Denae M. **Ford**
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Microsoft Research Lab Search Committee   *December 1, 2018*

RESEARCH IN SOFTWARE ENGINEERING GROUP
REDMOND, WA 98052

Dear Microsoft Research Lab Search Committee:

I am responding to your advertisement for a Researcher for the Research in Software Engineering (RiSE) Group at Microsoft Research Lab. I spoke to [redacted] about my interest in the group and they encouraged me to apply.

I am finishing my Ph.D. in Computer Science at North Carolina State University where my work intersects the fields of human-computer interaction and software engineering. Specifically, I study how programmers ask for assistance on technical problems and offer technical feedback in online communities. A notable outcome for this work has been a live just-in-time mentoring platform for helping novices to Stack Overflow ask questions. **This particular study resulted in a 50% increase in question scores of new users and a new question asking template on Stack Overflow.** My research has been published at ACM and IEEE international venues including Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), Foundations of Software Engineering (FSE), and Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW) to name a few. My work has also been supported through fellowships from the National Science Foundation, National GEM Consortium, and Microsoft Research.

My passion for research has also been reflected through my service commitments. By serving on conference program committees and boards of directors to get more African-American, LatinX, and Indigenous girls into computing, as well as mentoring REU students, I hope to reshape what it looks like to conduct computing research. Through my research, I will continue to foster more inclusive spaces for persons of underrepresented groups to take advantage of programming resources.

In order to grow as a leader in human-computer interaction research, it is paramount that I collaborate with an organization that leads the world in this space. Microsoft Research's RiSE group is an organization where I can without doubt see myself evolving. The group's approach to conquering global problems with interdisciplinary perspectives align well with my future research. With the recent acquisition of GitHub and my expanding research in that space, I can continue to have global impact on how software engineers engage and seek resources in online programming communities.

My application materials including my references, CV, statements, and selected publications are available at the online application site. Please contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Denae M. Ford