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### **Letter of recommendation for Assoc. Prof Dr Tomáš Takáč**

Dear Dean Assoc. Prof Dr Martin Kubala,

I am submitting this letter of recommendation in support of Assoc. Prof Dr Tomáš Takáč's application for the promotion to Professor of Biochemistry in your faculty. Although I have been following his research on heavy metal stress in plants, vesicle trafficking and the superoxide dismutase FSD1 for years, I got to know Prof Takáč personally only two years ago when he contacted me with the idea of an Erasmus exchange for one of his PhD students. This first initiative in the meantime has led to multiple in depth discussions, a highly successful Erasmus exchange of his student Dr Pavol Melicher, an in-person meeting in Bonn and plans for further collaboration that promises to benefit both our labs.

#### *Scientific profile*

After receiving his PhD in Plant Physiology from the Faculty of Science at the Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia) in 2004, Tomáš started working as a research assistant at the Institute of Plant Genetics and Biotechnology at the Slovak Academy of Sciences. During this time, Tomáš spent two years as a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarship holder here in Bonn at the Institute of Cellular and Molecular Biology (long before I moved to Bonn). In 2010, Tomáš then started working as a researcher in your faculty at the University of Olomouc, where he was promoted to associate professor in 2018. The time in Olomouc was interrupted by several research stays abroad, twice at the Institute for Genomics, Biocomputing and Biotechnology, Mississippi State University, USA (2013, 2014) and twice at the Centre of Biotechnology, Bielefeld University, Bielefeld, Germany (2018, 2019). Throughout his career, Tomáš has published around 60 papers, mainly in the fields of plant cell biology, plant physiology and plant biochemistry with a focus on protein regulatory networks involved in antioxidant defence in response to stress situations. This work uses of proteomic approaches, protein-protein interaction assays, molecular biology, gene modification and editing, and advanced microscopy. According to Google Scholar, these papers have received more than 2200 citations with a steady increase over the years. This increase in citation frequency is bound to continue, and it is particularly impressive that the most frequently cited papers list Tomas as the last and corresponding author. With all the recent papers on biochemical issues related to the antioxidant defence in plants, the number of citations and his h-index of currently 28 are bound to increase significantly. His continued publication success is also evidenced by a large number of awards, including the Arnold

Beckman Prize and the Josef Chmelik Prize of the Czech Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology as distinct highlights.

The gradual independence as a scientific leader is also reflected in the success in securing funding for his own work as a PI of student support projects from the University of Olomouc and, most importantly, an independent grant from the Czech Grant Agency. With a clear outline of further ideas for new grant applications for the coming years, further success is expected.

In his role as PI on several grants and as a group leader, Tomáš has also gained significant experience as an academic leader. This is reflected in two successfully completed PhD projects and several supervised B.Sc. and M.Sc. theses. Other PhD projects are ongoing and are expected to be completed in the next few years. As a PI, Tomáš has trained and guided several B.Sc. and M.Sc. students for successful career development.

#### *Teaching profile*

In addition to supervising PhD students, Tomáš has several years of experience in classroom teaching at various levels. Since 2015, he has given lectures and seminars on *Stress Biology and Biotechnology*, *Fundamentals of Proteomics*, and *Cytoskeleton and Signalling*. The teaching profile is complemented by several seminars in biotechnology and a practical course on GFP technology and confocal microscopy. All of these teaching elements in combination with his higher teaching qualification, clearly fall within the field of biochemistry.

#### *Administrative experience and service to the academic community*

Tomáš's scientific work is not only recognized by the corresponding citations, but also by several invitations to give oral presentations at institutional seminars and conferences at national and international level. Tomáš contributes to the success and development of the scientific community by acting as a reviewer for several international journals and funding organizations and as an Associate Editor of *Frontiers in Plant Sciences*.

#### *Concluding summary*

In summary, his distinguished research contributions, his long-standing motivation for University-level education and training in combination with his leadership skills make him an excellent candidate for higher academic positions. I thus wholeheartedly support the promotion of Assoc. Prof Dr Tomáš Takáč to the rank of Full Professor for Biochemistry.

Yours sincerely,

(Prof. Dr. Andreas Meyer)