

June 6, 2020

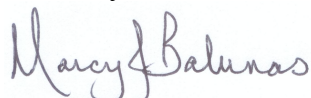
Patrick Schloss, Ph.D.
Frederick G. Novy Collegiate Professor of Microbiome Research
Department of Microbiology and Immunology
University of Michigan
1520A Medical Science Research Building I
1150 W. Medical Center Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Dear Pat,

I am writing in enthusiastic support for your National Institutes of Health R25 proposal, entitled "Code Clubs: Repeated practice opportunities to develop reproducible data analysis skills". In 2018, I had the opportunity to spend my sabbatical working in your research group. As a natural products chemist, it was eye opening to see how you interacted with your group and helped them develop the tools they needed to analyze large microbiome datasets. I face a similar struggle with training students to analyze large metabolomics datasets. While at the University of Michigan, I took your data analysis with R class and participated in your group's Code Club sessions. I was impressed that trainees with very different interests and level of comfort with R could improve their skills in such a safe, friendly, and nurturing environment. When I returned to the University of Connecticut, I started doing similar Code Club activities with my research group motivated by questions related to what we are trying to do with mass spectrometry data. Although I still do not feel proficient in my programming skills, the format works because complimentary skills from members of my lab allow us to continually teach each other. I have enjoyed seeing your initial attempts at virtual Code Clubs as YouTube videos and know that those you make for the proposed project will give my group more material to strengthen our skills with reproducible research practices.

As we have discussed, my research group generates mass spectrometry data from a variety of symbiotic populations. These are large, messy datasets that require us to move data between different proprietary software packages. I would love to be able to help you find interesting questions and datasets that you could use to develop Code Club sessions that incorporate metabolomics data. I look forward to working with you and supporting the proposed project.

Sincerely,



Marcy J. Balunas, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Medicinal Chemistry