

ANGABEN ZUM FORSCHUNGSAUENTHALT IM AUSLAND / ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH STAY ABROAD

Zielland / Destination country: US	Ort / City: College Park City, Maryland
Name der Gasteinrichtung / Name of the host institution: University of Maryland, College Park	Fakultät / Institut / Faculty / Institute: Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Anschrift / Address: 4418 Stadium Drive, Chem/Nuc Bidg.090 Room 2144, College Park, Maryland 20742	
Zeitraum / Length of stay: von / from : 18/09/2017 (TT/MM/JJJJ – dd/mm/yyyy)	= Tage / Days bis / until: 29/09/2017 (TT/MM/JJJJ – dd/mm/yyyy) 43

Administrative Formalitäten / Administrative formalities

1. Visum / Visa:

a) Welche Art musste beantragt werden? / Which type of visa did you have to apply for?

J1 Visa of US

b) Wo haben Sie das Visum beantragt? / Where did you apply for the visa?

U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt
Gießener Str. 30
60435 Frankfurt am Main

c) Wann haben Sie das Visum beantragt? / When did you apply for the visa?

In June 2017

2. Welche Versicherungen haben Sie abgeschlossen/abschließen müssen und von welchen Versicherungsunternehmen? / What types of insurances did you purchase and from which insurance companies?

Enrolled in the University of Maryland Health Insurance plan for students or employees.
Unitedhealthcare insurance company, US

3. Welche Impfungen waren nötig? / Which vaccines were necessary?

No.

4. Wie haben Sie Geldangelegenheiten vor Ort abgewickelt? (z.B. über Konto vor Ort, Online-Konto, Kreditkarte usw.?) / How did you manage your finances? (e.g., opened a local bank account, online banking, credit card, etc.)

Credit card

Information & Unterstützung / Information & Support

5. Wie erhielten Sie Informationen über Ihr Gastland, die Gasteinrichtung und die Kontaktperson? Waren die Informationen nützlich? / How did you get information about your host country, host institution and contact person? Was the information useful?

Informationsquelle / Information source	persönlicher Nutzen / useful	
	ja / yes	nein / no
WWU Münster	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gasteinrichtung / Host institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Andere StudentInnen / Other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sonstiges (bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben) / Other (please specify) I met the supervisor in a conference and then I asked him if I can do an exchange in his group.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Erhielten Sie vor und während Ihres Aufenthaltes angemessene Unterstützung durch Ihre Heimat- und Gast-Institution? / Did you receive adequate support from your host and home institution before and during your research stay?

	(1 = sehr schlecht/poor; 5 = sehr gut/excellent)				
	1	2	3	4	5
WWU Münster	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Gasteinrichtung / Host institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

I got fully support from my professor, Prof. Martin Winter, in Münster University. Besides, during my Visa application, the coordinator of IP@WWU-Project, Iva Ognjanovic, helped me quite a lot regarding the supporting materials preparation. I also got fully support from the host institution. Thanks to the kindly help of the Professors, Prof. Chunsheng Wang and Prof. Kang Xu in the University of Maryland, I managed to come there and have learnt a lot scientifically during my stay abroad.

7. Welche Vorbereitung auf das Zielland (bspw. Information zu Geschichte, Staatsform, Kultur, Verhalten, Religion etc.) wären hilfreich gewesen? / Which information or preparations in terms of the host country (e.g., history, language, culture, customs) would have been helpful?

I went to U.S. Therefore, in terms of history and language, there is not so much to be mentioned as long as you can speak English.

The really difficult thing for exchange student who will do research in the lab is the J1 US Visa application, which will take at least more than one month in general.

8. Welche Vorbereitungen hinsichtlich der Gastinstitution (bspw. Hochschulstrukturen, akademische Gepflogenheiten etc.) wären hilfreich gewesen? / Which information or preparations in terms of the host institution (e.g., university structure, academic customs) would have been helpful?

In US, the area of the campus is normally much bigger compared with that here in Germany. Therefore, there are more buildings inside the campus and be careful and do not get lost when you try to find one specific building, e.g., ISSS (like the international office in German universities).

The secretaries working in the institution are very professional and if you have any problems, you can first ask the secretary in the department and if she or he cannot answer, she or he will try to find one to answer you.

9. Wie kann das Projekt IP@WWU Ihrer Meinung nach verbessert werden (z.B. Information, Bewerbungsverfahren)? / How could the IP@WWU project be improved (e.g., information, application procedures)?

Before I answer this question, I went through the webpage of IP@WWU again. Basically, most of the info is there, which is good and nice. I especially checked the info part of the Research Stipend which I got, there is just one thing probably can be improved. For the application deadline, this time it is only mentioned "May 31", there is no info about which year (if I remember it correctly (or probably I am wrong), it was the same case when I applied in January 2017), which, at least for me, is uncertain info. It will be good if you can point out the specific year, too.

10. Wie beurteilen Sie den Integrationsgrad mit den Studierenden und Mitarbeitern der Gastinstitution? / How do you consider your degree of integration with students and staff in the host institution?

(1 = sehr schlecht/poor; 5 = sehr gut/excellent)				
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

For the lab I worked in, there is no problem for me to get involved. The group members are very friendly and smart and I have learned quite a lot from them. However, there is one thing that I think might be able to be improved, although I took part in one seminar for exchange students and scholars which was organized by the university, I did not manage to fully understand the whole structure of the host institution by e.g., some kind of campus tour.

Unterkunft & Forschungsinfrastruktur / Accommodation & research infrastructure

11. Art der Unterbringung im Ausland / Type of accommodation abroad:

- durch die Universität (Studentenwohnheim o. Ä.) / university accommodation (e. g., student halls of residence)
- private Unterkunft (z.B. mit einer Familie) / private housing (e. g. family)
- WG / shared apartment
- Sonstiges (bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben) / other (please specify)

12. Wie haben Sie die Unterkunft gefunden? / How did you find the accommodation?

- WWU Münster
- Freunde, Familie / Friends, family
- Privatmarkt / Private market
- Internet
- Sonstiges (bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben) / other (please specify)

13. Wie zufrieden waren Sie mit Ihrer Unterkunft?
 How satisfied were you with your accommodation?

(1 = sehr unzufrieden/very dissatisfied; 5 = sehr zufrieden/very satisfied)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

I found a private housing, with a family. I lived in one of their rooms. The family members are all very friendly. However, it is quite noisy and therefore I am not able to concentrate on working in the accommodation. Besides, according to what I heard, the neighborhood I lived in is not a real safe area. I lived there because of two reasons, one is that due to the Visa application issue, I got the Visa rather late and I only have 10 days to find a place to stay; another reason is that I did not have enough money to find a really nice place.

14. Wie zufrieden waren Sie mit der Infrastruktur Ihrer Gasteinrichtung / How satisfied were you with your host institution's infrastructure:

(1 = sehr unzufrieden/very dissatisfied; 5 = sehr zufrieden/very satisfied)

	1	2	3	4	5
Zugang zum Arbeitsplatz (PC, Internet) / Access to working space (PC, Internet)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Zugang zu den Bibliotheken / Access to libraries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sonstiges (bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben) / Other (please specify) Lab equipments for experiments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

I am pleased with the access to working space (PC and Internet.) as well as access to libraries (although I did not use it at all). By the way, there is one useful WIFI network called "eduroam", which I like very much. For students and employees from Muenster University, we can have the internet connection at most of the institutions in the world as long as this institution is also a member in the eduroam.

One thing I would like to stress is regarding the use of lab equipments for my experiments. With the support from the lab group members, I am allowed to use most of lab equipments in the whole institution.

Akademische Qualität / Academic quality

15. Wie beurteilen Sie die Qualität der Betreuung durch Ihren Gastgeber-Dozenten? How do you rate the quality of your host supervisor's support?

	(1 = sehr schlecht/poor; 5 = sehr gut/excellent)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Verfügbarkeit des Betreuers/der Betreuerin / Supervisor's accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Engagement des Betreuers/der Betreuerin / Supervisor's engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Beratungsgespräche mit dem/der Betreuer/in / Consultations with the supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Sonstiges (bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben) / Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Personality					

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

The two supervisors are very famous professors in the field of my research area. They have published many high citation papers. More importantly, they are very friendly and are willing to supervise students. They offered very useful suggestion for my research.

16. Wie beurteilen Sie die Qualität ... / How do you rate the quality of...

	(1 = sehr schlecht/poor; 5 = sehr gut/excellent)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Ihrer Forschungsaufgaben?/research activities you took?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
des an der Gasteinrichtung zur Verfügung stehenden Forschungsmaterials?/study material you obtained at your host institution?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

Basically I am pleased with the quality of the research activities I took as well as that of the study materials I obtained at my host institution. But one thing I am not so pleased with is the time length of my stay abroad. Due to the very limited time, I only manage to finish the research activities I planned in advance (because I shipped my sample from Germany to US in advance) but I did not manage to go deeply for the topic in the lab.

17. Wie unterscheiden sich Forschungsstruktur und -kultur an der Gastinstitution von denen an der WWU Münster? / How do research structure and research culture in host institution differ from those at WWU Münster?

The PhD students and Postdocs are more free to use the lab equipments. This is good but also not good. They have more freedom for arranging their work but in the meantime, the equipments are easier to get damaged. They do not usually go together for lunch as a big group as there is no big Mensa for them in the campus. This is good but also not good. They somehow have more freedom for the noon break (long or short time depends on themselves) but in the meantime, they cannot share their thoughts and daily lab life by chatting during the lunch (but normally they discussed with each other directly during the working time if they need to share the knowledge with each other or need to solve some problems).

Kosten / Expenses

18. Wie hoch waren die wöchentlichen Lebenshaltungskosten während Ihres Auslandsaufenthalts? / What were average weekly costs during your stay abroad?

	€
Unterkunft / accommodation	250
Lebensmittel / food	200
öffentliche Verkehrsmittel / Transportation	30
Gifts for friends and colleagues	20
Flight ticket and the transportation to the airport	160
Insurance cost	60
<i>Gesamtsumme per Woche / Total per week</i>	
	720

19. Wurden Ihre Kosten durch das Forschungsstipendium gedeckt? / Did the research stipend cover your costs?

Ja / yes Nein, per Woche habe ich zusätzlich _____ € ausgegeben.
No, I spent additionally _____ € per week.

20. Lagen Ihre wöchentlichen Ausgaben im Ausland höher als in Münster? / Did you spend more abroad compared to what you normally spend in Münster per week?

Nein / no Ja / yes, _____ €.

21. Mussten Sie irgendeine Art von Gebühren an ihrer Gastinstitution entrichten? / Did you have to pay any kind of fees in the host institution?

Nein / no Ja / yes, _____ € für / for _____

(bitte genaue Bezeichnung eingeben / please specify)

Persönliche Erfahrungen / Your personal experience

22. Welche spezifischen Ziele hatte Ihr Forschungsaufenthalt? Haben Sie sie erreicht? / Which specific objectives did you have for your research stay? Did you achieve them?

Ziele / Aims:	(1 = überhaupt nicht erreicht/not at all; 5 = voll erreicht/fully)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Improve my personal ability and skills for scientific research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Improve my cross cultural communication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning professional knowledge and new technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Broaden my scientific net work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Enhance independent working character	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Wie würden Sie Ihren Forschungsaufenthalt insgesamt einschätzen? / How would you evaluate your research stay in general?

In general point of view, the experience of stay abroad has improved my personal ability and skills for scientific research as well as offered more scientific exchange opportunities, which will be useful for carrying out the following work of my PhD project.

24. Bitte beschreiben Sie Ihre beste Erfahrung / Please describe your best experience.

Given a presentation about my former work regarding my PhD project, the general scientific life in Germany as well as the structure of my home institute in front of the group members and then discussed together with them about my previous topics and my home institute.

This experience is special for me because at the day that I gave this presentation I went abroad for exactly 5 years and it was kindly like a periodic summary for me with lots of people who actually have similar experience like me.

25. Bitte beschreiben Sie Ihre schlechteste Erfahrung / Please describe your worst experience.

I did not really have a bad experience. I really must to say that I did get lots of help from people ever since I started this research stipend application and I would like to thank all of them again.

Maybe the worst experience before I went to US is the Visa application and the worst experience in Maryland is the one that I waited for really a long time to get my university ID card as it is the beginning of the semester and the IT system broke down at that day.

26. Halten Sie die Dauer Ihres Forschungsaufenthaltes für / Do you consider your research stay to have been ...

- zu kurz / too short
- zu lang / too long
- genau richtig / just right

Falls zu kurz oder zu lang, welche Dauer hätten Sie sich gewünscht? / If too short or too long: which length would have been ideal?

At least 3 months. 6 months would be even better.

Beschreiben Sie bitte näher. / Please describe further.

For scientific research in the area such as Chemistry, Biology and Physics, which needs to do lots of experiments in the lab, 6 weeks are too short. For example, my personal experience this time, due to the very limited time, I only manage to finish the research activities I planned in advance (because I shipped my samples from Germany to US in advance) but I did not manage to go deeply for the topic in the lab.

27. Welche Tipps können Sie den nachfolgenden Promovierenden zu dieser Gasteinrichtung, dieser Stadt, diesem Land etc. geben (Geheimtipps, lohnenswerte Aktivitäten, wichtige Ratschläge)? / Could you please give other PhD students some tips about your host institution, city or country (insider info, useful activities, valuable advice)?

College park city is only 13 miles away from Washington DC, the capital of U.S. Itself is a small city but for the transportation and shopping it is quite convenient. Maryland University (UMD) is a public research university which has broad research topics in different areas. It is also strong at America football. In the campus you can feel the university culture by looking students wearing T-shirts with the logo of UMD.