To whom it may concern,

I wish to apply for the Super starts of STEM program.

I am an academic in Charles Sturt University which is a regional university in Australia. I came to Australia from Iran, a male dominated society where academic achievement for women was considered a little suspect so I have worked hard and shown considerable strength and resilience to become an internationally respected scientist.

During my research I have shown that parasite populations in Australian waters are increasing. There are many reasons for this. Many are man-made reasons and our oceans will probably get worse before they get better. Unfortunately, these man-made alterations are heaven for seafood borne parasites. As a result, human infections have increased and will, in all likelihood, continue to do so.

I discovered the first human case of infection with such parasites in Australia. What is very alarming is that my research also shows medical doctors do not consider infection with fish parasites in their patients. Some fishbone parasites can cause really serious health conditions if left undiagnosed so this lack of information in our doctors can have serious human health implications.

I do hope to be selected for this program. I am keen to become an influential voice to push a review of seafood safety protocols in Australia. Fundamental to the heart of my application is to give hope to other immigrants, in particular women, so that in Australia they can become who they want to be.

Regards

Shokoofeh Shamsi, PhD