



National Institutes of Health  
NIDDK  
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October 1, 2005

Yves Brun  
Systems Biology/Microbiology Faculty Search  
Department of Biology  
Indiana University  
Jordan Hall 142  
1001 E 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Bloomington, IN 47405-7005

Dear Faculty Search Committee,

I am very pleased to write this letter to support Dr. Yanfen Hu's application for a tenure-track Assistant/Associate Professor position in your University.

I am a Senior Investigator in NIH. My lab has been working on fibroblast growth factor receptors, Smads and the breast cancer suppressor gene 1 (BRCA1) for the past ten years. I first met Dr. Hu about 3 years ago in the University of Virginia. She was then an Assistant Professor of Research. I was invited to give a seminar about BRCA1 in cell cycle checkpoint regulation and tumorigenesis in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, University of Virginia. Dr. Hu hosted me for the dinner after my seminar and we had a long conversation about BRCA1 and estrogen signals in breast cancer. Since then, I began to follow her work and discussed with her many times on issues of mutual interesting.

Dr. Hu has been studying BRCA1 for many years in the University of Virginia. During this period of time, she made a number of important findings about BRCA1 in transcriptional regulation, and published several excellent papers in *Genes & Development*, *J. Cell Biology*, *J. Biol. Chem.* and *EMBO reports*. A number of interesting papers have been published from her own laboratory with a focus on the connection of BRCA1 with estrogen signaling and revealed novel findings regarding mechanisms underlying tissue specific action of BRCA1 in mammary and ovarian tumor formation. Her work for the first time demonstrated that BRCA1 negatively regulates estrogen production through down-regulating aromatase expression. This work is truly excellent and should also open a new area for future researches on some other tumor suppressor genes, such as BRCA2, in gynecologic tumor formation.

Dr. Hu is an excellent investigator and her work is both important and promising. I also found that she is also an excellent speaker. She was recently invited to give platform presentation about her work in BRCA1 and aromatase in DOD Era of Hope Breast Cancer Research Conference (2005). Her speech was eloquent and convincing. I do not know how she teaches her students, however, I feel she must do it well based on her style of lecturing. Dr. Hu was just promoted to an Associate Professor of Research, but I think that it should be more appropriate for her to be in a tenure-track position.

In sum, Dr. Hu is an excellent investigator compared with her peers in the field. The questions that she is addressing are important and interesting. I have been very impressed by the qualities of her studies and believe that she has a great potential to maintain a high level in future. Therefore, I strongly support Dr. Hu's application for a tenure-track Assistant/Associate Professor in your University.

Thank you very much for providing me the opportunity to evaluate Dr. Hu's work. Please feel free to contact if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuxia Deng". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, connected style.

Chuxia Deng, Ph. D.  
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