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Dear Applications Committee,

I am pleased to offer my highest recommendation for Francielle Vargas, Ph.D. Candidate at the School of Computer Science and Computational Mathematics, University of São Paulo, in support of her postdoctoral research application. My name is Ameeta Agrawal, and I am an Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Portland State University, USA, focusing on research and education in natural language processing (NLP), and more broadly, artificial intelligence (AI).

I first met Francielle at the NAACL 2024 conference in Mexico City, where she presented her insightful work, "*HausaHate: An Expert Annotated Corpus for Hausa Hate Speech Detection*", at the 8th Workshop on Online Abuse and Harms (WOAH). During the conference, I presented our research on "*Understanding Position Bias Effects on Fairness in Social Multi-Document Summarization*". It was during these presentations that Francielle and I instantly connected over our shared passion for using AI to promote fairness and inclusivity.

As we discussed her Ph.D. dissertation, "*Socially Responsible and Explainable Fact-Checking and Hate Speech Detection*", I became even more impressed by her work. Francielle has developed a set of benchmark datasets and proposed novel methods to combat misinformation and hate speech in marginalized communities through explainable and socially responsible language technologies. Her research, particularly focused on the Brazilian social context, addresses the critical and challenging issue of hate speech, contributing a much-needed perspective on how AI can be designed to uplift rather than harm.

Recently, Francielle and I collaborated on a project titled "*Improving Explainable Fact-Checking via Sentence-Level Factual Reasoning*", which has been accepted at the 7th Workshop on Fact Extraction and Verification (FEVER) 2024, co-located with EMNLP. Her leadership and expertise in socially responsible AI were crucial to the success of this project, further demonstrating her ability to tackle complex, real-world problems with both rigor and insight.

Beyond her technical brilliance, what truly stands out about Francielle is her ability to *connect with people* as she has built a strong global network of collaborators. Her research focuses on understudied user groups, whose interactions with technology — often designed without their needs in mind — can have significant, sometimes life-altering consequences. Francielle's commitment to addressing the social implications of AI is not only evident in her work but also in her passionate engagement with these communities.

I offer my strongest support for Francielle's postdoctoral application. I have no doubt that Francielle will be a strong asset to any department and continue to make valuable contributions through impactful research and positive societal outcomes. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Ameeta Agrawal, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Computer Science
Portland State University, USA
Director, NLP Lab & Co-Founder, Compassionate Computing Lab