

Jun Li

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To the Admissions Committee

Re: Recommendation for Mr. Shizhao Gao

Dear Members of the Admissions Committee,

I am pleased to recommend Mr. Shizhao Gao for doctoral study in computer vision, multimodal learning, and related areas. I am a Professor at the Quanzhou Institute of Equipment Manufacturing, Haixi Institute, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and I have served as his primary research supervisor for his M.Eng. degree since September 2024 (under a formal co-supervision agreement with Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University), overseeing his research, experiments, and manuscript preparation. During this time, I have met with him regularly, reviewed his experiments and manuscripts, and observed his work within our research group. I therefore know him well enough to recommend him with confidence.

Shizhao's strongest quality is his willingness to take ownership of a research problem. In his work on repetitive action counting, he did not simply apply an existing model. He recognized a limitation in how earlier methods handled changes in action speed and developed a new approach around that observation. Crucially, he did not require step-by-step guidance. He independently identified the bottleneck in variable-speed action sequences, conceived the mitigation strategy, and drove the implementation to completion—demonstrating the intellectual autonomy essential for doctoral research. When early results were unclear, he responded well to criticism, re-examined his assumptions, and improved the evaluation rather than selecting only favorable evidence. The resulting work was published as a first-author paper in CVPR 2026 Findings and received a CVPR Compute Gold Star. The publication is a strong achievement, but I value even more the persistence and judgement he showed in reaching it.

Since then, Shizhao has broadened his work to skeleton-based action understanding and efficient video-language models. I do not regard this as simply moving between topics. Across these projects, he has consistently asked how a model can focus on information that is genuinely relevant while avoiding unnecessary sensitivity or computation. In one recent study, an efficiency strategy worked well for one model but did not transfer to another. Shizhao reported this limitation directly and investigated the difference instead of overstating the result. This was a good example of the intellectual honesty and maturity I expect from a developing researcher.

In our laboratory, Shizhao is dependable and constructive. He keeps careful experimental records, prepares reproducible code, and communicates clearly about both progress and problems. He has helped undergraduate students with project planning, supported interns with research code and paper preparation, and assisted with the maintenance and allocation of shared GPU resources. He is receptive to feedback and is willing to help with technical issues that affect the wider group. Among the master's researchers I have worked with in recent years, he stands out for his combination of initiative, follow-through, and consideration for colleagues.

I believe Shizhao is well prepared for the independence and persistence required in doctoral research. He has already demonstrated the ability to identify research problems, carry them through rigorous experimentation, and revise his conclusions when the evidence demands it. He also has the breadth to move beyond his current specialisation and the temperament to work productively in a collaborative group. I therefore recommend Shizhao for doctoral study without reservation. I am confident that he will thrive in a rigorous graduate research environment and contribute meaningfully to the research group he joins. Should you require any further details regarding his performance or potential, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

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