Date: 9 February 2009

Dear Dave

LETTER OF SUPPORT – MYEXPERIMENT – REPOSITORY ENHANCEMENT PROPOSAL

I am very happy to write to support your application for the further development of MyExperiment. As you aware I am very interested in applying both the idea and practice of workflows as a means of automating data analysis for large facility experiments as well as sharing such workflows as a way of supporting our users at ISIS. One of the major problems with the description of data analysis in the published literature is the lack of a detailed record of how the analysis was carried out. As we have identified, workflows offer an effective way of describing and sharing procedures while electronic laboratory recording systems provide an effective way of recording a specific instance of running a given workflow. MyExperiment can provide the tools for sharing, provenance, and versioning of the methodology. Integration with other systems will provide a means of linking this with the record of what specifically was done on a given day, with a given dataset.

Within the current proposal the specific areas which are of particular interest to me is that of growing the diversity and functionality of objects that MyExperiment understands. The world of the experimental scientist is a heterogeneous and messy one by comparison with that of the computational science. MyExperiment has made significant strides in this area by expanding the number of workflow types and objects it understands as well as by introducing the concept of packs and arbitrary pointers to objects on the web. It is by continuing down this path, along with the associated technical and social developments, that it will become a truly general research tool.

Yours sincerely,

Cameron Neylon