

## **IAESTE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE AT EMPA**



What a year! A year immersed in Switzerland breathtaking landscapes, while unlocking the gateway to professional growth through the IAESTE internship program. A year full of cultural richness, academic growth, and unforgettable experiences nested in the heart of Europe's innovation hub. With that said, my name is Kelvin Weru, from Kenya. I was privileged to work at Empa, Dubendorf Campus in the department of Building Energy materials and Components under the guidance of Dr Jannis Wernery.

- How did your traineeship influence your personal development?

Being the first time out of my country, I can say that the impact was huge. I got to learn how to live an independent life. The first few months were tough trying to adjust to the new culture but however, after some time I got to love the way of life in Switzerland.

- How did your traineeship influence your professional development?

Before undertaking the internship, I was confused about what career paths to undertake, but during and after the internship with the assistance of my supervisor Dr Jannis Wernery and the other experienced colleagues I was able to identify my strengths and weakness in my career and what it takes to excel.

- What was your most impressive/ meaningful/ touching experience?

The most impressive experience was working at EMPA specifically at Lab 312 where I was attached was an amazing experience not only professionally but also socially, since the lab was more diverse with people from all parts of the world. With this, I had a chance to know about diverse cultures, languages, and food. There was one time when we organized an international food party where everyone cooked

different foods from their country. Not forgetting also, the Swiss fondue, racellete and the numerous types of chocolates and cheese.

Another unforgettable experience was the numerous weekend hikes through the Swiss Alps and swimming in the lakes during the summer. I also had a chance to visit other countries like France, Italy, Germany and Lichenstein.

- What were the advantages of doing an internship through our exchange organization?

Firstly, I would say that the entire process starting from application of the work offer through the IAESTE portal to settling down in Switzerland is made easier by IAESTE Switzerland since they help you all way through.

Secondly, during the internship period one was able to get to know other trainees in the same city through the weekly meetings that were usually held on Thursdays hence one does not feel alone. Furthermore, there were organized weekend activities for the trainees at discounted prices.





