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Grenoble, 6th December 2021

To whom it may concern:

I herewith want to express my utmost interest in the project “Heterogeneous Astrocatalsis of Space-Abundant Transition Metals. A Computational Approach (COMPUTASTROCAT)” led by Dr. Albert Rimola and submitted in 2021 to the “Proyectos de Generación de Conocimiento” call in the framework of *Plan Estatal de Investigación Científica y Técnica y de Innovación 2021-2023*.

I started collaborating with Dr. A. Rimola in summer 2013. Since then, our collaboration has been actually very fruitful, publishing o a great number of articles, working together in large observational programs (SOLIS and FAUST), forming part of the MSCA-ITN ACO project I am coordinating, and even co-supervising a PhD thesis (defended on October 2021) in the framework of the ERC-DOC project I am leading.

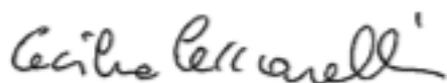
The participation of Dr. A. Rimola in all these events is very important for us (astronomers and astrochemical modellers) because the theoretical computations provided by his group are very important to make the best use of the observations. Indeed, getting a detailed knowledge (at the atomic level) of interstellar grains particles is critical to understand their role in the formation of astrochemically-crucial molecules, including the organic ones. In particular, having reliable kinetic and thermodynamic data of these processes is essential to improve the information derived from our numerical astrochemical models, which are often

based on guessed values, that help rationalising the observations and to better focus them. Even when they are based on laboratory experiments (which are extremely difficult to carry out in interstellar conditions), they still need a theoretical ground to be applied to interstellar conditions.

All of these comments are also valid for the project Dr. A. Rimola is presenting in this call. Remarkably, the project has, additionally, the particular relevance that it will deeply investigate on the likely occurrence of heterogeneous astrocatalysis, an aspect largely overlooked by the Astrochemistry community, since most of the grain surface effects are believed to be due to ice mantles and not refractory materials containing space-abundant metal transitions, as the COMPUTASTROCAT project proposes. This is a ground-breaking idea that, to be valid, will suppose an important breakthrough on our understanding of the role played by interstellar grains in the chemistry occurring in space.

For this reason, the project of Dr. Albert Rimola is extremely important for our community. It represents a major challenge and a necessary one to progress in unveiling the interstellar grain surface chemistry.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cecilia Ceccarelli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cecilia Ceccarelli