Dear committee,

This letter is to recommend Shimi Friedman’s research application to your Foundation.

I have known Dr. Friedman since 2007, when he was a young scholar and lecturer under my supervision. Beginning with his master’s-level work, studying children in the particular social-political circumstances of east Jerusalem, he has shown deep insight and a sensitive vision in his fieldwork.

His subsequent significant investigation was performed for his PhD project, which manifested significant research abilities. In his unique and pioneering ethnographic fieldwork on the Hilltop Youth in the Hebron hills, Shimi used his outstanding skill in communication and interaction to build trust with marginal youth in his participant observation and informal daily living with his subjects.

Regarding the research he has suggested here, it is encouraging to see him return to the sensitive and important field of the Israeli–Palestine conflict, which many scholars keep their distance from. His interest in children and youth and his outstanding research abilities will certainly aid him in studying the mixed soccer games between Israeli and Palestinian kids in the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem.

Rivalries, aggression, and tension have been unwelcome guests in the Middle East for a long time, and they are, sadly, now routine in Jerusalem as well. Shimi’s work may produce an important contribution from his focus on the meetings between the social groups. As Friedman wrote in his earliest publication, a shared childhood may bring about re-socialization, leading to a bottom-up impact on the community, from children to adults. The work outlined here will lead to a high-quality case study for understanding how aggression can be reduced and peace promoted between hostile groups.

I have full confidence in Shimi Friedman’s research proposal and consider it to be on an important theme and with good prospects for success.