

My Research Experience in Germany

Daniel Mirotta

PhD Candidate, Johns Hopkins University

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My Background

- Undergraduate at Stevens Institute of Technology
 - Studied in the Cooperative Education Program and worked at Siemens Corporate Research
 - Started basic German lessons

Before The Trip

- At Johns Hopkins
 - Audited German I and II
 - Found out at about the NSF IREE through my advisor, Prof. Greg Hager.
- How to establish a connection and setup research?
 - Your advisor's contacts - In my case, Prof. Hager's former Post-Doc, Prof. Darius Burschka, now professor at the Technical University of Munich (TUM)
 - Networking at conferences
- How to acquire funding?
 - NSF IREE - covers housing and stipend aboard
 - German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) - in the case of Germany this is an other option
- How are supplies and consumables paid for aboard?
 - In my case my work was well aligned with the host labs main research goals and Prof. Burschka lab bore the cost.

Arriving In Germany



Similarities & Differences

- Though being in a different country you can still find some of the same
 - Regular working hours, though you could stay later most people were gone after in the evening
 - Most person spoke English around the university and most tourist areas, but a knowledge of German was useful at the local shops and when in the countryside
 - Finding a chorus to sing with
 - Finding a band to play trombone with
- Differences
 - Going to Biergartens almost weekly after work and continue to discuss research but in a more relaxed setting
 - German law requires windows for all employees, which was a welcome change from the basement lab I was in



Cultural Exchange

- Living in student housing is a easy way to be able to contact other students
- There are also student organization (e.g. Munich Erasmus Student Association)
- New appreciation of the culture
- Exposure to a different atmosphere



Maintaining Connections

- After returning from Germany, I remain in contact via email and Skype.
- We exchange software, ideas and are now coauthoring a journal paper

Today

- New Friendships
- Continued Collaboration
- After MICCAI 2009 in London I travelled to Munich this year to meet with my current collaborators



Conclusions

- The trip matched well with the goals of both NSF International Research and Education in Engineering (IREE) and the ERC Gen-3
- The trip
 - provided a research experience with German students
 - provided time to refine foreign language skill
 - provided a cultural experience
 - created new foreign collaboration
 - strengthened existing connections

Thank You

