

10/23/05
Yves Brun
Systems Biology/Microbiology Faculty Search
Department of Biology
Indiana University
Jordan Hall 142
1001 E 3rd Street
Bloomington, IN 47405-7005

Dear Dr. Brun,

This is a recommendation letter for **Debraj GuhaThakurta**, who is applying for a faculty position in your department. Debraj collaborated with me for ~ 2 years on a project attempting to identify novel heat shock response promoter elements using microarray-derived *C. elegans* gene expression data. Working from the expression data I had assembled, Debraj used a variety of algorithms to identify candidate promoter elements. We subsequently tested these predictions *in vivo* using transgenic reporter constructs, and were able to verify a novel heat shock response element predicted by his analysis (see GuhaThakurta et al, *Genome Research* 12:701, 2002). A particularly interesting aspect of this work was that this computationally-identified promoter element would not have been identified by classical "promoter-bashing" molecular techniques, because it functions redundantly with other heat shock elements.

Debraj was an excellent long-distance collaborator; he promptly responded to my emails and went to exceptional lengths to illustrate his analysis (including writing a program to graphically display the distribution of identified promoter elements). In addition to his obvious skills with computer-based analyses, he has a good biology background, and readily understood the questions we were asking, the possible approaches towards testing his predictions, and the interpretations of our experimental results.

Since our active collaboration, I have stayed in touch with Debraj, and followed his ongoing research. His work at Rosseta integrating gene expression and DNA polymorphism data is clearly cutting edge, and we have discussed at length how he might continue this type of work in an academic setting. I believe Debraj is really committed to following this line of scientific inquiry, which is a major motivation for him seeking an academic-type position.

Perhaps indicative of how science works these days, I have actually never met Debraj in person. The fact that we were able to put together a strong publication, despite clearly traveling in different scientific circles, is a testament to Debraj's exceptional communication skills. His ability to convey to me the essence of his analysis, despite my lack of a real computational analysis background, bodes well for his interactions with students and colleagues. In conclusion, he is exactly the type of bioinformatics-savvy person I would want to have on my faculty.

Please do not hesitate to call (303-735-5112) or email (linkc@colorado.edu) if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Link
Associate Research Professor
Institute for Behavioral Genetics