



TATA INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

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To whomsoever it may concern

I am writing this letter of recommendation to nominate Ms Darshana Kapri for the Sun Pharma Research Scholar Award. Darshana is currently a 5th-year Integrated PhD student in my laboratory at the Department of Biological Sciences at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Darshana is a very hardworking, creative and motivated young graduate student who has identified a very interesting and novel role for the catecholamine neurotransmitter, norepinephrine in the regulation of mitochondrial biogenesis and function in hippocampal neurons for her thesis project in my laboratory. She is extremely resourceful and sharp and works towards incorporating new and emerging techniques in her research. Using a wide array of approaches, Darshana has shown that norepinephrine increases mitochondrial mass and function in hippocampal neurons, and identified the norepinephrine receptors and molecular players that mediate these effects. She has also shown that drugs that regulate norepinephrine and are clinically used to treat attention deficit disorder, can also be powerful regulators of neuronal bioenergetics in the hippocampus. She has expertise in a myriad of cell culture and molecular biology techniques and has also extensively done behavioural assays. She has developed a deep understanding of the field and is always pushing new boundaries in her science by taking on the most challenging of experiments and approaches.

Darshana is an effective communicator and works very well with teams. Darshana's thesis will immensely benefit from the Sun Pharma Research Scholar Award. She would also benefit immensely in her career trajectory from this recognition and so I recommend her enthusiastically for this award.

Dr. Vidita Vaidya

(Thesis Supervisor)