

The New York Times

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I am writing to offer my recommendation for Vanessa Barbara as a columnist. I have been working with Vanessa for over a year as her editor at The New York Times and I can say without reservation that she is an excellent writer, a creative thinker and an all around wonderful person to work with.

Vanessa consistently offers strong contributions to The Times's coverage of Brazil. Whether it's the economy, political protests or environmental disasters, she produces timely and unique takes on the news that inform our global audience. Ahead of last summer's Olympics, Vanessa traveled to Rio and reported a compelling piece not only on the government's lack of preparedness but also on the way that preparations for the Games were contributing to the city's inequality. The story that resulted — which we ran on the cover of our Sunday section — was one of the most popular pieces we published that month and it helped stir an international conversation ahead of the Olympics.

But Vanessa does more than just cover the biggest news in Brazil's headlines. She is also able to write varied, interesting essays that go far beyond the typical remit of a columnist, whether it's a thoughtful personal essay on her own treatment for depression or a hilarious skewering of the nail polish industry. She is an exceptionally versatile columnist.

Part of the reason all of these columns are so successful is because Vanessa is such a talented stylist. She has a great sense of humor that always shines through. (See, for example, this sentence from her latest column about ecotourism in the Amazon: "I enjoyed the scenery; there was no need to hug illegally domesticated sloths.") Her descriptions crack with insight and her turns of phrase delight the mind.

On top of all this, Vanessa makes work easy. She's appreciative of edits, doesn't mind helping out with a fact check and consistently files her columns on time. She brings in new ideas, is receptive to pitches that come from our team at The Times, and doesn't mind when we send her back to the drawing board to come up with something new. She's funny and personable and patient — all excellent qualities to find in a write.

You would be lucky to add her to your roster of contributors. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

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