

**TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN**

I have been approached by Ms. Shailya Verma to support and justify her nomination for the Sun Pharma Science Foundation Science Scholar Awards under the Category of Pharmaceutical Sciences. As Dean of Academics for the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bangalore, India, a centre of the Tata Institute for Fundamental Research (TIFR), it is my pleasure to do so, and add my strongest support for this remarkable student. Ms. Verma is an Integrated PhD student who has just finished five years at the National Centre for Biological Research. We select Integrated PhD students, just after their Bachelor's degree, after three rounds of rigorous selection. Typically, we only select one out of every 1000 applicants, making these students amongst the very best in India. Ms. Verma is one such student that we selected in 2018.

Under the guidance of Prof Sowdhamini, Ms. Verma has become an expert in different areas of computational biology such as sequence searches, phylogeny, homology modelling, protein-protein docking and large-scale virtual screening. At NCBS, we provide an open atmosphere to nurture the creativity and talent of our graduate students. Ms. Verma has wisely exploited this environment to perform several wet-lab studies that validate many of the computation approaches she designed, such as protein expression, purification, site-directed mutagenesis, cell-based function-validation assays and NMR experiments. In each of these areas, she has effectively collaborated and learned the techniques. In many of these projects, she has been the primary driver. These are demonstrated by high-quality publications in International Journals such as *Biology Direct*, *Computational Structural Biotechnology Journal* and *Current Research in Structural Biology*.

I am entirely convinced and wholeheartedly support Shailya's application. I strongly recommend that the Selection Committee of the Sun Pharma Science Foundation Science Scholar Awards give her application the highest consideration. Please feel free to write to me if you have any queries.

With Best Regards,

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Raj Ladher', is written over a horizontal line.

Raj Ladher

**Prof. Rajesh K Ladher**  
Dean of Academics  
National Centre for Biological Sciences  
Tata Institute of Fundamental Research  
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