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To whom it may concern

Re: UK-Thailand Capacity Building in Software and Hardware Infrastructures and Data Handling through Astronomy 2016

The Department of Physics and Astronomy strongly supports Dr James Mullaney's application for funding linked to the project *Newton STFC-NARIT: Using data from astronomical surveys to train Thai students in the analysis of "Big Data"*. This project involves exploitation of large volumes of datasets obtained with the upcoming Gravitational-wave Optical Transient Observatory (GOTO), which is a new wide-field robotic telescope under construction at La Palma Observatory whose primary science goal involves rapid searches of the large fields of view (100 sq. degrees) required for Advanced LIGO and VIRGO. This project, involving Warwick/Monash, Sheffield, Armagh and Leicester, has signed an MOU with LIGO-VIRGO collaboration and will also offer a wide range of time-domain science opportunities. Students will be trained in the development and testing of Machine Learning algorithms to analyse GOTO survey data under the supervision of UK and Thai supervisors. GOTO will be commissioned later this year, permitting access to wide field survey datasets from 2017, and provides an excellent test bed for future, deep, high cadence surveys such as LSST, in which several GOTO team members are involved via LSST:UK.

Yours faithfully

Paul Crowther