

Dear Friends at the Tsadra Foundation,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Victor Roithman as an applicant for your contemplative scholarship.

I first met Victor in 2017 at the beginning of our BA program in Buddhist Studies at Rangjung Yeshe Institute (RYI). From our initial meeting, I was struck by his gentle nature—he was a tender-hearted young man of just 20 years old. We remained classmates throughout our entire BA program and later during our MA in Translation. Over these seven years, I have come to regard him as a younger brother, and he has always looked to me as a mentor. I have come to know Victor as a fundamentally kind, compassionate, and humble individual who connects easily with others and demonstrates unwavering dedication to the Dharma.

Victor possesses profound devotion to the Dharma. Throughout his studies, he has sought guidance from accomplished teachers, including Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, for whom he holds deep respect and reverence. His Tibetan language skills have developed to such an extent that he now serves as an interpreter from Tibetan to Portuguese. Victor now seeks to enter the three-year retreat at Gomde Pyrenees, France, under the guidance of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. At 28 years old, having completed both his BA and MA at RYI and devoted extensive time and effort to studying the Dharma in both traditional and academic contexts, I believe he has reached the ideal moment to undertake this profound commitment.

My perspective on this matter is informed by personal experience. I entered the three-year retreat at Dag Shang Kagyu in Spain when I was 28 years old (2009-2013), and later served as an assistant and translator for the subsequent three-year retreat at DSK (2013-2017). After this period, I traveled to Nepal to study at RYI, where I met Victor. Based on this experience, I can confidently say that Victor's years of study, his experience living in Nepal, and his natural qualities of devotion, humility, kindness, and compassion have excellently prepared him for retreat practice. Victor's successful three-year retreat will undoubtedly bring beautiful fruition to his sincere aspirations of serving the Dharma and helping establish authentic lineage teachings in Brazil and the broader Western world.

With deepest gratitude and respect,

*Lama Maitri (Maite Castellano)*

*July 30th, 2025*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maite C." with a stylized flourish underneath.