

Dear Dr. Sheinberg,

I am extremely enthusiastic to write this letter of recommendation for Rob Haslinger. I have worked closely with Rob at Massachusetts General Hospital over the past three years and know him well. He is, without question, one of the most intelligent, highly creative and hard-working young investigators I have had the opportunity to work with. I have collaborated with Rob on a number of neuroscience projects that have dramatically benefitted from his extraordinary background in physics and neurostatistics.

So far, much of what we know about how the brain functions has come from a basic single neuronal perspective that focuses on the activities of individual neurons. Rob has developed and refined a number of highly creative approaches for examining the activity and connectivity pattern of large distributed networks in awake-behaving animals that go beyond this. In particular, he has devised a number of remarkable approaches for looking at the intractable permutation of possible neural states that can exist across large neural populations, and has found unique ways of looking at how they change in relation to task relevant events. He has also developed new ways of examining the dynamic process of learning within frontal cortical populations in primates as well as the connectivity dynamics of neurons and how they coordinate their activities. These are approaches that are on the true cutting edge of our field and which he has used his unique background in physics and neurostatistics to develop.

At the same time, Rob had developed a truly astonishing understanding of basic neurophysiology, relevant literature, experimental design, and techniques that far surpass many of my own students and other colleagues in neuroscience. Many of the experiments that we performed are complex and require an in-depth understanding of neurophysiology, memory processing and higher cognitive function. I have been amazed at his capacity to think on his feet and understand complex experimental design and appropriate controls. Overall, he has gone above and beyond what any other faculty at his level has been able to achieve. The work that he has done is an integral part of our projects and will likely lead to a number high impact papers (one that is currently on its second round of review by Cell and another that will be submitted shortly to Science).

Beyond his scientific accomplishments, Rob was a fantastic pleasure to work with and a true highlight. He can become friends almost instantly with anyone and is always good humored and with infinite energy. He is an avid rock climber and has many interests outside of academia which make him a remarkably well rounded individual. Rob has demonstrated that he has all the necessary skills to become an outstanding scientist, and I give him my absolute highest recommendation. There is no simple way to state in words how lucky any program would be to have him, and I would be happy to talk with you any time in person if you have the time. I give him my absolute highest recommendation!

Sincerely,

Ziv Williams, MD  
Assistant Professor

MGH-HMS Center for Nervous System Repair  
Harvard Medical School  
55 Fruit Street, WHT 502  
Boston, MA 02114  
Phone: [617-312-6534](tel:617-312-6534)  
E-mail: [zwilliams@partners.org](mailto:zwilliams@partners.org)