Maedbh King
· Ph.D. Candidate ·

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National Institutes of Health

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BETHESDA, MD, 20892 USA

Application for Health Specialist

To whom it may concern,

About Me

I'm currently finishing my Ph.D. in cognitive and computational neuroscience at the University of California, Berkeley. I have 6+ years of research experience, and leadership expertise in academia and non-profit work. My research consists of hypothesis- and data-driven experimentation, and I apply machine learning and statistics to large and complex databases to build models of brain function. I have a strong track record of publishing in high-impact, peer-reviewed scientific journals (>350 citations), presenting at research conferences (>10 proceedings), and making science accessible (>200 downloads of open-access datasets and code). I also enjoy teaching and mentoring diverse groups of students, from undergraduates at UC Berkeley to incarcerated students at San Quentin State Prison. Furthermore, my research interests dovetail strongly with science and technology policy, and over the past 5 years, I have used data-driven solutions to promote issues concerning equity, transparency, and accountability within academia and non-profit organizations.

Why NIH?

As a neuroscientist, I am motivated to work at the NIH as a health specialist and use my scientific and data-driven expertise to support and strengthen research programs in U.S. institutions, and work on projects that lead the way in creative and collaborative discoveries. I am excited at the prospect of using my experience as a scientist, educator, and mentor to work at the foundation of medical and scientific innovation, and I am particularly interested in a scientific program analyst role. Furthermore, the at-large PMF program at the NIH offers a unique opportunity for professional development training, and I am very eager to hone and develop my leadership skills and expertise through meaningful work assignments. Most importantly, I am excited at the prospect of working alongside colleagues who, as well as being innovative thinkers, are creative, thoughtful, and driven.

Why Me?

I have gained a lot of technical expertise during my STEM Ph.D., with a particular focus on data science techniques and advanced statistics. However, as every scientist knows, non-technical skills are integral to successful research, from developing efficient communication strategies for managing cross-functional projects, to establishing norms and guidelines for collaborative decision-making. I believe that I have the skills necessary to work as a health specialist at the NIH. For example, I have the ability to develop qualitative and quantitative analytic methods to evaluate program efficiency, and indeed I have previously used my data science training to recommend data-driven solutions to university leadership, resulting in increased stipends for psychology graduate students. Further, I have co-written two NIH grants (R35 was funded, R01 was not) with my PhD supervisor, therefore, I have the knowledge required to review grant applications, and identify reviewers with the appropriate expertise. I have managed large-scale neuroimaging projects and I therefore can take on many roles that involve planning, program development, and analysis. Finally, it is because of funding from the NIH that I have been able to conduct high-quality scientific research during my Ph.D. For this reason, I would relish the opportunity to apply what I have learned, namely quantitative and communication skills, to high-impact projects that push the boundaries of scientific knowledge.

Sincerely,

Maedbh King