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Re: Letter of reference for Dr Jorg Grigull

To whom it may concern,

I met Jorg two years ago at the Friday morning statistical genetics rounds in Toronto, and we subsequently have had numerous meetings on the topic of statistical genetics. When I met him, I was impressed by his interest in, and his good basic knowledge of human genetics, and the relevant statistical approaches. Since then, we have had a number of discussions relating to the problems faced in statistical analysis of complex diseases, and he has revealed a keen interest and willingness to learn.

During the summer of 2000, Jorg worked part-time for me on a joint project related to data made available as part of Genetic Analysis Workshop 12 (GAW12). The specific question that we addressed was whether genetic marker data from a genome-wide linkage study of asthma, could be used as a proxy for ethnic group in families of mixed genetic backgrounds from the US. After much thoughtful discussion, Jorg recommended that use of a neural net approach, specifically a self-organizing map, might be to best way to proceed with such analysis. Jorg was responsible for the neural network analysis of the marker allele frequencies, and provided a clear interpretation of the results. He participated in the design and undertaking of the subsequent linkage analysis, as well as being involved in the writing and editing of our resulting manuscript, which will be published in *Genetic Epidemiology*. When we presented this work at the GAW12 meeting, there was considerable interest in it, and the results.

Throughout my discussions and interactions with Jorg on the theme of statistical genetics, and the problems facing genetic dissection of complex traits, I have been impressed by his questions, and his thirst for knowledge. When faced with a problem, he is able to find the relevant literature, understand the details, and present his summary in a clear and concise way. Jorg has a strong commitment to being involved in the design and analysis of studies that relate to elucidation of the genetic and environmental factors involved in complex diseases, as well as their interactions. His background in math brings a new perspective to genetic studies of complex diseases, and certainly I foresee that he will make important theoretical and practical contributions to the field.

I have no reservations in recommending Jorg. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.



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