Re: Recommendation Letter for Dr.   for Immigration Visa Petition for Classification under the Category of Outstanding Researcher

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Dr.   application for permanent residency in the United States based on his qualification as an outstanding researcher. This letter will highlight the international recognition of his outstanding contributions to the fields of computer vision, machine learning, and human-computer intelligent interaction and his potential to contribute to the Information Technology in the United States of America.

I am currently an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Science, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. I received the Ph.D. degree in Computer Science from Leiden University, The Netherlands in 2001. My general expertise is in the fields of computer vision and pattern recognition, human-computer interaction, and machine learning in particular content-based retrieval, maximum likelihood analysis, and machine learning techniques for face detection and recognition. I served as the Technical Program Chair and the Editor of the Proceedings for the *International Conference on Image and Video Retrieval (CIVR2003)*, July 24-25, 2003, Urbana-Champaign, IL, USA and I was guest editor of the *Special Issue on Video Retrieval and Summarization* for the *Computer Vision and Image Understanding Journal*. I was the organizer of the *5th ACM Workshop on Multimedia Information Retrieval (MIR2003)*, November 7, 2003, Berkeley, CA, USA and of the *1st Workshop on Human-Computer Interaction in Computer Vision (HCI2004)*, May 15, 2004, Prague, Czech Republic. I also served as the program committee member for the *IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo*, July 6-9, 2003, Baltimore, MD, USA, the *10th International Conference on Computer Analysis of Images and Patterns*, August 25-27, 2003, Groningen, The Netherlands, and I was a Program Committee Member and the Editor of the Proceedings for the *International Conference on Image and Video Retrieval (CIVR2002)*, July 18-19, 2002, London, UK. I have authored the book *Robust Computer Vision – Theory and Applications*, ISBN 1-4020-1293-4, Kluwer Academic Publishers, April 2003 and I am a co-author (together with   ) of the upcoming book *Computer Vision: A Machine Learning Approach*, to be published by Kluwer Academic Publishers in Summer 2004. I am the author of 11 journal papers, 5 book chapters, and more than 50 peer-reviewed conference papers. I have direct knowledge of Dr.   work, as my own research interests include computer vision, human-computer interaction, and machine learning.

I am aware of his work through his presentations and publications in prestigious scientific conferences such as *IEEE International Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition, IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo, International Conference on Machine Learning, International Conference on Pattern Recognition,* and *International Conference on Image and Video Retrieval.*

Dr.   is an internationally well-recognized expert who has done extensive and detailed research on machine learning techniques in human-computer intelligent interaction, computer vision, and bioinformatics. He made significant contributions to these rapidly growing areas by achieving a series of exciting results that have greatly expanded scientific knowledge in the areas. He is the one of the first to apply a Bayesian framework to the problem of combining gene predictions, for multimodal event detection, and for facial expression analysis. These results have been published in the *Journal of Bioinformatics, Proceedings of the IEEE,* and *Computer Vision and Image Understanding Journal.*

We had the chance to collaborate when I was a visiting researcher in the Beckman Institute for the Advanced Science and Technology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1999 and 2001. Dr.   (co-authored with me) proposed a novel approach to facial expression and emotion recognition which uses machine learning techniques for learning with labeled and unlabeled data. This is a fundamental result since for several important application areas there is a small amount of available labeled data and constructing and labeling a good database requires in most cases expertise, time, and training. Dr.   elaborated a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the semi-supervised learning paradigm and showed that unlabeled data can be successfully used in applications such as face detection and facial expression recognition. This work has been internationally recognized as the state-of-the-art method for learning in computer vision and has been published in the journal of *Computer Vision and Image Understanding,* a prestigious international journal. This work also resulted in an upcoming book *Computer Vision: A Machine Learning Approach* to be published in Summer 2004 (co-authored by Dr.   and myself).

Dr.   past accomplishments are proofs that he has played a significant role in the research field of machine learning, human-computer intelligent interaction, and computer vision. He has been invited as a program committee member for the 1st *Workshop in Human Computer Interaction in Computer Vision (HCI2004)* and he was a peer reviewer for several peer-reviewed journals in our field such as *IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence, IEEE Transactions on Image Processing, IEEE Transactions on Multimedia,* and *Journal of Computer Vision and Image Understanding.* He has proven himself to be among a small percentage of researchers at the very top of his research area. He is in the process of publishing a book and has been invited to write three book chapters. Dr.   has published in high quality and peer-reviewed journals and is the author of over 30 conference papers, further attesting Dr.   s scientific productivity. He also holds five pending US Patents and frequently presents his research findings at international scientific meetings. Therefore, his talent and academic achievements are well known to his fellow researchers. I am also aware that he is currently playing a vital role in developing tools for text analysis and improving search quality at Google Corporation.