October 18, 2018

Brandon D. Gallas, PhD
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Center for Devices and Radiological Health
Division of Imaging, Diagnostics, and Software Reliability

Dear Dr. Gallas

I am writing this letter to express my support to your proposal entitled, "High-throughput truthing of microscope slides to validate artificial intelligence algorithms analyzing digital scans of same slides: data (images + annotations) as an MDDT." As you well know, I lead the caMicroscope project — a CBIIT funded project to support digital pathology informatics and I'm also part of the team that manages the Cancer Imaging Archive focusing on Digital Pathology capabilities for TCIA. I'm also the PI/MPI (together w/ Fred Prior – Chair, Dept. of Biomedical Informatics at UAMS, and Joel H. Saltz – Chair, Dept. of Biomedical Informatics at Stonybrook University) of an ITCR U24 (1U24CA215109) that is tasked with the Sustainment and Scalability of TCIA to support Quantitative Imaging Informatics in Precision Medicine. Through these and other related activities I am well aware of the value of high-quality labeled data and its usefulness in the development, training, and validation of AI algorithms for digital pathology. I was therefore very excited to learn about your plans to run a controlled data collection activity for characterizing TILs in breast cancer cases.

We will work with your team to support the data collection activity, incl., the hosting of images in TCIA; the development of annotation templates that accompany slide markup; as well as any automated TIL characterization efforts that may arise from this project. As you are aware, Dr. Joel Saltz and I have published methods to extract and characterize TILs in various cancer types. If interested, we'd make our pipelines available to your project. I wish you the best and look forward to working on this important and exciting activity.

Sincerely,

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