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Edinburgh, 25th April 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to act as Mihir's referee for his consideration for the Joint graduate programme in at University of Manchester and IIT KGP. I have known Mihir due to his internship he is currently doing in my group from June 2020 related to low cost automated CRISPR diagnostics. His understanding of SARS-CoV-2 was quite good based on his previous work on this and his enthusiasm for developing solutions for COVID-19 Pandemic was remarkable.

His work is focusing on developing low-cost automated CRISPR based COVID19 screening methods using Opentron OT-2 robots. He greatly contributed finding bottlenecks in the already available CRISPR based COVID-19 diagnostics to decide which test would be more cost effective and easy to automate. He demonstrated excellent soft skills to work as a team, greatly impacting in a positive manner the work done by several of my PhD students. As a result of his work, we are in the final stages of writing both a review and a experimental paper about the project results where Mihir will be credited as a co-author.

I can confirm his verbal and written skills proved to be excellent, as well as his communication and dedication during my group meetings. He is very capable of proposing innovative ideas independently, and showed great skills interacting with other members of my lab to discuss about his ideas. Mihir also demonstrated good computational and technical skills, allowing him to be able to tackle coding challenges for the robot using python independently.

Mihir showed a keen interest in research and pursuing a academic career from starting of the project, attending various international conferences on bioengineering.
To conclude, Mihir is an excellent and thoroughly reliable student. He is highly capable and has made an valuable outstanding contribution to my COVID-19 project over the time he has worked with my lab members. I would rate Mihir research performance in the top 3% of my students, and I would have gladly offered him a PhD position in my group if I have had the funding's possibilities.

I would highly recommend him as I am sure he will continue to be an outstanding member in any lab. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Leonardo Rios Solis

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