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Re: Letter of Recommendation for Xavier Fontcuberta

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this reference in support of Xavi Fontcuberta's application for the research post in basic income you recently advertized. I believe Xavi is ideally qualified to take up the position of a project manager for a US-based basic income experiment. Moreover, having briefly researched Y Combinator, I think Xavi will be an excellent fit in your organisation more generally.

I have known Xavi for well over a decade now and worked closely with him for six of those years. We met in 2004 at the Barcelona world congress for basic income, organized by Red Renta Basica (RRB), an organisation of which Xavi was a member. At the time RRB had an idea to start up a publication devoted to basic income, but little experience or knowhow on how to cater for an international audience. Xavi was one of the people with the vision to focus on an academic publication (there was none at the time) and to approach international scholars as lead editors, in this case Karl Widerquist and myself.

From 2004 onwards Xavi, Karl and I worked as a close team to set up the journal Basic Income Studies from scratch (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/bis>). Xavi's role was both essential and extremely varied. He was involved in sourcing publishers, funding, an editorial board, copyeditors; drafting operational and editorial guidelines; managing the budget and so on. Once the journal was up and running, Xavi's role remained crucial as managing editor (dealing with the production side), budget manager as well as liaison with external stakeholders such as RRB. The three of us ran the journal for six years and managed to turn it into a valuable commodity: our original publisher Bepress end up selling us onto the more established De Gruyter. BIS is now run by a new editorial team, but Xavi remains involved as a consulting editor. It is no exaggeration to state that without Xavi BIS simply wouldn't have existed!

Xavi's broader commitment to basic income and basic income research in particular is without question. In addition to his work for the journal, he served on the board of RRB at a time when Spain was one of the leaders in Europe in putting basic income on the policy agenda. He went to Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium) to complete his master's degree in economics, writing a dissertation on basic income and labour markets with Prof. Bruno Van der Linden (a world leader in the economics of minimum wage and trade unions). His master's dissertation puts Xavi in pole position for any research posts that will have to look at the labour market effects of basic income. In other words, Xavi has the

necessary qualifications for the job. More than that, having had numerous conversations with him (both privately and as part of conferences or workshops) I can assure you he has a deep understanding of the nature and challenges of basic income as an economic policy.

Relatedly, I want to draw your attention to Xavi's practical experience with policy evaluation. Working on several projects (including one on disability policy that I was involved in as well) he has fine-tuned both his knowledge of the policy process itself (in my view a key asset for conducting a basic income experiment aimed at actual future implementation!) and his abilities to manage a complex project. I have no doubt at all you will find Xavi both a team player and someone who can be relied upon to get the job done without any prompting or supervision.

A final crucial point in Xavi's favour. As I can attest personally from my own involvement in the Finnish pilot study, planning a basic income experiment is a complicated matter that requires a variety of skills and expertise not only in economics but also in social legislation, simulation methodology, opinion polling and survey methodology, policy design and implementation, and so on. To manage this you need a person who has the background to oversee all of this, but also someone who has the necessary contacts to draw on outside expert knowledge where required. Xavi has both, and for that alone you should seriously consider his application.

In short, I want to warmly recommend Xavi Fontcuberta to you. I have no doubt whatsoever he is an excellent candidate for the post and will prove to be an enjoyable colleague and invaluable member of your team. Feel free to contact me at any time if you require any further information to support his application.

best wishes,

Jurgen De Wispelaere, PhD.



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