

Personal Traineeship Report

Intern: Yvonne Joho, Switzerland

Company: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

Internship dates: 15.07.2019 - 31.05.2020 (extension until August 2020)

Experience of being abroad

How did your traineeship influence your personal development?

My personal development during this internship was immense, being far from home and connecting with many different people and cultures, strengthened my personality incredibly. Overall, being surrounded by so many influencing people helped me to gain new knowledge and confidence.

Experience at work

What was the most valuable thing you learned from your colleagues at work?

Learning and mastering new skills with lots of practice is a life-time process. I gained confidence that I can learn anything I have in my mind if I put effort into it. For instance, my supervisor who is talented and knowledgeable in many areas inspired me to learn different software to add to my skills. It was an honor to learn so much from his immense knowledge as I built an understanding of the field of protein engineering. Finally, I got an amazing opportunity to present the work of my Master thesis at a conference held in Canberra.

The pictures below are the places at CSIRO where I enjoyed working.





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What projects have you been working on?

I had the opportunity to work on a very actual topic and to use this internship for my Master's thesis. I worked in the field of protein engineering to improve enzymes which are capable to degrade Polyethylene terephthalate (PET). PET is widely used as a food package and for drinking bottles, whereas it is designed to be stable over hundreds of years we only use it once. Working on such an important topic motivated me day by day to give my best and contribute to improving enzymes which could lead to a real circular plastic economy.

Cultural differences

What did you miss most during your stay?

First and foremost, I missed my family and friends from Switzerland. However, it was still easy to keep in touch with them and communicate regardless of the time difference from 8 – 10 hours. Second, I missed special food, the wonderful Swiss mountains, and my beautiful home town in Switzerland. Although, Melbourne is such a beautiful place to live, which does not let you feel homesick. Also, the people here are so helpful and friendly that you feel very welcome. The unforgettable memory on Christmas was the invitation to a Christmas dinner from a Group leader at CSIRO.





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What was your general experience with IAESTE in Switzerland like?

IAESTE Switzerland helped me a lot to organize the stay and with a visa for Australia. My general experience and stay in Melbourne were great. The advantages through this organization were beneficial for example having a pick up at the first arrival or social events organized from IAESTE Australia and meeting other students from the organization.

What does IAESTE mean to you?

IAESTE means a lot to me they gave me one of the most exciting opportunities. I am very grateful to IAESTE for this opportunity and that they allow many students such a life-changing experience. It was the best experience and broadened my horizon and let me grow as a person!

THANKS a lot to IAESTE!!!

