Date: 18/10/2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing with great enthusiasm to recommend Fatemeh Vazirian for the National Innovation Visa. I have had the privilege of being a Research Advisor for her PhD at the University of Tasmania, where she is conducting exceptional research at the intersection of chronic pain and neurodegenerative diseases.

Fatemeh is a remarkably talented and innovative researcher whose work is reshaping how we understand the early manifestations of neurological disorders. Her research provides compelling evidence that chronic pain may serve as an early marker of neurodegenerative processes, a concept that challenges conventional thinking and has significant implications for early diagnosis and preventive neurology. This paradigm-shifting work contributes to what can be considered a new era of preventive neurology, where early identification of at-risk individuals could enable timely interventions and improved patient outcomes.

Her first paper, published in a top-tier movement disorders journal, demonstrated a strong association between chronic pain and Parkinson's disease. She has since continued to expand this line of inquiry through large-scale population-based analyses, integrating advanced epidemiological and statistical methods to uncover critical links between pain, neuroinflammation, and neurodegeneration. Beyond her scientific insight, Fatemeh possesses exceptional data science and analytical skills. She independently manages and analyses complex datasets, employing sophisticated techniques. Her ability to extract meaningful insights from high-dimensional data demonstrates both technical mastery and deep biological understanding.

Equally impressive is her collaborative approach and leadership potential. She has been an active contributor to several Parkinson's disease research projects within our team, displaying initiative, intellectual independence, and strong interdisciplinary communication. Her work exemplifies how data-driven neuroscience can generate transformative insights with real-world clinical implications. In my professional opinion, Fatemeh is an outstanding emerging scientist whose contributions align perfectly with Australia's vision for research excellence and innovation. Her combination of technical expertise, creativity, and forward-thinking research places her among the next generation of leaders in neurological and data-driven medical science. I give my highest recommendation for Fatemeh Vazirian and have full confidence that she will make a substantial contribution to Australia's innovation landscape.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Alty
MA(Canab.) MD FRCP(UK) FRACP
Professor of Neurology, University of Tasmania
Staff Specialist in Neurology, Royal Hobart Hospital
jane.alty@utas.edu.au