

My IAESTE Internship Experience

Intern: Sophie Kürbisch

Employer: Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI)

Period: 01.07.2025 – 30.09.2025

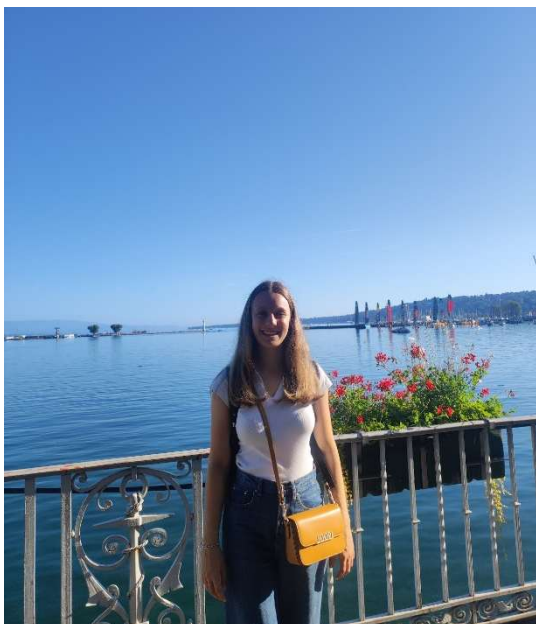
Sending Country: Austria

I knew I wanted to do an internship abroad, so I applied through IAESTE and was happy when I received confirmation from the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) in Switzerland. Of course, I was a bit nervous at first, knowing I would be alone in a new country for three months. But looking back, it was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

The Paul Scherrer Institute is a major research center in Switzerland. The accommodation was organized by PSI and was located close to work. I spent three months as part of one of the research groups there, and as a chemistry student, I learned so many new things. My project focused on photocatalysis. One of the highlights—besides working with a great team and meeting new people—was using the Swiss Light Source (SLS), a synchrotron, to measure my own samples. Another unforgettable experience was getting the chance to visit the SLS and SwissFEL during a shutdown. I mean, when else would I ever get to go inside a particle accelerator and see how incredible it is?



Swiss Light Source (SLS)



Me visiting Geneva

Outside of work, I explored a lot of Switzerland. I joined the Ticino weekend organized by IAESTE, which was a great opportunity to visit also the Italian-speaking part of the country. I can only recommend joining such activities—they're a great way to discover new places and get to know Switzerland better. On weekends, I explored beautiful cities—some even had amazing lakes—and went hiking to enjoy the incredible views of Switzerland.



Ticino weekend

All in all, this internship was a great experience both personally and academically. I had the chance to explore a new country, meet new people, and make new friends. At the same time, I learned a lot for my future career as a researcher. Finally, I want to thank IAESTE for this amazing opportunity.



View from the Rigi, also known as the 'Queen of the Mountains' in Switzerland