



## Brain Science Institute, RIKEN

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To whom it may concern,

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It is a great pleasure for me to write this letter supporting Dr. Mir Shahram Safari to apply for a research grant of Iranian Cognitive Sciences and Technologies. Dr. Safari joined my lab as a postdoctoral researcher in January, 2012 and worked in my lab until September 2015. Therefore I am in a position to know his achievements and potentiality as a researcher and his personality.

In my lab Dr. Safari was involved in experiments in which we attempted to elucidate a functional role of GABAergic inhibitory interneurons in the operation of cortical circuits. For this study he applied the method of *in vivo* whole cell patch clamp recording to various types of transgenic mice. This method requires a high-grade of advanced techniques. After arrival at my lab he quickly mastered this technique and obtained very interesting results. He presented these results in the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in San Diego, USA in November 2013. Also he gave a talk in the Symposium on "Synaptic and network plasticity in development and learning" in the 12th meeting of the Asian-Pacific Society for Neurochemistry that was held in Taiwan on August 23-26, 2014. We have published a full paper on functional significance of the cholinergic projection to GABAergic interneurons in the visual cortex in *Journal of Neuroscience* (34, 10122-10133, 2014). He is one of the two top equally contributors of this paper. Another paper of his research work in my lab has been submitted a high-profile journal. In sum I am very much satisfied with his excellent performance. Thus, his achievements in my lab indicate that he is a very capable researcher.

Personally he is very pleasant and healthy physically and mentally. Also he is interested in wild areas of neuroscience and attended many seminars which were held in our Institute. In these seminars and also meetings in my lab I am strongly impressed by his active behaviors such as asking many good questions and expressing very constructive suggestions.

I believe, therefore, that he will make a great contribution to the Neuroscience Research Center of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran if his application is supported.

Also I would like to show my agreement to be an advisor of his research project entitled: "Modulatory role of serotonergic system on orientation selectivity and contrast response function of excitatory and inhibitory neurons in layers I and II/III of primary visual cortex, an optogenetics and *in vivo* whole-cell optopatch-clamp study"

If you have any question, please do not hesitate and contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Tadaharu Tsumoto, MD, PhD  
Science Coordinator, Brain Science Institute RIKEN