Reference Letter in Support of Adler Perotte.

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Adler for nearly two years. I first met Adler while giving a guest lecture at Princeton, he took my machine learning class at Columbia (in which he was the star student), we published a paper together (NIPS, ~25% acceptance rate, top conference in machine learning, double-blind, peer reviewed) , and we are working on a book chapter (a book on LDA methods edited by David Blei and others) and a journal paper together. I know Adler professionally very well. I also know him personally. I am impressed by him in all ways. I look forward to working with him on this project.

Adler is unique in his ability to be both productively creative and creatively productive. His combined skill sets are impressive and perfectly suited to the kind of research he has proposed. As a machine learner / data miner / statistician his skills are extremely strong, particularly in comparison to others in the applied sciences (I know of no one with a stronger data analysis background and ability in the applied sciences).

He has, in my humble opinion, put together an exciting and coherent research plan that not only has the chance to change the way retrospective clinical trial research is performed, but also has the chance to change the way Bayesian modeling is used in general, particularly with respect to hypothesis testing.

Adler possesses a unique set of very strong skills. I think that Adler’s work should be funded for several reasons. First and foremost, funding an individual is a bet on their future productivity. I’d take that bet personally. Adler will produce. Second, funding an idea is a bet on its importance. I’d take that bet too.

In particular, Adler has the background and ability to advance both the applied discipline in which he works, but also contribute to and advance the more general mathematical discipline. The state of data analysis in the applied sciences is very different than it is in machine learning and Bayesian statistics. We (applied Bayesian statisticians and machine learners) have developed a very large arsenal of models and computational approaches that promise to revolutionize data analysis and hypothesis testing in every field. Adler is familiar with these tools in a way that is to both his and the field’s benefit. My familiarity with these kinds of models and techniques, as well as my familiarity with Adler’s ability, background, and passion, makes me absolutely certain that Adler will produce important, useful research of lasting benefit even beyond the scope of that proposed.

I have technically been his mentor. All along we have probably been something more akin to collaborators. I am happy and proud that it is now officially becoming so. I sincerely encourage you to fully fund Adler’s proposal.

Frank Wood, Phd

Assistant Professor of Statistics

Columbia University

New York, NY