

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION — DR. MANIJEH MOTAGHY

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Dr. Manijeh Motaghy as a speaker, on the basis of having worked with her directly during her visit to Bulgaria in June 2026 - both at the Green Transition Forum 6.0 in Sofia, where I moderated the panel on which she appeared on 5 June, and at a fireside chat hosted by my organization the Digital National Alliance on 8 June, with which organisation I serve as vice president and member of the board.

The [Green Transition Forum](#), organised by [Dir.bg](#) and now in its sixth edition, is Central and Eastern Europe's leading platform for strategic dialogue on the continent's transformation. The 2026 edition, held from 1 to 5 June at the Sofia Event Center under the theme "Europe's Next Chapter: Competitive. Innovative. Secure.," featured more than 450 speakers across over 110 panels on four stages, and convened approximately 4,500 C-level executives and institutional leaders together with European Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament, representatives of the OECD and UNESCO, ambassadors, and the President and ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria. The standard expected of speakers is correspondingly high.

Dr. Motaghy participated in the panel "*Parasocial World – AI and Humans-in-the-Loop*," which I moderated, alongside Luis Bravo Martins, Joanna Pilch and Dr. Stephanie Camarena.

As moderator I had the closest possible view of how she works, and I can speak to it without qualification. She came thoroughly prepared, engaged substantively with the other panellists rather than delivering a prepared monologue, and brought the human and psychological dimension into a discussion that would otherwise have remained narrowly technical. Her framing of human development as the determining factor in whether our technologies serve us or come to define us was, in my judgement, among the more clarifying contributions of the session.

Three days later, on 8 June, the Digital National Alliance hosted a bespoke fireside chat between Dr. Motaghy and the futurist Aric Dromi Jankov, held at the historic Central Sofia Marketplace, on the difficulties of being human in a fast-paced, technology-governed world. Having been involved in convening that conversation, I can attest to how well she carried it. A fireside chat is a more exposed format than a keynote - unscripted, conversational, and wholly dependent on the speaker's capacity to think in real time opposite an interlocutor of considerable intellectual force. The setting was equally demanding - an open public space rather than a controlled auditorium, with an audience free to walk away at any moment. Dr. Motaghy held both. She met a futurist's systems-level reading of technological change with a psychologist's account of what such change does to human attention, relationships and wellbeing, and the exchange became genuinely generative rather than two experts speaking past one another.

Across these settings her range was striking. She was equally effective before senior political and institutional figures and before general public audiences, adjusting her register without diluting her substance - precise and credible in the former context, warm and immediately accessible in the latter.

Her handling of a culturally different audience deserves specific mention. Bulgarian audiences are discerning and are not easily persuaded by imported inspirational material. Dr. Motaghy read the room accurately, adapted her framing and examples to it, and earned genuine engagement rather than assuming it.

She is a magnetic presence, on a stage or in a public square. She holds an audience through the substance of her thinking rather than through performance, and conversation continued well after her sessions closed. Her professionalism throughout matched her work in front of the audience: she was punctual, well prepared, flexible when timing shifted, generous with her time before and after her sessions, and entirely straightforward to work with.

For further background, Dr. Motaghy is an organisational psychologist and UCLA-trained mindfulness instructor, Founder and Researcher at Perfectly Here and UCLA MARC, with more than 750 programmes, retreats and talks delivered internationally, including work with organisations such as Disney and Kaiser Permanente. She is the creator of the Mindful Life Optimization methodology, the author of *It's Not Easy to Be Human*, and a contributor to the Stanford and IEEE "Planet Positive 2030" initiative, in which I am also engaged.

I recommend her without reservation to any organisation considering her for a speaking engagement, at any level of seniority or formality. I would invite her to a session of mine again without hesitation, and I am glad to answer questions directly at mkmanolova@gmail.com or +359888771247.

Sincerely,



Dr. Monika Manolova

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