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To the members of the selection committee of the Giovanni Bignami prize

**Letter of recommendation for Dr. Eleonora Alei**

Dear prize selection committee,

It is a great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Eleonora Alei for the Giovanni Bignami prize. I have closely collaborated with Dr. Alei for more than two years now, due to our shared interest in the modeling of exoplanet spectra. Dr. Alei's profound work has been *the* driving force behind the modeling efforts of the LIFE mission, seeking to assess the detectability of so-called biomarker molecules of potentially habitable exoplanets. Dr. Alei has single-handedly kickstarted this modeling project at the ETH Zurich and has demonstrated significant initiative, independence, and leadership. An example of this is her supervision of a PhD student at the ETH Zurich, resulting in a refereed first author paper of the student. Other examples are her leading organization of an ESO exoplanet conference<sup>1</sup>, and the impressive thoroughness and speed with which she has implemented complex physical processes into my atmospheric modeling code, which she has adapted for her purposes very successfully. Through her contributions to the code we have interacted most over the last years, and Dr. Alei's work has become indispensable for its success.

In summary, I can imagine few people who would deserve this prize more. Dr. Alei's has just submitted her first paper to come out of her first postdoc at the ETH Zurich. Let me clearly state that this paper count completely belies the amount of dedication and brilliant work she has executed for the LIFE project. I hope you agree with my assessment and will be available for any further inquiries from your side.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Mollière

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<sup>1</sup> see <https://www.eso.org/sci/meetings/2021/Atmo2021.html>.