Meredith C. Riley

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Dear Hiring Manager:

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the Prospect Research Associate position with the American Museum of Natural History. After reviewing both the required responsibilities and the desired qualifications for this position, I believe I would make a good fit in this role and within the Museum’s professional community.

In 2020, I graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Reed College with a degree in sociology. Since that time, I have been working as the lead researcher for a small collaborative project exploring perceptions of emerging genetic technologies like ancestry testing products. This research is funded by two grants from Reed College and includes 60 participants from across three undergraduate institutions. My co-author and I recently submitted our paper, “Shifting racial frameworks: How genetic ancestry results influence racial conceptualizations” (Riley and Whittington), for review at the journal *Social Studies of Science*. In August, our paper was accepted for the 2021 American Sociology Association annual conference, for which I presented our study in the section on technology.

Through this experience, I cultivated knowledge on research ethics and confidentiality protocols as well as developed an extensive inventory of research skills, including grant writing, participant research and recruitment, qualitative data collection, statistical analysis, and data visualization. I have a depth of experience navigating academic research databases (Web of Science, JSTOR, ProQuest, GSS, etc.) and working with data analysis software (Stata, Excel); familiarity with such programs will lend itself to learning new research platforms in the future, such as those used for sourcing and exploring potential donor profiles.

My research background and intensive academic training underpin my quick learning style and dedication to detailed, conscientious work. In addition to my participation in collaborative work in an academic setting, I have four years of customer service experience that has deeply informed my interpersonal communication style. As a shift lead at a Portland-based small business, I excelled in problem-solving– with a focus on team-oriented solutions– and endeavored to promote growth and agency in my co-workers. In this role, I also organized and executed time-sensitive tasks, drafted daily sales and team reports for upper management, and independently led a team of associates as the shop serviced over 100 daily guests.

With my academic and professional experience and the applicability of my research skills to new projects and fields, I believe I can contribute a competent and communicative presence to the Research and Management team. I hope this letter has provided you with insight into my training and qualifications for the role of Prospect Research Associate. My attached resume outlines my proficiencies and skills further. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Meredith C. Riley