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It is with great pleasure that I write a letter of support for Dr. Tak-Wai Chan's grant "**Building Learning Companion in Learning Context Supported by Wireless, Mobile, and Digital Tangible Technologies.**" Dr. Chan is a world-leader in technology and education. His efforts and the efforts of his colleagues have made significant contributions to the educational technology community across the globe. Dr. Chan is one of a small handful of world-class leaders who are providing both the vision and the concrete demonstrations of how technology can lead to a positive impact on student achievement and student attitude. Without hesitation or qualification, therefore, I give Dr. Chan's proposal my highest recommendation for funding.

The notion of a "learning companion" is an old one in the educational technology world. However, while seemingly a good idea, no one has really made it work. But, I find Dr. Chan's ideas on learning companions refreshingly new and most promising. His thinking that virtual learning companions can interact with children on the children's mobile networked devices has merit since the interactions between the student and the companion will take place in the context of learning. Dr. Chan is thus exploiting the fact that learners have the mobile technology with them while they are engaged in learning and thus they are open to support, at the moment of learning that a virtual learning companion can provide. It is always exciting to take an old, good idea and finally make it work. Dr. Chan is poised to do just that in his proposed effort.

Dr. Chan and I have only recently begun to interact. While Dr. Chan is a world traveler and has built up a worldwide reputation, I did not travel much outside the US. However, I have come to appreciate, fortunately for me, the contributions that world leaders such as Dr. Chan can make. If resources are available, I would very much like to see graduate student exchanges between Dr. Chan's and my group. As well, I would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Chan and his group and publish with his group.

To be perfectly clear: I give Dr. Chan's proposal my highest recommendation. As with the other investments that Taiwan has made in Dr. Chan, I fully expect that supporting this "learning companion" proposal will yield a substantial return on that investment for all parties – Taiwan's reputation, Taiwan's education community, Dr. Chan and his research group, and the worldwide educational technology community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elliot Soloway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Elliot Soloway  
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor  
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