



**a place of mind**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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Selection Committee  
Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship  
Iranian Studies Program  
The University of Toronto

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to recommend Dr. Pegah Behrooz Nobar for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies at the University of Toronto. Pegah is a dedicated and talented scholar who recently was awarded her Ph.D. in Urban and Regional studies, with a project focused on self-built housing in a community in Iran. I recommend her highly and without reservation for this opportunity.

I served as a co-supervisor for Pegah during her last year of her studies after her former supervisor was no longer able to serve in that role. Her supervisor for this last year has been Nathan Lauster, also from UBC. I was highly impressed by how dedicated Pegah has been to her work during this time. Her project very broadly encompassed the development of self-built housing in a community called ZoorAbad near Tehran, and the advantages and disadvantages of the Iranian local government supporting this form of low-income housing. Her work included considerable interaction with members of this community in unstructured interviews, and distilling these viewpoints to a consistent narrative. She also started a complementary study on a self-built Baha'i community in Iran that was targeted by the Iranian government for expropriation and demolition. It is this later study that she intends to continue during her postdoctoral position at the University of Toronto.

Her dissertation was well received by her committee and the external examiner, passing with minor revisions. She was able to complete the required revisions well within the required four weeks. Pegah's passion and deep engagement in her field was evident throughout the process. It is impressive to see somebody with a non-traditional academic background flourish in her doctoral studies as she did. Throughout my interactions with Pegah, she demonstrated a level of independence and drive that was well in excess of what is expected and observed in doctoral students. She truly has the drive to be a well-known and respected scholar in Iranian studies.

I think that Pegah has excellent potential as a scholar, and this postdoctoral fellowship a perfect opportunity along her scholarly path. Pegah has demonstrated the ability to be successful in this field, and is well-prepared to have a highly productive postdoctoral experience. Please feel free to reach out to me with any further questions that I can address.



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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Shipley'.

Paul Shipley, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies