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Subject Letter of Support



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To Whom It May Concern

With this letter I strongly support the VIDI proposal "Magna Data" by Dr. Alexandru Iosup. As director of education of the Faculty Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science of TU Delft I know dr. Iosup as a very competent researcher and, in particular, as a very talented teacher. The fact that he has been elected as Teacher of the Year of The Netherlands 2014 is proof of this.

The research proposed by Dr. Iosup can bring very efficient and highly accessible data-services to ICT-based education and online education at TU Delft (and other higher educational institutes), with practical applications such as:

- All the experiments computer science students do in the Dutch cloud DAS-4 for courses such as Cloud Computing, High Performance Computing, Distributed Computing Systems, etc.;
- Many of the experiments done by the doctoral students engaged in the ASCI Doctoral School;
- Future technical courses in the MOOCs offered by TU Delft, where the courses require students to do extensive simulations;
- Future data-intensive courses and training given in the context of the Delft Data Science;
- Future student-profile based education, where data services will help Study Counsellors and Education Managers to coach students and to monitor and guide the education process.

Being an education manager myself I am aware of the new possibilities that cloud computing and data science can bring to education. In particular data science applied to the enormous amount of user data generated by online education intrigues me. Educators will be able to, for example, not only monitor individual students and adapt their teaching process to them, but also to monitor groups of students and measure the effect of new teaching methods. The project proposed by Dr. Iosup is addressing the underlying architecture that is needed to handle the enormous growth of these kinds of data.

I approve Dr. Iosup using in the MagnaData project the anonymised data he has already used for his paper on gamification, and may further agree that he uses other data used by our scientists to analyse the education processes, on a case by case basis.

For the reasons mentioned above I am very interested to take part in the User Advisory Board proposed by Dr. Iosup. It will help to steer the research in a direction that is beneficial to the needs of educational management. I also believe that the other objectives of the research proposal will benefit from the ideas coming from the board.

Overall, I estimate the total value committed by the Education Board of EEMCS to MagnaData for the entire duration of the project to over €10,000, to be paid "in kind" through participation in the User Advisory Board, and through time spent on giving feedback to help steer the research and on approving further anonymous datasets for use in the project.

In short, I am very supportive of the research proposal put forward by Dr. Iosup.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hans Tonino". The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract.

Dr.ir. Hans Tonino
Director of Education
Faculty of EEMCS

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