December 22th, 2014

Admissions Office  
Heinz College of Public Management Carnegie Mellon University

Dear Admissions Committee:

I am the CEO of the Mexican Institute of Competitiveness (IMCO), a public-policy-oriented think tank based in Mexico City, focused on improving conditions to foster and attract talent and investment in Mexico. IMCO has had a significant impact on the country’s political and economic agenda and has been involved in shaping several recent reforms that will undoubtedly strengthen Mexico’s competitive performance.

Through this letter it is my wish to highly recommend Mr. Carlos Grandet to be enrolled in the Master of Science in Public Policy and Management. Through my professional experience I have been in contact with many types of personalities and Carlos has always impressed me for his commitment to improve the economic and social conditions of Mexico with careful policy analysis and innovative projects. As of today, he is a key member of IMCO´s team and I am confident that he will greatly benefit from enrolling in the MSPPM program to become an effective influence in the shaping of a more competitive and developed urban Mexico.

Carlos has shown during the 3 years and a half I have worked with him characteristics and skills that are fundamental to a successful agent of change and that set him apart as a policy analyst. He is an individual with strong analytical capabilities, social and professional commitment, leadership skills and innovative-drive. One of the biggest interests he has shown during his professional career is the strengthening of local institutions through governance and development policies. Carlos was part of the team that launched groundbreaking studies with the aim to strengthen accountability in subnational governments in Mexico. The first one was a study assessing the transparency culture in Mexican municipalities, this research was designed and executed with the partnership of the US based NGO, Global Integrity[[1]](#footnote-1). The second one was a study conducted with the University of Guadalajara to determine the legal framework and implementation practices of the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) in the 32 Mexican states[[2]](#footnote-2).

Carlos was a vital member of both projects and contributed with careful analysis and proactive leadership to devise a communication strategy as well as to interact with public officials to promote the adoption of the studies´ recommendations. Both projects were successful in delivering a strong message to improve governance in Mexico. As a matter of fact, the projects recently led into the adoption in the State of Coahuila and Querétaro[[3]](#footnote-3) of a new Auditing Law as well as an open government project implemented by the Supreme Audit Institution of the State of Chihuahua, all initiatives based on the recommendations of IMCO´s studies[[4]](#footnote-4). In the case of Chihuahua´s open government project, Carlos was the one that actively advocated for the introduction of indicators that assessed citizen engagement in the auditing process as well as led the efforts to promote its adoption among local institutions.

Carlos has also been an active participant in the development of other projects at IMCO. So far he has performed rigorous analysis and recommendations on fiscal policy, entrepreneurship and access to finance. Additionally, he has written three chapters of IMCO’s competitiveness indexes, our institution´s trademark study. In the 2011 international report he co-authored an essay analyzing and comparing the innovation economy in Mexico to those of the BRICs[[5]](#footnote-5). In the State´s Competitiveness Index of 2012 he also co-authored a chapter with recommendations for accountability policies in the assignation of federal transfers to local governments[[6]](#footnote-6). Finally, in this year state´s competitiveness index I entrusted him with a study on fiscal federalism and the states´ pending duties in achieving a greater fiscal responsibility[[7]](#footnote-7). I was confident that he had the ability to perform an outstanding and useful analysis. Carlos used a mixture of hard-data, law interpretation and interviews with relevant actors to deliver a compelling argument on the need of a greater source of revenue from property and Piguvian taxes in the Mexican states. In these activities, Carlos has shown a genuine commitment to undertake a variety of tasks beyond his scope of interests and background as an economist, as well as strong teamwork aptitudes and analytical rigor.

One of Carlos´ greatest attributes is his drive for professional growth. He began his work as an intern in IMCO in 2011 and quickly received several promotions until he became a project leader last year. He is currently the youngest person exerting that position at IMCO. All of IMCO´s Directors are constantly amazed by his level of maturity and ability to learn. Far away from being self-centered, he is a good team member that always seeks to improve its surroundings and get the most out of his teammates. For instance, he took responsibility by his own initiative of writing in an institutional blog and also asked his colleagues for articles[[8]](#footnote-8). Most recently he is leading an effort to launch monthly interactive maps that address relevant policies of Mexico.

As a project leader for the past year he has achieved impressive success. Carlos has shown a particular interest in the adoption of technologies and data science to address local issues. Recently, his team developed and began implementing an innovative and unprecedented project in Mexico to give preparation to municipal officers on how to open data related to economic development and governance. This information is being used to create an online citizen application and to perform data analysis on the municipal zoning and economic development policies. His team managed to convince 6 Mexican municipalities on being part of a pilot project. I can assure you that this success is greatly explained by Carlos´ ability to set a clear objective and manage effectively a team to achieve it.

I truly believe Carlos can greatly benefit from further studies of public policy at the Heinz College. For starters, I think the academic excellence and international experience of your institution can challenge him into questioning his own beliefs and acquiring a valuable set of skills and can provide you with a proactive and persistent individual that is truly committed to the public service. Carlos has often talked to its superiors on how he feels he lacks certain tools to effectively create a change in the Mexican society. He is particularly interested how to use the new data analysis tools to improve the understanding of public issues. He is also concerned on acquiring further experience in innovative projects around the globe to implement them in Mexico. Carlos has constantly stated how the program of your institution is the ideal program to cover these professional weaknesses and become a stronger policy maker.

In sum, I am confident that Carlos has the skills, the leadership, the conviction and the desire to learn that will allow him to take full advantage and be a successful graduate of your program. I am also certain that Carlos´ talent and strong commitment with improving the economic and social conditions of Mexico combined with your widely acknowledge reputation will provide our country with a most valuable and needed kind of professional.

Sincerely,

Juan E. Pardinas

Director

Mexican Institute of Competitiveness

1. The project can be consulted at <https://www.globalintegrity.org/local/mexico/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The project can be consulted at <http://imco.org.mx/politica_buen_gobierno/auditorias_superiores_locales_en_mexico_evaluacion_de_su_normatividad_pract/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. An article (in Spanish) describing the process can be found at <http://www.vanguardia.com.mx/cocinannuevaleydefiscalizacionparacoahuila-2103722.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The website with the new open government policies can be consulted at <http://www.auditoriachihuahua.gob.mx/portal/?p=3727> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The article can be consulted at <http://imco.org.mx/indices/documentos/2011_ICI_Libro_Mas_alla_de_los_brics.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The article can be consulted at <http://imco.org.mx/indice_de_competitividad_estatal_2012/archivos/libro/gasto_y_finanzas_publicas.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The article can be consulted at <http://imco.org.mx/indices/#!/competitividad_estatal_2014/analisis/2014_ICE_Fiscal> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The blog can be consulted at <http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-neoliberal-nel-liberal/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)