Dear Berkman Center Fellows, Board, Faculty, Staff, and Friends:

We are writing to enthusiastically support Shauna Gordon-McKeon's application to be a fellow of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society. Our names are Asheesh Laroia and Marina Zhurakhinskaya, and we are the editors for this letter. Other letter contributors are Thea Atwood, Mel Chua, Jen Davidson, J.P. de Ruiter, Heidi Ellis, Jon Grahe, Britta Gustafson, Jennie Rose Halperin, Benjamin Mako Hill, Vanessa Hurst, Cindy Pallares Quezada, Sri Raga Velagapudi, and Carol Willing. Given Shauna's commitment to this fellowship application, her exceptional nature as a candidate, and the many collaborators and supporters she has, we felt that only a collaborative letter could truly be a fitting recommendation. In this letter, the unison views and connecting words are not highlighted, and the words by each contributor are highlighted with the same color as their name. (If you prefer a version without highlighting, please visit http://htmlpad.org/shauna-rec-unformatted/.)

Some of us first met Shauna through community spaces like the Sprout hackerspace, the AdaCamp open technology unconference, or the Open Source Day event at the Grace Hopper Conference. We admired her consensus-building dialogues on mailing lists for months before meeting her. When we met her in person, it was often by volunteering at some of the Open Source Comes to Campus workshops or by putting together an Open Science event. Others have never met Shauna face-to-face, working remotely with her on the Open Science Collaboration Blog. At least one of us e-mailed Shauna out of the blue one day, a total stranger inspired by her work.

I am a co-founder of OpenHatch, and on our Board of Directors. Shauna currently fills our one staff position, Program Director, and she is the driving force behind the organization, advancing our mission to help newcomers contribute to free and open source software. Shauna has doubled the number of Open Source Comes to Campus workshops organized by OpenHatch year after year, bringing it to dozens a year all around the country. These workshops have a tremendous impact in involving students in free and open source software. Shauna is tireless in coordinating with local hosts, training workshop leaders, recruiting volunteer mentors, and sometimes leading the workshops herself.

Shauna makes enormous contributions as a volunteer Managing Editor for the Open Science Collaboration Blog, and I don't know if it would function without her. She assists authors in getting their blog posts from submission to publication, providing them with timely and useful feedback. She further combines her interests in science and collaborative work in her contributions to the SciPy open source scientific toolkit, and in her analysis of the Open Science Framework's scientific data offered for crowdstorming.

Shauna is ready to dive into coding too when she sees problems that can be solved with it. For example, she created a WelcomeBot for the OpenHatch IRC channel, which greets newcomers if no one is talking in the channel and pings some volunteers present in the channel who can assist the newcomers. She created Merge Stories, a website to help newcomers gain a personal sense of what it's like to get involved in open source by sharing the struggles behind other contributors' efforts. To achieve these two projects, she learned new tools like raw socket programming in Python, automating Google Docs forms via external websites, and unit testing. She cares deeply about growing her skillset, so her standard way to request technical help is to pair-program. She also cares about communicating what she knows to others: both of these projects are extraordinarily well-documented, in source code comments as well as a general overview. I have pair programmed with Shauna as well as paired with her on events and I identify her as a leader both within free and open source software and innovative technology as a whole. Shauna's GitHub account activity gives a good view into some of the projects that Shauna organizes and supports.

Shauna is a creative thinker who is excellent at analyzing results, asking exploratory questions, synthesizing feedback, offering insights, improving processes, and documenting best practices. She is very observant, curious and has an attitude of openness and genuine interest in learning, which makes her a persistent active learner. She knows how to pose thoughtful questions and has a lot of insight when teaching and giving advice based on her own learning and experiences. She has inspired me to improve my way of framing questions and not to be afraid of asking when I don't understand something, as well as to be explicit when learning and explaining concepts to other people. She frequently reflects on her work and finds concrete ways to improve it, spends focused effort on improving skills useful to her projects, and reaches out to people in her communities for advice. When we first volunteered together at the Open Source Comes to Campus event at UIUC, Shauna adeptly delivered the lecture. At a meeting afterwards, she provided thoughtful feedback at every level of the event - publicity, event structure, teaching style, curriculum. The UIUC event was the sixth Open Source Comes to Campus event, and I was one of the original founders of the program. In the meeting, she impressed me with her willingness and ability to provide useful criticism despite my attachment to my own ideas.

Shauna also helped reevaluate and broaden our strategy for diversity, which at that time was focused on working with women in CS groups at colleges and universities. She created resources for reaching out to non-CS students emphasizing how open source influences their fields, which resulted in attracting more women to the events. She also encouraged us to reach under-served institutions like community colleges and trade schools. Although I live in San Diego and only see Shauna a few times a year, her thoughts and ideas on creating welcoming and diverse communities have helped us grow the reach and effectiveness of new programs at Fab Lab San Diego and the San Diego Python community. Even beyond OpenHatch, Shauna continues to demonstrate her passion for a free, open, equal-opportunity world through her continued interest in Open Science.

Shauna is a passionate educator who cares deeply about making explicit the knowledge that has traditionally been hard to come by in open source communities. My PhD is on how good learning happens in Free Culture communities - and basically, my research findings can be summarized as "Shauna". She embodies the cultural value of transparency - not only in code, but in how we work with it, and work with others on it, and talk about it - the thousands of tiny things we take for granted, but which can cause newcomers to silently turn away if unobserved. Shauna sees those things, walks over, and transforms the room into a hub of hospitality that fits *you*. With her own work, she thoroughly documents all activities and organizational logistics for Open Source Comes to Campus workshops, so they can be easily replicated.

Shauna attracts collaborators because she pursues ambitious social change, strives to have healthy conversations, in which everyone gets a chance to share their thoughts, and is diligent and patient in working with others. As a faculty member, I have been impressed with Shauna's ability to communicate with people from a variety of backgrounds. She has a remarkable ability to speak to both technology novices as well as much more technology savvy people in a cohesive, smart, and compassionate manner. We always imagine a smile on her face and kind words as she explains something; we are grateful for her ability to communicate effectively and provide prompt, valuable feedback on research methods; and we are heartened by her reliable and graceful guidance to Open Source Comes to Campus workshop organizers across the country. As a longtime Berkman Center affiliate, I know Shauna is the kind of person that the Berkman Center wants around in fellows hour and in other center groups, events, and activities.

Shauna's openness makes her an approachable and admired leader and someone you really want to work with. When Shauna sends an email to OpenHatch volunteers about how we might improve the Open Source Comes

to Campus events, people take the time to answer. Knowing Shauna's dedicated to the same goals helps me sleep better at night and think bigger during the day. Accepting Shauna as a fellow of the Berkman Center would mean you are not just getting Shauna; you are getting the entire web of people she's cultivated to help with this work. Shauna comes with a built-in posse.

I've been impressed by her alignment of her work to her personal values. She practices what she preaches, from having an open source recommendation letter to putting her presentations on GitHub. She is fully entrenched in open source communities, not just as a community-builder, but as an active participant. She is able to lead, guide, and organize highly effectively and efficiently, while at the same time upholding the democratic principles and transparency of the organization. This is not easy, and Shauna is a master at it.

Shauna is a shining example of the potential of empathy + technology + open communities to change the world. She gets things done, from running events to building useful technology and sharing knowledge, and always empowers others in the process. Shauna's thoughtful listening, enthusiasm for action, intellectual honesty, and compassion serve her well as both a collaborator and an advisor. Her talents bridge into many disciplines - I admire her ability to create a community and reach out to interested parties. She is great at coming up with fresh ideas based on bits of feedback and at getting the last parts done to ship something. She is super creative and consistently out-of-the-box. In my work with Shauna at OpenHatch, I have seen her take perspectives at all fractions of the time horizon - addressing urgent problems at an event on the one-minute timescale, reaching out to student groups a few weeks before an event to make sure all is going well, revamping online documentation and creating a remote mentorship program over periods of months, asking hard questions of the board to ensure that we have clear, quanitifiable goals as an organization, and discussing with me how OpenHatch fits into the long arc of technology empowering more people to be in control of their lives.

I love the description of the Berkman Center fellows as "nodes of intelligence, insight, energy, and knowledge-sharing" - Shauna is all of these things. She uniquely combines "let's try it!" attitude, solid follow-through, and thoughtful reflection. Her position as a leader in open source education combined with her strong foundation in the sciences makes her an ideal candidate. Her dexterity in building community and her ability to envision and execute collaborative projects make her a great fit for the role of a social entrepreneur in the digital world. She's exactly who we need exploring the most compelling opportunities for the internet and society. Her interests, skills, passion, and principles are a perfect match for a range of projects going on at the Berkman Center. Shauna is a dreamer and a doer. We can't wait to see what world-changing ideas she thinks up and puts in motion as a Berkman Center fellow. She is absolutely the right person for this fellowship and we all wholeheartedly recommend her without any reservations.

If you have any questions about Shauna or her application, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Asheesh or Marina.

Sincerely,

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