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Re. Letter of support for Rich Chilver

Dear Wellcome Trust,

I am writing to confirm that I have agreed to assist Rich Chilver in making a play depicting stroke. I was awarded my Ph.D. in Psychology by the University of Glasgow and at present I am a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of East Anglia. I have a strong track-record in stroke research with 18 papers published in leading scientific journals. The majority of my stroke research has focused on deficits and treatment for visual neglect, a severe and disabling syndrome classically defined as a loss of awareness of the side of space opposite to the side of the brain lesion. My research is very well cited and has even received a prestigious award from the British Psychological Society in 2012. Importantly, I have experience disseminating my research to the general public having recently spoke for the Pint of Science in Norwich event and my recently published clinical trial of a novel rehabilitation for visual neglect has been featured in numerous news outlets worldwide.

Rich and I have discussed the necessary time commitment and what my role will be, as I am unfamiliar with how plays are made. He has described my role as a 'Dramaturg', I would serve as more than a consultant and be encouraged to contribute my scientific insight and share my opinions on the artistic execution of the work. This approach would blend art and science in a way I would be excited to see.

Stroke is a subject that is vitally important for the scientific community to discuss with the public. It is on the rise, particularly in those under thirty. There remain some myths amongst the public surrounding Stroke, namely regarding its high probability, what its consequences are and also how to act around those in recovery. Rich and I agree that a greater understanding within the public of the causes and consequences of stroke and how the brain operates could significantly counter those myths. My work in stroke has highlighted to me how much more we need to do to educate the public and the need to campaign for better stroke care.

The arts are a wonderful way to engage with the public and I very much look forward to working on this project and applying my knowledge.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Rossit'.

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