

Letter of Recommendation

My name is Suprit Kulkarni and I have over half a decade of experience working with machine learning driven systems across the financial & IoT domain. I have been a supervisor & mentor to him during the overlap of our time in Mu Sigma's Innovation & Development Labs team. I was his Team Lead for a period of six months when we worked on designing and building an MLOps platform for in-house capabilities. After my departure from the Labs team, Ram also succeeded me in leading the High Velocity Trading Systems team that was in charge of building the event-driven ML powered trading platform as a capability showcase of the team.

Ram's contribution in designing the MLOps platform included market research, LLD of the microservices that made up the platform, as well as requirement gathering from Deep Learning practitioners within the company and outside. During this time, Ram probably had the most impact on our understanding of operationalizing ML & DL models with the aid of generalized explainability of the models. A lot of his understanding came from reading research papers around evaluation, safety, & explainability of models that were emerging at the time along with the concepts he was picking up while trying to actively contribute to EleutherAI's work around LLM Evaluation back in 2020.

This self-driven research was way beyond the scope of his regular duties but helped him get the required foothold in a field like AI Alignment & Safety a few years down the road. His continued efforts into AI research beyond the scope of his hectic work day at Mu Sigma is a testament to his motivation & drive for research.

With regards to Ram's personal characteristics, I have never seen embody the word "laconic" as much as him. While he is very aggressive in defending his strongly held opinion around design choices as well as his thoughts around specific topics of AI Safety in small groups educated in the matter using the fewest possible words. I think that the University of Utah is the right place to bring the best out of Ram's potential as an academic (and possibly Industry) researcher as a part of the PhD program.

Having worked with people who've completed their PhD & Masters in Machine Learning related fields, I can confidently say that Ram is a perfect fit for the PhD program at University of Utah under the guidance of Assistant Professor Daniel S Brown. Being exposed to Ram's craftsmanship & engineering skills as a backend developer & ML Engineer, I would also like to recommend him for roles like Lab Assistant in any research lab focused on AI & Machine Learning. His admission to the program at Univ. of Utah would yield great benefits to both the University & Ram.