FROM IDEA TO DATA – FAST
Gemini's Fast Turnaround Program

The FT program has been operating at Gemini North since January 2015. There is a proposal deadline at the end of each month, and submitting a proposal commits you to reviewing up to 8 proposals submitted during the same round. Your grades and comments are due after 2 weeks. The Gemini FT support team then checks the technical feasibility of the top-ranked proposals. We also figure out which combination of proposals will fit in the available time, staying as close to the reviewers' rankings as possible.

PIs are notified of the outcome by the 21st of the month, then have 10 days to prepare their observations (with the help of the FT team). Accepted programs stay active for 3 months, and ~60% of the programs from the first 4 cycles (valid until August 30) have now been completed.

1) Agree to rules; 2) Declare conflicts; (3) Review proposals

Users are reporting positive experiences:
- *"a valuable option for getting quick data when you need it without creating and excessive extra work load"*
- *"a fantastic opportunity for graduate students (like me) to get familiar with proposal reviewing process"*
- *"all the proposals I received have scientific merit and are interesting"*

Can we tailor the program to better serve you? Please let us know! Find staff here or email fast.turnaround@gemini.edu.
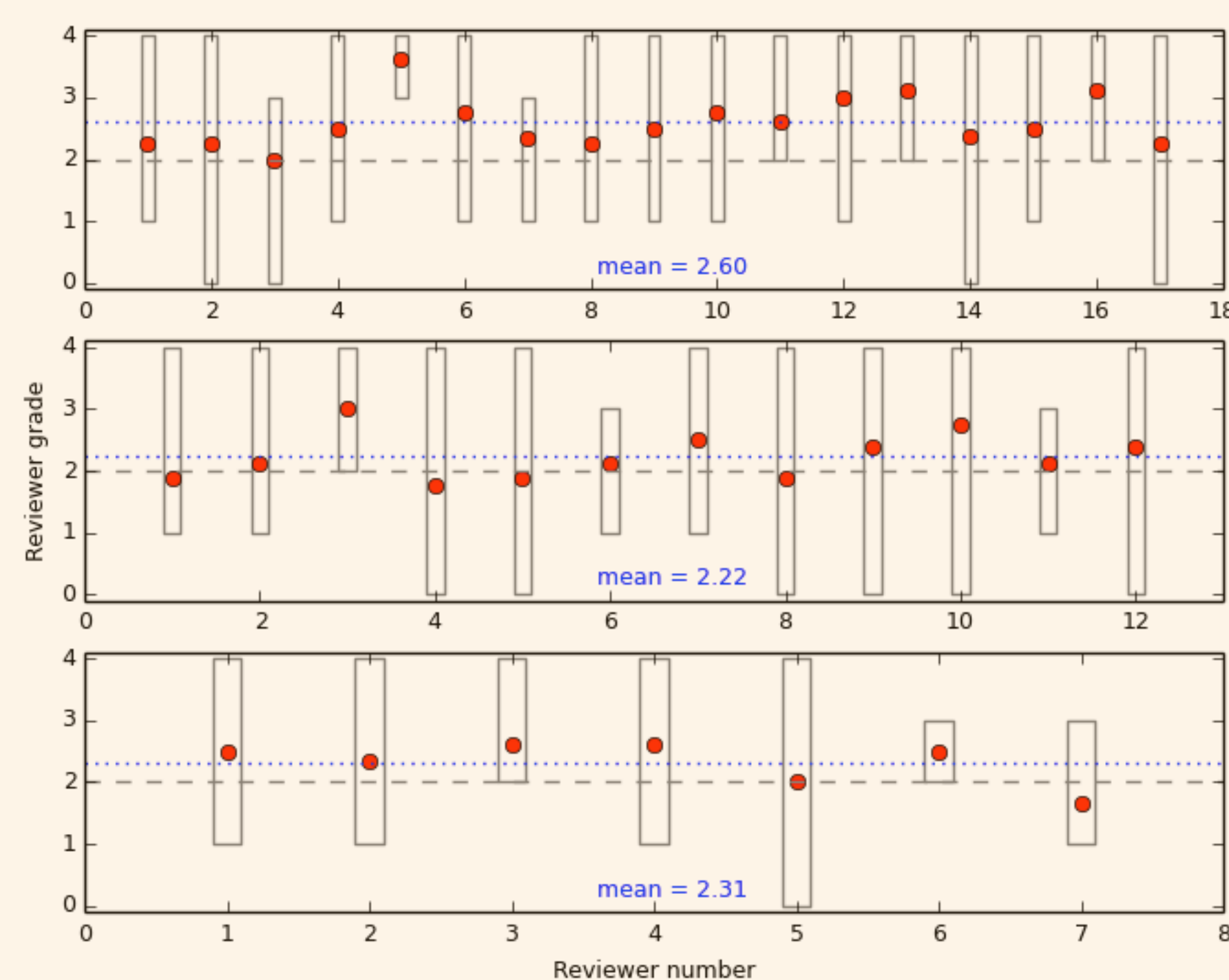
Top – bottom in all plots: analysis of Jan 30, Feb 28, & March 31 deadlines.

1) There is no evidence of people unfairly down-grading other proposals, attempting to promote their own. When people give low scores they almost always use the full range.

Bar length = range of scores

Rejected

Accepted

2) The review process gives fairly good agreement about the strongest and weakest proposals. Using clipped scores to rank the proposals (grey points, filled bars) would give a stronger signal but would not have changed which programs got time so far. A mean score >=2 is required for time to be awarded.

Little knowledge
Some knowledge
Work(ed) in this field

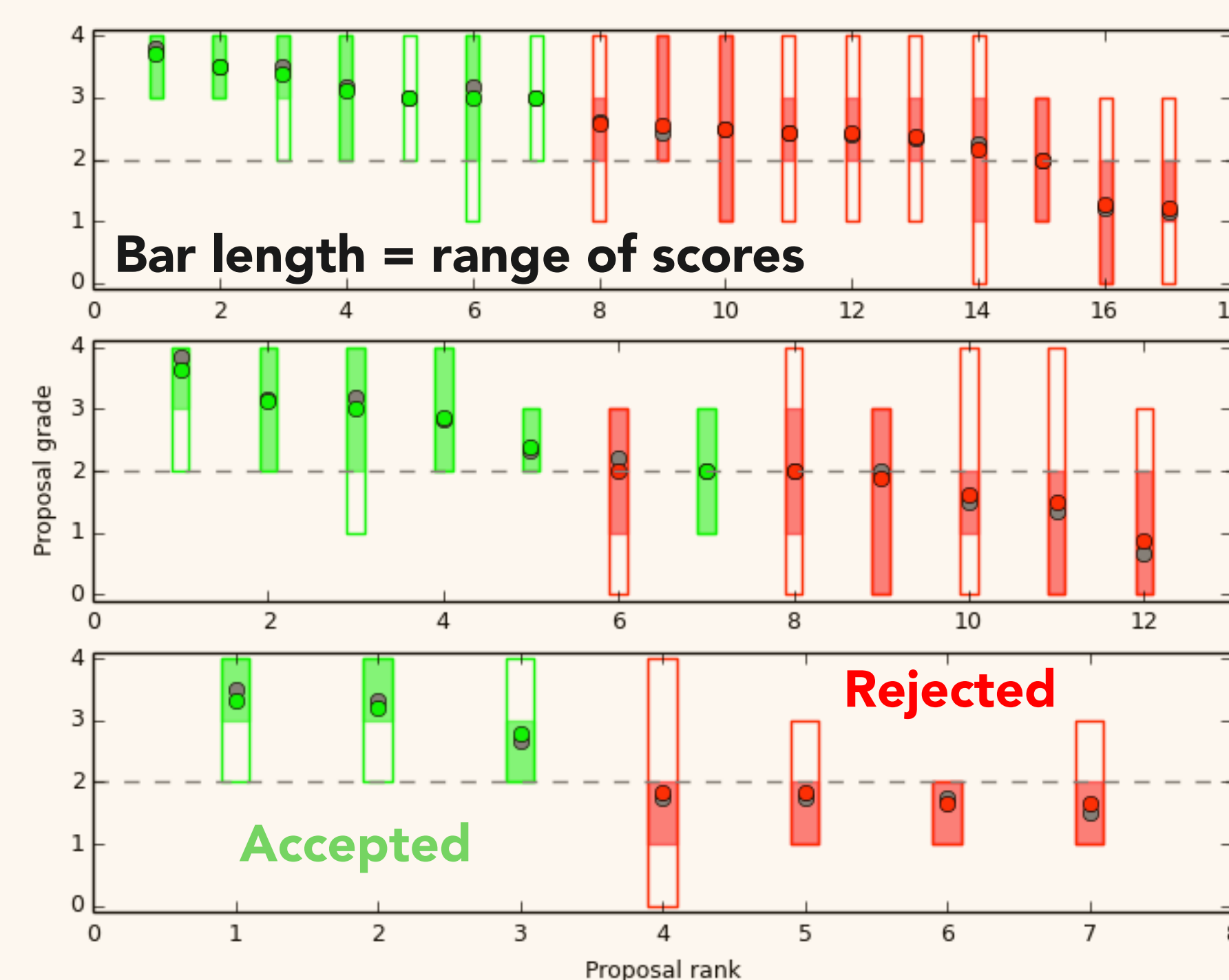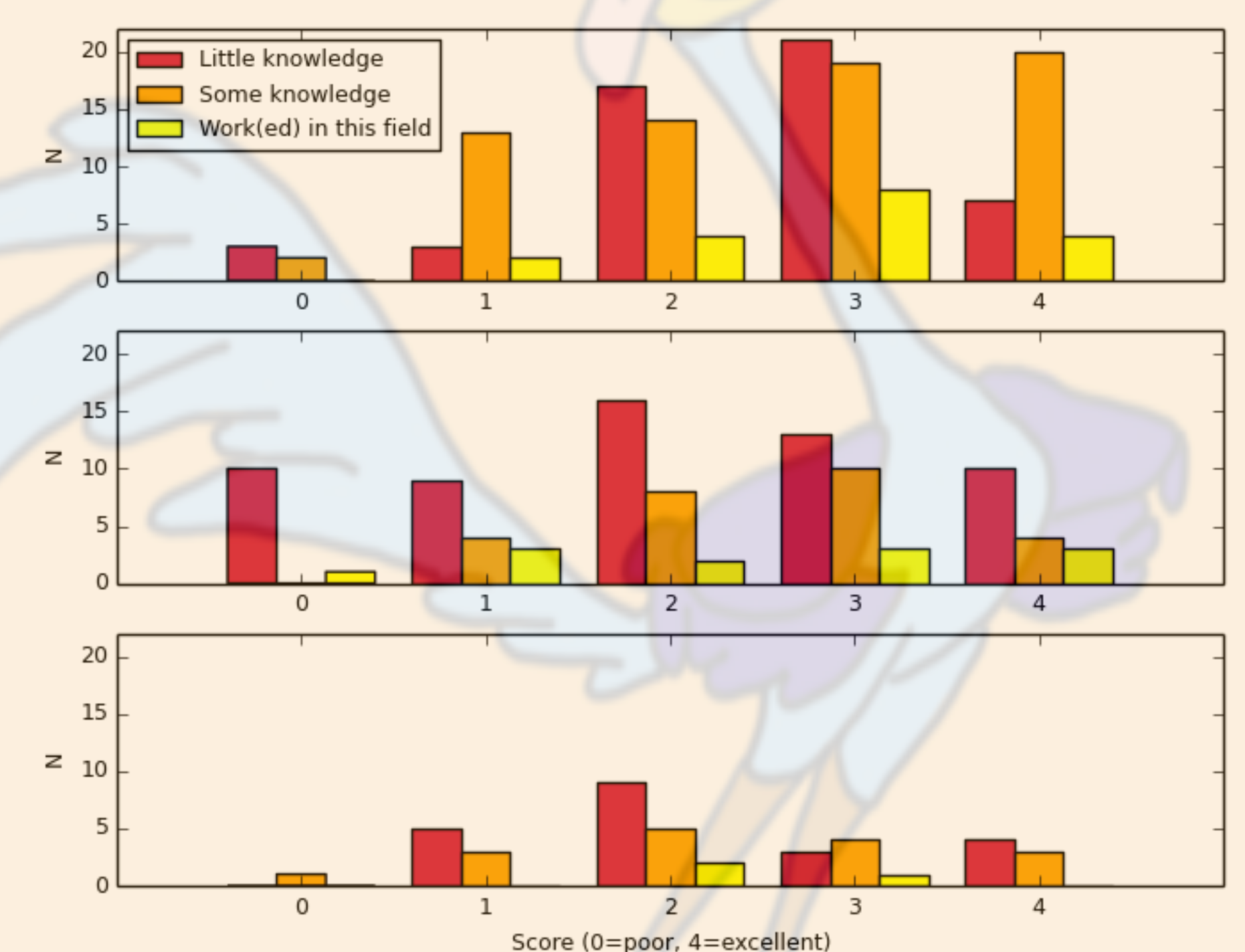Score (0=poor, 4=excellent)

3) There is no sign that non-expert reviewers miss issues that experts find. At least, most of the very low scores have been given by people who describe themselves as knowing little about the field. This probably means that proposers should aim to make their science accessible to a broad audience.

Rachel Mason, Tom Geballe, Kristin Chiboucas, Andreea Petric, and Jared Eckersley

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The FT program allows Gemini North users to obtain data within a few weeks. There is a proposal deadline at the end of each month, and submitting a proposal commits you to reviewing up to 8 proposals submitted during the same round. Your grades and comments are due after 2 weeks. The Gemini FT support team then checks the technical feasibility of the top-ranked proposals. We also figure out which combination of proposals will fit in the available time, staying as close to the reviewers' rankings as possible.

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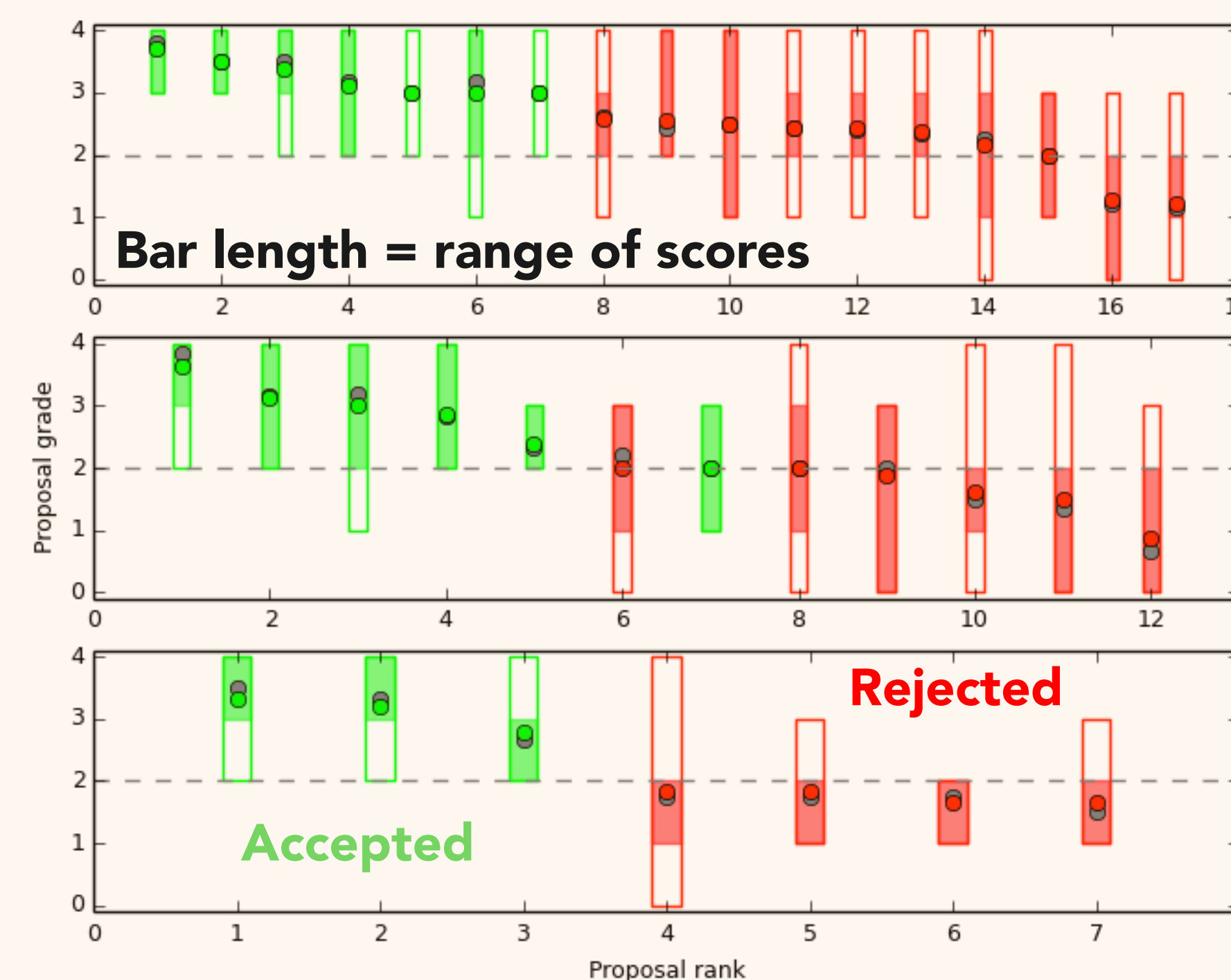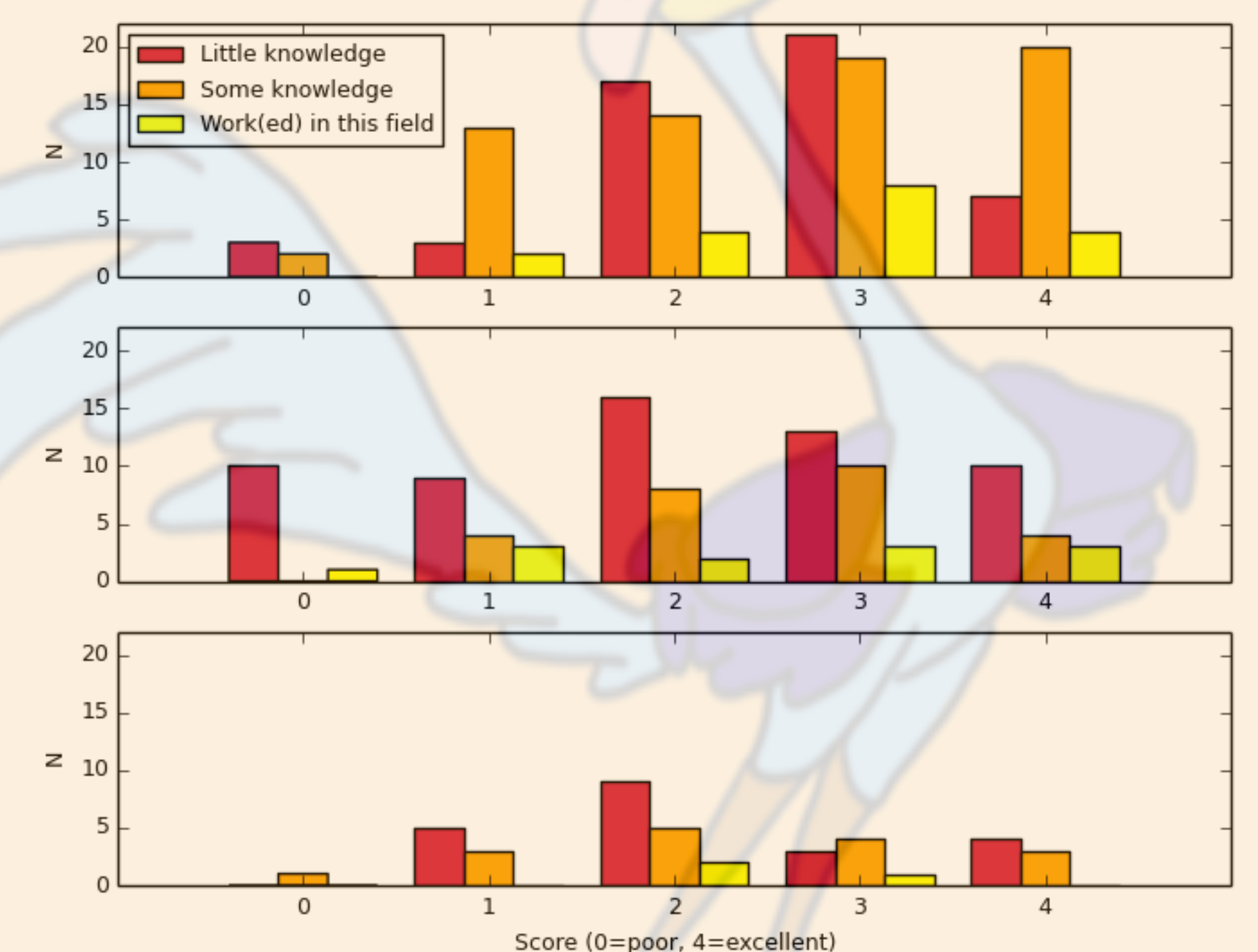**3) There is no sign that non-expert reviewers miss issues that experts find. At least, most of the very low scores have been given by people who describe themselves as knowing little about the field. This probably means that proposers should aim to make their science accessible to a broad audience.**

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Rejected

Accepted

Proposal grade

Proposal rank

mean = 2.60

mean = 2.22

mean = 2.31

Reviewer grade

Reviewer number

Little knowledge
Some knowledge
Work(ed) in this field

Score (0=poor, 4=excellent)

The review process gives fairly good agreement about the strongest and weakest proposals. Using clipped scores to rank the proposals (grey points, filled bars) would give a stronger signal but would not have changed which programs got time so far. A mean score >=2 is required for time to be awarded.

There is no evidence of people unfairly down-grading other proposals in an attempt to promote their own (although subtle effects would be 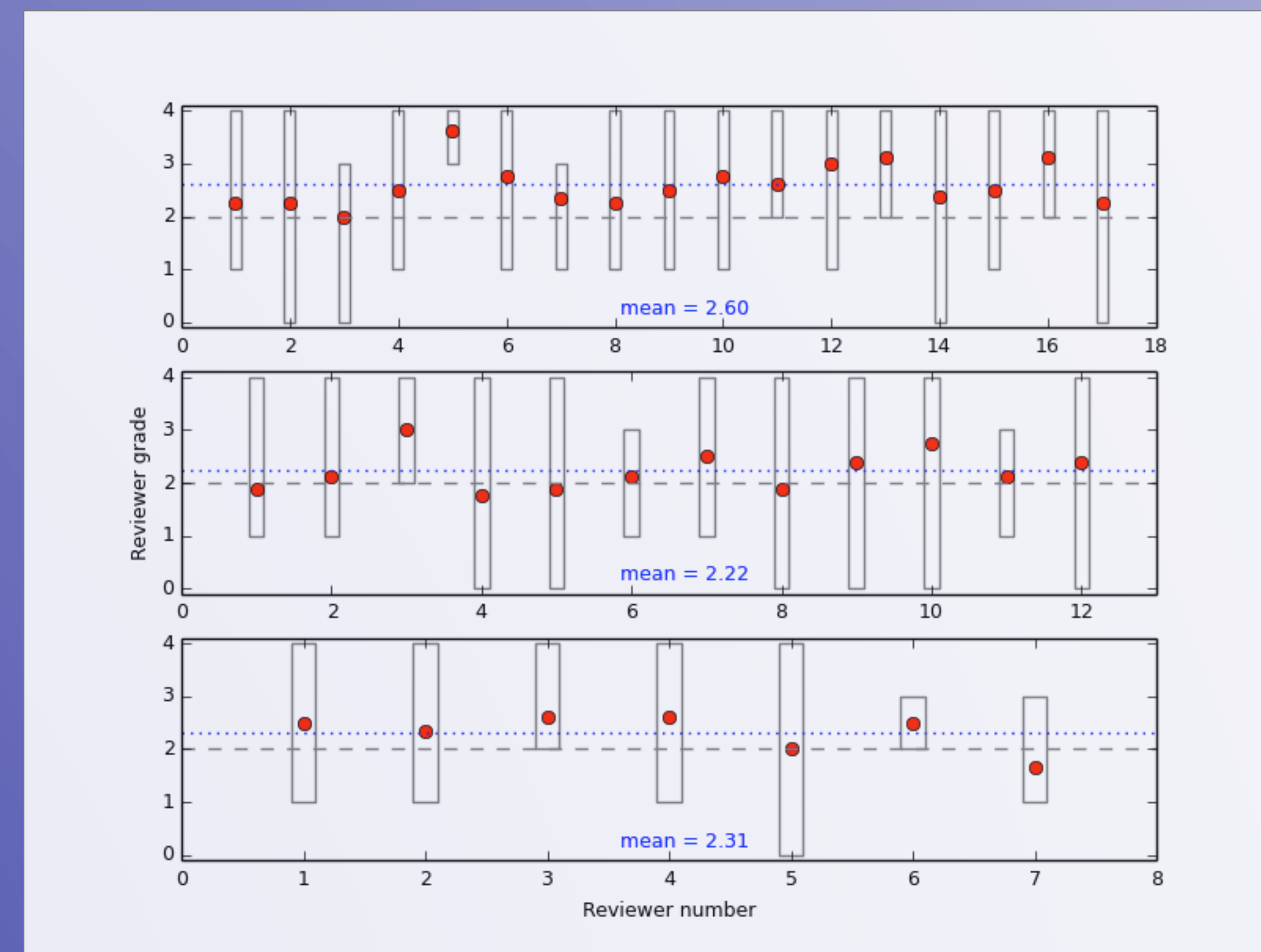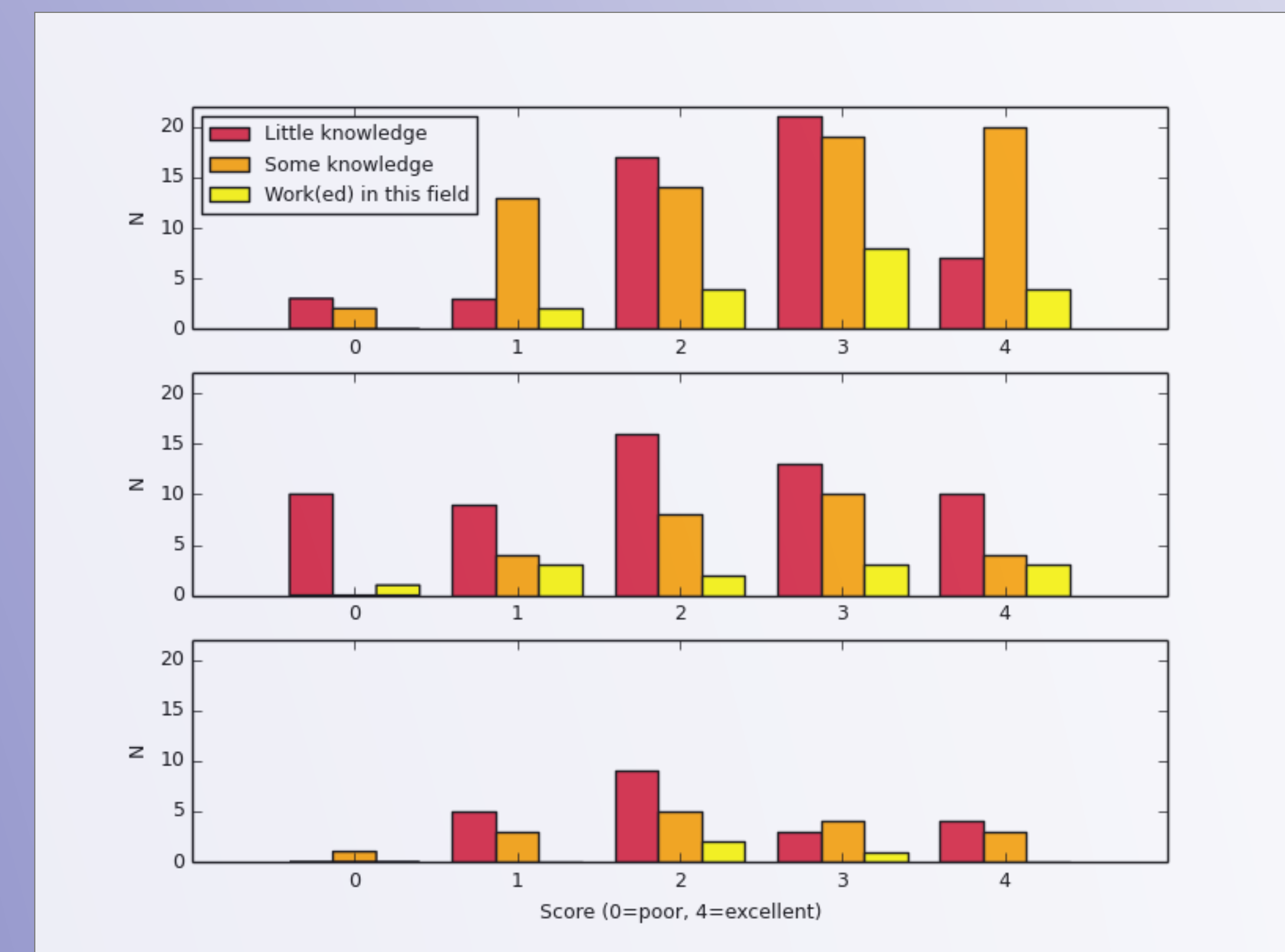difficult to detect in the limited data available so far). When people give low scores they are almost always using the full range.

There is no sign that non-expert reviewers miss issues that experts find. At least, most of the very low scores have been given by people who describe themselves as knowing little about the field. This probably means that proposers should aim to make their science accessible to a broad audience.

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