



DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

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Dr. SMITA SRIVASTAVA
Professor

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TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

It is my pleasure to give a letter of recommendation to Ms. Sarayu M in support of her nomination for Sun Pharma Research Scholar Awards 2023. She is currently enrolled as a PhD student under my guidance in the Department of Biotechnology, IIT Madras. Her PhD project focuses on developing metabolic engineering strategies for enhanced production of camptothecin, the third-most used anti-cancer drug in the world. With the ever-increasing market demand, increasing deforestation and climate change, developing techniques for large-scale sustainable production of camptothecin is the need of the hour.

This project aimed to predict plant behavior enabling selection of rational metabolic engineering strategies, saving time, cost and energy over traditional hit and trial methods of experimentation. The fact that she has chosen to work in a non-trivial inter-disciplinary field like plant metabolic engineering where she is required to get specifically trained in computational biology, plant cell bioprocessing and genetic engineering of plant cells shows her strong motivation and zeal towards modern biotechnology.

Furthermore, her innovative work has led to the filing of **two patents**. She presented her research findings at **five** prestigious international conferences, garnering highly positive feedback. Her **research article** has been published in a distinguished Q1 journal, Frontiers of Plant Science with an impressive impact factor of 6.6. Additionally, she has also authored a **book chapter** published by Springer International Publishing. Recognizing her academic excellence, she was awarded the **INSPIRE scholarship** and also became a recipient of the **Women Leading Initiative** at IIT Madras.

I strongly recommend her application for the Sun Pharma Research Scholar Awards. This award will further motivate and aid her in accomplishing her research objectives and provide a platform for contributing to scientific advances for sustainable development and socio-economic impact.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any clarifications.

Thank you,

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