To whom it may concern,

**Re: Mr. Ali Javid, Recommendation for The Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies**

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support and recommend Mr. Ali Javid for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies.

I have known Ali for the past three years in various capacities, as his PhD co-supervisor, as a collaborator and co-author and as his manager (Ali has recently started as research assistant on one of my forthcoming books) and on these grounds, I highly recommend him for this position.

Ali is an outstanding young scholar with a promising future. This was confirmed by the scholarships committee of the University of Western Australia, who granted him a highly competitive full research scholarship. As his PhD co-supervisor, I have witnessed firsthand his commitment to scholarship and genuine research. In examining the development of architectural education in Iran over a long period of time (between the 1960s and the 2000s), Ali had to demonstrate great skill in adapting himself to various fields ranging from aspects of pedagogy, architectural history, general theory and history and politics of contemporary Iran. He has performed outstandingly. He has demonstrated his prowess in collecting data from within Iran—as those who have conducted fieldwork inside Iran would know, this is no mean feat. He has proficiently mined various archives, conducted interviews, and recorded and analyzed written, oral, and visual data. In his research, he has managed to combine this skill-set with the ability to make novel and perceptive connections among disparate data. Throughout, he has demonstrated a commitment to the pursuit of hard historical facts over easier polemics and formulaic ideological renditions alike. The outcome of his intellectual effort is apparent in his dissertation, which is ready for submission and constitutes a novel and outstanding contribution to scholarship in the field. A feature of this contribution is that it is comparative and, while focused on Iran, presents insights that transcend the boundaries of Iran proper.

As a collaborator, I have co-authored with Ali a forthcoming book chapter about the relationship between Italy and Iran in architectural education with a specific focus on the role of Melli University. In the course of that work, Ali demonstrated characteristic skills I mentioned above by meticulously combing archival material, paying attention to details while maintaining a broader perspective. This made the task of research and writing a pleasant endeavor. Based on this experience, we are now planning other joint papers. As a research assistant, Ali has demonstrated the same characteristics, making him a trusted, capable, and collegial member of the research team, someone to be counted on.

His proposed project,***Archaeology, heritage, and architecture; cultural agents for the East-West dialogue: The Italian cultural diplomacy in Iran, Egypt and Turkey (1947\_1990)***, stems from his accumulated knowledge across multiple disciplines related to the field. The project builds on his PhD research. In the course of investigating the changes in the structure and content of architecture education in Iran in the 60s and 70s, he discovered the significance of a network of Italian institutes, architects, restorers, archaeologists not only in Iran but also in the Middle East. While the existence of such networks was somewhat understood, the topic of cultural diplomacy during the Cold War and the role of Italian in promoting and supporting it as a nativism discourse against the development and modernization movements in the Islamic countries is an original research angle. The research proposal straddles several disciplines such as archaeology, architectural restoration, architecture and urban planning, and architecture education to describe how these disciplines could be formed as a comprehensive and coherent cultural-political program.

In my assessment, Ali has the requisite skill sets, the ability, commitment to work independently and accomplish a project from start to end. Knowing his work and his ability to think across disciplinary divisions, I am positive that if the opportunity arises, Ali will prove his ability to produce exciting work and contribute further new ideas about Iran and the middle east studies.

In addition to his intellectual prowess and work ethics, Ali has developed a reputation among colleagues and peers as an engaging and personable character, and a respectful colleague with reliable work ethics.

I believe Ali is a promising scholar and an asset to any research establishment. He will have a lot to offer to your Center and, building on the intellectual context you provide, he will advance his research to new heights. I therefore strongly encourage you to consider him for this position.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further information.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Ali Mozaffari

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