

July 25, 2022

Dear Award Selection Committee

I am delighted to give my strongest possible support to the nomination of Elizabeth Murphy for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Elizabeth is currently the Deputy Director for Research Strategy and Management in the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI). I am the Director of CABBI and most of Elizabeth's work has been focused on CABBI over the last 5 years, so it will be that service that I emphasize in this nomination letter. But, it is important to note that this year Elizabeth also became the Managing Director of the Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment (ISEE), extending her service and impact still further.

Elizabeth has been very rapidly promoted into senior research administration roles having been initially hired by the university in Feb 2018 as a CABBI research coordinator (equivalent to a program manager role). This growing responsibility reflects her exceptional ability and the quality of service in support of research administration that she has provided for a very large number of people. Within CABBI, the group of researchers she enables spans from K-12 students, undergraduates, graduate students, postdoctoral scientists, technicians, up to faculty from twelve departments spread across three colleges. Their research has been made possible by the excellent and productive working relationships that Elizabeth has quickly developed with administrative staff performing diverse research administration roles in many units across campus, including the Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB), ISEE, OVCRI, SPA, OTM and more.

I cannot imagine anyone more deserving of this Outstanding Service award because Elizabeth has shown such extraordinary commitment and leadership in taking CABBI from being a brand new research entity and transforming it into an efficiently operating \$115M research center involving more than 350 people spread across UIUC along with 23 partner institutions around the country. This has involved Elizabeth establishing a strong team of 5 research administrators that report directly to her.

Elizabeth oversees internal monitoring and reporting on research planning and progress on a quarterly basis. She also leads the organization of a multi-day annual evaluation event including presentations from >60 faculty and a multi-day annual retreat for hundreds of scientists. In addition, she coordinates the development and reporting of planning and progress on an annual basis to our funder, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). This involves annual written reports on research as well as research administration, plus a multi-day evaluation by external reviewers.

Elizabeth oversees the large CABBI research budget, including sub-awards to external partner institutions. This involves a great deal of coordination with DOE program managers, business office staff, and SPA. She also oversees stakeholder relations and communications for CABBI.

This includes developing monthly briefing materials for DOE program managers as well as organizing interactions with our external Scientific Advisory Board and Governance Board. She also takes the lead in working with OVCRI to host high profile visitors to campus from government and industry, such as the Secretary of Energy. Elizabeth works with OTM to maintain procedures for our scientists to report and protect any intellectual property that emerges from their research. She has also overseen the establishment of procedures for managing, storing and sharing the enormous quantities of data generated by CABBI. A key measure of this success is that over 100 datasets have been published in a publicly available form. Most recently, she has overseen the development of our new summer research internship program for students from under-represented minorities.

I hope this brief description provides some insight into the staggering array of research administration activities that Elizabeth performs. And, I cannot state too strongly how essential all of these tasks are and what excellence she demonstrates in performing them. She is regularly praised for the quality of her work by our DOE program managers. And, I am frequently told by administrative staff on campus that work with her how much they value her efforts.

In summary, Elizabeth's excellence elevates the performance of all the researchers that she serves, all those that report to her, and others in research administration that depend on her. She works strategically to deal with large, important tasks but yet also has an uncanny ability to make sure nothing small gets overlooked either. At times, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and during staffing disruptions, this has involved staggeringly heavily workloads. But, Elizabeth is both selfless and uncomplaining. As such, we are exceptionally fortunate to have her as a colleague on the UIUC campus and I encourage you most strongly to publicly recognize her talent and commitment by awarding her the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Leakey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andrew D.B. Leakey

Director, Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation

Professor and Head, Department of Plant Biology



7/29/2022

Selection Committee
SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Dear Selection Committee

I am pleased to nominate Elizabeth Murphy for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I have been serving as the Interim Director (and am now the Incoming Director) of the Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment (iSEE) and also as the Theme Leader for the Sustainability Theme in the \$115 million U.S. DOE-funded Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI). In both capacities I have had the pleasure to work closely with Elizabeth for several years. Elizabeth has been serving as the Deputy Director of CABBI for about four years. In January 1, 2022, I recruited her to take on the position of the Managing Director of iSEE. To ease the transition in CABBI which is currently in the process of applying for renewal for another five years, she agreed to continue working half time for CABBI and half time for iSEE for this year. In practice, I have observed first-hand that Elizabeth has been effectively working two full-time jobs and doing so with dedication and a cheerful attitude.

CABBI is a large interdisciplinary center with 23 partner institutions, 66 investigators, 149 postdoctoral researchers and technicians, and 131 graduate and undergraduate students. As the Managing Director of CABBI, Elizabeth is responsible for not only managing the day-to-day governance of CABBI but also for providing strategic administrative leadership and managing the interactions with the DOE program managers and Science Advisory Board, the annual reporting, on-site review each year and annual evaluations and retreat meeting for the entire Center.

iSEE has a three-fold mission of fostering interdisciplinary research in the area of sustainability, which brings faculty teams together to apply for large external funding, providing value-added opportunities for interdisciplinary educations and promoting a sustainable campus. The Institute manages several centers and projects with grant funding of over \$35 million currently. As the Managing Director, Elizabeth oversees all these functions and a staff of about 10 full-time employees. She also oversees the financial management of the institute and the personnel and operations of the centers and projects within the institutes.

In all of these responsibilities, Elizabeth provides thoughtful guidance, human resource management and carries a significant burden of administration that would otherwise fall on the researchers and the faculty leadership. These responsibilities involve significant interactions with faculty, staff and students and Elizabeth manages these tactfully and pleasantly. She has

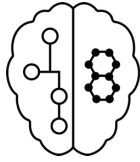
streamlined a number of processes within CABBI such as quarterly and annual reporting, preparation for the annual report and review and data collection and management. She is very well liked within both operations for being efficient, responsive and reliable. She is a highly organized person with a strong ability to ensure that everyone in CABBI meets deadlines and that the Center stays on track for meeting DOE expectations. Elizabeth is extremely hard working, dedicated and highly skilled at research administration. She is among the few staff members that I have worked with that define their responsibilities by the task at hand to be completed not by nine-to-five working hours. Once she has taken on a task, I can rest easy that it will be completed in a timely manner with an attention to detail that will require little oversight by me. Her efforts make an important contribution to the success of CABBI and iSEE.

It is a pleasure to work with Elizabeth. She has my highest recommendation for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Madhu Khanna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Madhu Khanna
ACES Distinguished Professor in Environmental Economics
Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics
Interim Director, Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment
Co-Director, Center for Economics of Sustainability
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign



MOLECULE
MAKER LAB
INSTITUTE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology
1206 W. Gregory Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801 USA

July 21, 2022

Dear SPaRC Award Committee,

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Elizabeth Murphy's nomination for a SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. As the Managing Director of the Molecule Maker Lab Institute, I have had the pleasure of collaborating with Elizabeth for the past 18 months.

Prior to my arrival on campus, Elizabeth was instrumental in launching the Molecule Maker Lab Institute, one of the NSF-funded AI Research Institutes led by UIUC. This includes leveraging her experience in research administration to meet NSF's requirements for the Institute, including a retreat in the first 3 months, a strategic and implementation plan within the first 4 months, and a website in place within 4 months. These tasks are no easy feat, and Elizabeth successfully led these efforts while continuing to manage CABBI. The early success of the MMLI was built upon Elizabeth's leadership.

Even though she no longer supports the MMLI, she has remained a trusted mentor who is always willing to listen, provide advice, and support her colleagues. I truly enjoy working with Elizabeth, and she is an essential part of the University of Illinois research community. I highly support her nomination for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

Celine Young

Managing Director, Molecule Maker Lab Institute
Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

July 29, 2022

Dear SPaRC Award Committee,

It is our pleasure to nominate Elizabeth Murphy for the Outstanding Service award for her research administration contributions to the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI), as well as Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE) and Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB) -affiliated programs, at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC).

CABBI was established on December 1, 2017 as the fourth Bioenergy Research Center (BRC) funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). It is jointly administered through UIUC's iSEE and IGB, where it is centrally located. To provide an idea of the breadth and depth of the center, CABBI integrates researchers from Illinois and 23 partner institutions with over 350 active personnel, and it has an operating budget of \$115M for FY 2018-22, the largest DOE research grant awarded to UIUC.

Elizabeth was hired as a CABBI Research Coordinator in February 2018 and was quickly promoted to Program Manager in July 2018, and then to Deputy Director of Research Strategy and Management in April 2021, where she manages a team of 7 research administrators, including 5 direct reports. Since January 2022, she has assumed the role of iSEE Managing Director while also continuing in her role as Deputy Director of Research Strategy and Management with CABBI.

As Elizabeth's role grew to undertake these increased responsibilities, she successfully shepherded CABBI from a newly funded grant into a fully functional research center. Her contributions were essential in developing and organizing the administrative backbone of the center, establishing and implementing management structures and procedures, seeding research collaborations, and demonstrating commitment to creating a safe and inclusive work environment for a diversity of researchers, among numerous other day to day management responsibilities.

Building on these strong foundations, Elizabeth continues to go above and beyond to administer the CABBI grant and serve researchers at all levels within the center. CABBI Director Andrew Leakey highlights in their enthusiastic letter of support many examples of how Elizabeth's exceptional ability and high-quality work are essential to the center and helps demonstrate the breadth and depth she covers. As one notable example, Elizabeth leads the organization of an annual, multi-day evaluation of >60 PIs, plus a research-planning retreat for all center researchers to evaluate program performance and provide opportunities for increased cross-disciplinary collaboration. In addition to internal coordination, she also coordinates the center's research externally with DOE, as well as the other BRCs, and communicates CABBI's many unique research achievements to a diversity of stakeholders.

As well, Elizabeth's strategic contributions elevate the center's operations at all levels, from high-level strategic decisions to everyday details. For example, in response to DOE feedback, she created a data management position to ensure appropriate archiving, documentation, and sharing of CABBI-generated data. She led the charge for hiring a data manager and provided guidance in developing the center's data management plan, which has led to over 100 published datasets and increased sharing and collaboration between the center researchers. In another example, she recognized the importance of supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at all levels of the center and identified an opportunity to expand CABBI's impact to broaden participation in bioenergy research by helping establish the RISE program, our new summer research internship program for undergraduate students from under-represented minorities. In addition, she initiated DEI training for the CABBI community and inclusive mentor training for the mentors of the RISE program.

In early 2022, Elizabeth led the enormous effort to prepare and submit the CABBI Renewal Proposal to the DOE. She efficiently coordinated preparation of a 930-page proposal document summarizing previous achievements in relation to proposed future work and mapping out proposed research activities for the next 5-year grant cycle, including a significant increase in research collaboration with other BRCs. This effort culminated in a one-day reverse site visit for the CABBI Executive Committee with a DOE review committee in Washington D.C.

During the incredibly busy months of successfully coordinating the CABBI renewal proposal, Elizabeth simultaneously assumed a new role as Managing Director of iSEE. Madhu Khanna, Director of iSEE, highlights in their letter of support how Elizabeth's ability to organize and manage significant administrative workloads benefits multiple centers with smooth operational continuity, even in times of transition.

In addition to her operations contributions, Elizabeth is compassionate and responsive to the needs of others. One way she demonstrates this is actively leading others in achieving success through mentorship. For example, she advised and supported a CABBI postdoc in starting Academic Women in STEM (A-WIS), an organization geared toward bringing awareness to the issues women and non-binary people face in the academic space. Specifically, Elizabeth has assisted A-WIS in acquiring seed funding for programming, campaigning for CABBI and IGB leadership support, recruiting planning committee members, organizing programs and panels, and serving on A-WIS panels. Her contribution to the expansion of A-WIS to encompass the UIUC campus and Champaign-Urbana community has been invaluable.

Elizabeth has also assumed additional research administration responsibilities to support campus. She was instrumental in setting up and supporting the director of the Molecule Maker Lab Institute (MMLI), one of the NSF-funded AI Research Institutes led by UIUC. Celine Young, Managing Director of MMLI, explains in her letter of support Elizabeth's role in establishing the foundational operations of the institute. This further

demonstrates Elizabeth's ability to establish excellent, productive working relations and her ongoing contributions to the UIUC community.

In summary, Elizabeth's leadership, dedication, and empathy have led to effective programs for research management, communication, DEI, industry engagement, career development, and data management in CABBI and the iSEE, which made a large positive impact for UIUC. We believe that her outstanding accomplishments in these areas merit her recognition for Outstanding Service to the University.

Many thanks,

Mary Albrecht, Anna Fedders, Michael Ponte
Research Coordinators, CABBI

Leslie Stoecker
Data Manager, CABBI

Lucienne Burrus
Research Laboratory Coordinator, CABBI

Donelle Ash
Theme Secretary, CABBI

Celine Young
Managing Director, Molecule Maker Lab Institute