

27 October 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

National Innovation Visa application – Fatemeh Vazirian

It is with great enthusiasm that I write in support of Fatemeh Vazirian's application for the National Innovation Visa. I have had the privilege of observing her outstanding scientific work, which reflects exceptional intellect, creativity, and commitment to advancing research in chronic pain and neurodegenerative diseases.

Fatemeh's research is both innovative and impactful. Her work explores the intricate relationship between chronic pain and neurodegenerative processes, offering compelling evidence that pain may serve as an early indicator of neurological decline. This perspective challenges long-held assumptions and opens new avenues for early diagnosis and preventive neurology. Her publication in *GeroScience*, a leading journal in the field of gerontology, exemplifies her ability to conduct rigorous and meaningful research that contributes to reshaping our understanding of neurological health across the lifespan.

Her earlier studies, including one published in a top-tier *Movement Disorders* journal, demonstrated a robust association between chronic pain and Parkinson's disease, positioning her as an emerging thought leader in this area. Building on this foundation, she continues to lead large-scale, population-based analyses that integrate advanced epidemiological and statistical techniques to identify key mechanisms linking pain, neuroinflammation, and neurodegeneration.

Beyond her scientific insight, Fatemeh exhibits exceptional data analytical and research leadership skills. She independently manages complex datasets with precision, employs advanced statistical modelling, and translates her findings into clinically relevant knowledge. Her ability to synthesize data-driven evidence with biological understanding is remarkable and exemplifies her potential to drive innovation in translational neuroscience.

Fatemeh also brings a strong collaborative spirit, intellectual curiosity, and professionalism to every research endeavour. Her work reflects a rare combination of analytical depth, methodological rigor, and visionary thinking, qualities that align seamlessly with Australia's mission to foster excellence in scientific innovation.

In my professional opinion, Fatemeh Vazirian is an exceptional emerging scientist whose research has the potential to shape future directions in neurodegenerative disease prevention and management. I give her my highest possible recommendation and have complete confidence that she will make a substantial contribution to Australia's research and innovation landscape.

Sincerely



Distinguished Professor James Vickers

Director

Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre