaboration

## Litterature

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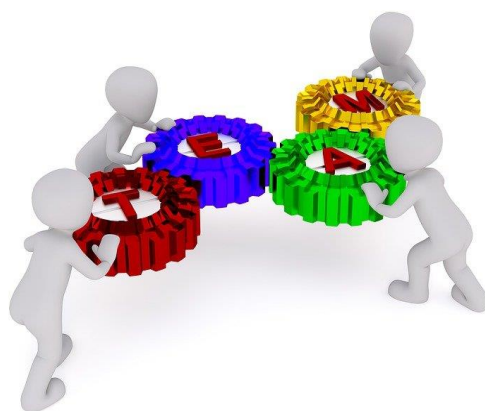
*Different meeting designs to support collaboration  
between school and EPS.*

*Vegard Moen, University of Stavanger  
Marit Mjøs, NLA University College*



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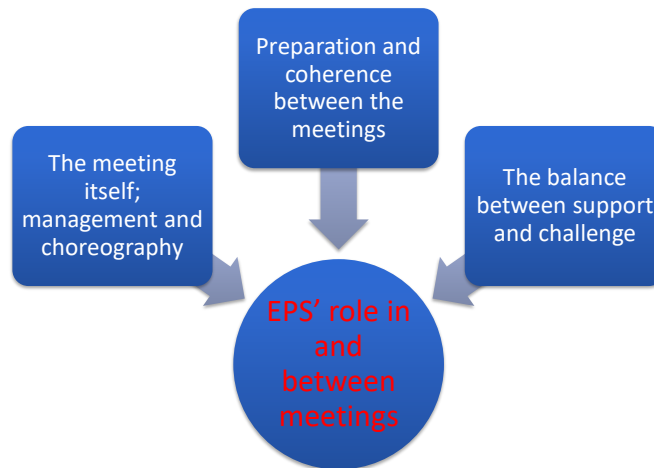
How can different meeting designs support the development of a new infrastructure for collaboration between school and EPS?



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## Two schools - two cases



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## Theoretical perspectives

- The meeting as an innovation and metaphor for collaboration
- Strong vs. weak choreography or inscription

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Case A	Case B
<p>Primary &amp; lower secondary school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 10 teaching teams are involved</li> <li>• The teachers select the focus for the discussion</li> </ul>	<p>Primary school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two teaching teams involved over a period of two years</li> <li>• Focus on educational measures on 4 low-achieving students, selected by the teaching team</li> </ul>

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## Meeting structure

Case A	Case B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An implicit structure and a «weak» choreography and framing</li> <li>• Open and involving meeting structure</li> <li>• Focus on communication and ownership to the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear structure and a stronger choreography and framing</li> <li>• A clear focus on challenging the participants</li> <li>• Expectation on tasks and preparations in advance</li> </ul>

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## The connection between the meetings

### Case A

- An indirect structure between the different meetings
- Development during the project period towards clearer expectations for more collaboration

### Case B

- Clear expectations for collaboration between the meetings
- Minutes from previous meeting as a starting point for discussion

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## The balance between support and challenge

### Case A

- Supporting and facilitating a safe environment for the participants
- Focus on creating legitimacy to the process itself

### Case B

- Clear expectations and challenging the participants
- Establishing trust, a prerequisite for the challenges not to be perceived as too demanding

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## EPS role in and between the meetings

Case A	Case B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meetings should be qualifying for the EPS</li> <li>• EPS is given access to the teachers work and through this preconditions for contributing to the collaboration in and between the meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defined expectations to the EPS; to challenge and support the teachers to adapt ordinary teaching</li> <li>• EPS is given a central and valued role in the meetings</li> </ul>

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## Main challenges and the way forward

Case A	Case B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To challenge and commit teachers more clearly in the period between meetings</li> <li>• To challenge EPS and make it possible for them to take a more major role in the collaboration with the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue the professional learning community in the teacher teams after the 2-year project period</li> <li>• To continue the collaboration EPS-school with new teacher teams as participants in the meetings</li> </ul>

**Open question as a common challenge in both cases:  
How can the chosen collaboration affect the whole school  
as a learning organization towards an inclusive practice?**

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