***STATEMENT OF PURPOSE***

I have always considered creativity and innovation to be the most rewarding and impactful pursuits for an individual to take up in their career. Over the years I have found myself with myriad answers to the question - 'What is your passion?' - and in retrospect I have figured out that there was one binding factor to each of my answers - an inherent need to create. In the same regard, I have always felt that technology and computing is the greatest enabler that can facilitate creativity and innovation, especially in the current day and age.

I found myself fascinated by Computer Science from a very early age. My rudimentary learning of the subject happened through high school, in Christ Nagar Higher Secondary, Thiruvananthapuram, where in the subject, I was able to score 100% and 95% for my ICSE [Class 10] and ISC [Class 12] for my Board [National] examinations respectively. I then went on to pursue an Undergraduate degree in Computer Science and Engineering from VIT University, whose School of Computer Science and Engineering is renowned as one of the best in the country. College was when I was confronted with the vastness of the subject that I wished to master, and hence I had realized that before I could conclusively target where I wanted to build depth, I had to thoroughly explore the breadths of this subject. During the course of college education, internships and full-time employment, this was the goal I set out to achieve.

In this pursuit of exploring all the flavours of computing, I had my taste of the industry as I had ventured into Game Development during my winter break in 2016, working for inApp, a software services company based out of Palo Alto, USA. I developed my own standalone game from scratch, using unity engine and C#. The internship had made me realize how steep of a learning curve I could manage, and left me hungry for more such opportunities. Hence in summer break of 2017, I pursued another internship in a field that I had always found to be incredibly fascinating (and relatively alien to me at the time, which made it that much more exciting) - Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. I joined as a Data Science intern at Techvantage Systems, a product engineering company that specializes in building software powered by Artificial intelligence. I worked on a project that aimed to classify and match animals by the pattern on their muzzle (which surprisingly behave just like fingerprints do). Since it was an experimental project, I was given the freedom to develop it from scratch, and this is when I really got my hands dirty with Computer Vision, TensorFlow and Image Classifiers.

In my final year I was offered a position as a software engineering intern at Zynga Game Network, the silicon valley company behind games such as *FarmVille* and *Zynga Poker*. At Zynga I got to be part of live software development cycles, giving me a chance to work with some of the country's best artists, animators, writers and of course, engineers. Other key takeaways from my time there was learning industry-standard design patterns, architecture designs and coding practices. In 6 months, I had developed 2 features for *Farmville* *2*, a game with more than 10 million users on Facebook. These features can be still played in the game. Parallelly during this internship, since it was my final semester, I was required to complete my Undergraduate Capstone Project. I had leveraged my expertise in Unity and C#, to build an AR-VR classroom simulation as my final year project. The aim was to provide students, especially younger ones, with a more interactive learning environment, where concepts which would be otherwise hard to visualize, would be directly tangible, thus nurturing an environment of more interactive, better learning.

After my graduation, I chose to take up a position as a Business Technology Analyst at ZS Associates, a management consulting firm headquartered in Evanston, USA. I chose ZS among other offers as it was the perfect opportunity to work towards my goal of building breadth, since the company had many different clients and a vast array of development pods, with different technological and business expertise to be assimilated from each of them. Moreover, being a technically adept individual in a firm that was slowly rebranding itself to showcase more technological innovation, gave me quite an edge. The most important privilege I felt, that came as a result of my technical expertise, was a green signal to sidestep the bureaucracy of the conventional software development lifecycle, and be given the opportunity to implement my own algorithms and sometimes even my own system architectures. Since my first 30 months with the company, I have written thousands of lines of Java and Python code, dozens of APIs, hundreds of database queries and a handful of shell scripts. Apart from this, I had the opportunity to have designed systems, interacted with several Fortune 500 clients, transformed data at terabyte volumes and several billion records, managed AWS accounts and the DevOps tied to them, worked with machine learning algorithms, built a chatbot, created reporting dashboards and also developed UI/UX capabilities from scratch.

I feel that up until now I have been doing justice to my pursuit of constantly challenging and reinventing myself whilst simultaneously strengthening my foundations. As I explored the multifarious avenues of software, I have realized that what excites me most is core programming and software development, because I believe it is the rubric on which the other avenues of computing are based off of. This is why I have set my next goal to get out of my comfort zone and dive into the depths of core CS, which an MSc in Computer Science will help me achieve.

It has always been my dream to learn at a world renowned institution, to interact with faculty that are torchbearers in their field, to live in Europe, and to be part of a melting pot of technological advancement- a hub of computer science. This is why it would be an honour for me to secure an admission at University College Dublin, for a Masters degree in Computer Science.