Invitation letter for the PRIME 2025/26-Fellowhip for Dr. Christine Nussbaum

Dear Sir or Madam,

I hereby happily provide an invitation letter for Christine Nussbaum to accompany her application for the DAAD PRIME Postdoctoral Fellowship enitled “variability and flexibility in the perception of synthetic voices”.

*Support provided by the host institution:*

If the project receives funding, my department would be the primary host, with me being the scientific mentor. Furthermore, my department would provide the funding for compensation of participants. And Mrs Nussbaum is already part of my department, she would keep her office including desk and technical equipment, access to all laboratory facilities, her university E-Mail address and all other internal resources of the Friedrich Schiller University Jena. We are equipped with all necessary infrastructure for successful execution of the empirical project and we are already in regular and productive exchange with the host institution in London.

*Potential of the research proposal:*

The proposed set of studies are not only of high relevance to the field, they are also theoretically well-motivated, empirically sound and well-designed. Furthermore, they fit very well into the overarching research agenda that Christine Nussbaum is pursuing in the context of her habilitation: the systematic understanding of the perception of naturalness in voices. I therefore expect this work to be of great impact, both within academia but also beyond, as her insights directly inform applied fields such as synthetic voice design. Having worked in the UK myself for many years, I believe that a research in London is an ideal next step for Mrs. Nussbaum career development. The department of Prof Carolyn McGettigan is an excellent choice as host, as this is one of the world's leading research groups in the field of voice research. I therefore express my full support for the proposed research project.

*Potential of the candidate:*

Mrs. Nussbaum is an outstanding young scientist and has been an invaluable member of my Department for several years already. She started her doctorate in my department at the beginning of 2019 and completed it summa cum laude in summer 2023. She has been awarded the 3rd prize of the Dissertation competition by the DGPs, which puts her on the very top of German early career researchers in general psychology. She already has an outstanding list of publications and has successfully acquired third-party funding in her first few months as a postdoc. Further, she has already been an invited speaker several times at symposia at international conferences such as EPS (2023) or SPR (2022, 2024). As part of the EU-funded network ‘Voice Communication Sciences’, she will soon be supervising her first doctoral project as co-PI. In addition to her research activities, Ms Nussbaum is also involved in university teaching, the coordination of administrative tasks in my department and science communication far beyond the usual level. Although she is already a highly skilled empirical researcher another of Ms Nussbaum's strengths lies in her constant striving to acquire new skills and continually broaden her scientific horizons.

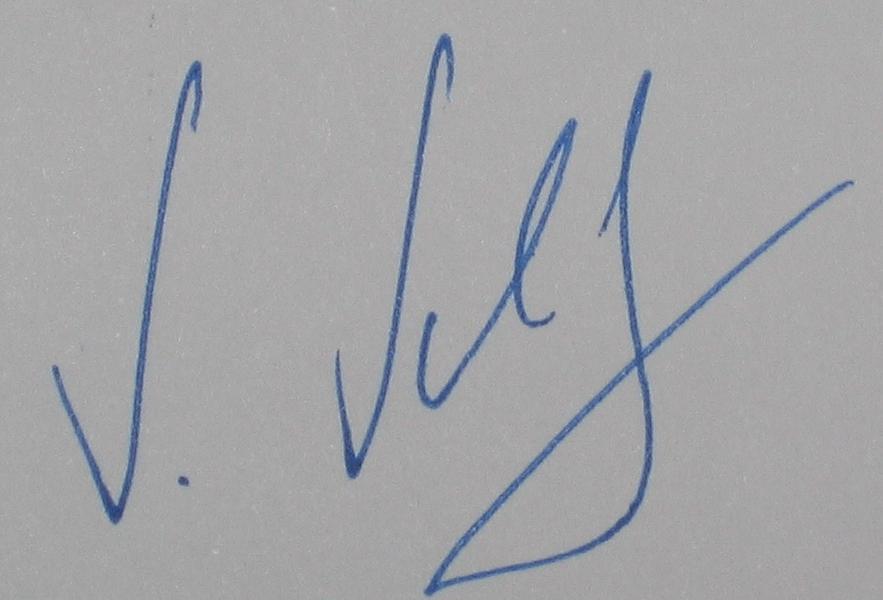
Most importantly, Mrs. Nussbaum is an independent and critical thinker. This is primarily evidenced by her habilitation topic “Naturalness in voices”, which she has explicitly chosen on her own and pursued with great dedication ever since despite receiving some initial skepticism about its potential. By now, she has converted her ideas into a concise research vision and fully convinced the field of the tremendous importance of the topic. This has culminated in the publication of a conceptual review on the topic of ‘Understanding Voice Naturalness’ in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, one of the most competitive and influential outlets in our field. In this work, Mrs Nussbaum lays the conceptual foundation for her empirical work, which she also plans to pursue in the PRIME fellowship.

*Long-term career perspectives:*

Mrs. Nussbaum is an essential member of my department and after the completion of the PRIME fellowship, she will return to her current research position to continue her habilitation. She currently holds several crucial roles in my department: principal investigator of our high-resolution EEG-lab, co-supervisor or a PhD project on the topic “Neurocognitive processing of voice naturalness in human and synthetic voices”, coordinator of the Jena Voice Research Unit, and main organizer of the upcoming conference VoiceID for 2 - 4. September 2026. Furthermore, she is a valued member of the international voice research network and has recently been appointed to the executive board of the newly founded Voice Communication Sciences Association (VoCSA). All these roles will be paused or covered by other team members during the PRIME Fellowship to allow Mrs Nussbaum to fully focus on this project, but I am delighted that she has agreed to take most of them back on upon her return.

With her portfolio, Christine Nussbaums prospects for a successful academic career in Germany are excellent and I am happy support her in every way I can. Please feel free to approach me with any additional questions about the candidate or the research proposal.

Sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Stefan R. Schweinberger

Wichtige Aspekte:

Ein Einladungsschreiben der deutschen Gastgebenden (Dok 2). Dieses sollte erläutern, warum die Hochschule besonders gut für die Durchführung des Forschungsprojekts geeignet ist, welche Unterstützung bereitgestellt wird, wer als Mentorin/Mentor, fungieren wird und welche längerfristigen Forschungs- und Beschäftigungsperspektiven an der Hochschule bestehen

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| Applicants must have an excellent academic track record, and the research project must be innovative and of high quality. The host institutions in Germany and abroad must provide the perfect research environment to implement the proposed project. A PRIME fellowship should enable the candidates to start an independent research career and to acquire additional scientific/methodological skills. The fellowship is intended to position the candidates as serious competitors for more advanced positions in research.  If you are strongly convinced that the candidate fulfills these requirements and if you fully endorse the research project, please support the applicant with an invitation letter. The letter must detail the support you and your institution provide and outline the career perspectives of your candidate in Germany. |

Die gastgebenden deutschen Hochschulen müssen bestätigen, dass sie bereit ist, die PRIME Fellows im Falle einer Förderung für die gesamte Förderdauer anzustellen. Die Mittel für die Anstellung werden der Hochschule vom DAAD im Rahmen einer gesonderten Projektförderung zur Verfügung gestellt. Die Hochschulen ernennen Mentorinnen/Mentoren für die Geförderten. Es wird erwartet, dass sich die deutsche Hochschule bereits im Einladungsschreiben zu möglichen Perspektiven für eine längerfristige Sicherung der Forschungstätigkeit an der Hochschule äußert. Eine rechtlich bindende finanzielle Zusicherung über das Förderende hinaus wird nicht erwartet, aber die anstellende deutsche Hochschule sollte darlegen, dass und wie sie die Karriereentwicklung der Antragstellenden nachhaltig unterstützt.

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