

Field Report: Research Stay at JSCBB – University of Colorado Boulder

General impression:

I was really impressed about the well-organized University. The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) department takes care of all incoming students from outside the US, they help with the visa applications personally or via their website where they give an overview about the necessary documents. The registration process to start working in the lab was straight forward without any delay.

My host group leader Dylan Taatjes and the members of his lab made me immediately feel as part of their lab. During the whole stay they were extremely helpful and supportive, concerning the work I did in the lab but also helping me with non-work related issues. I did learn a lot from the people there since their lab has a focus on biochemistry and their expertise is different to mine. The scientific discussions with people from another research field offered some new input and perspectives that will help me for my future work.

As agreed I had the chance to learn new methods during my stay, which broaden my expertise and which improved the output of my research during my PhD thesis. On the other hand I also could show them parts of my main work in Vienna and talk to them about our immunological view of several cellular processes.

Quality of the host institution

The University of Colorado Boulder offers a broad spectrum of research opportunities. Just focusing on the JSCBB department I was working at, it offers a range of state-of-the-art analysis tools, e.g. qRT-PCR machines, electron microscopes, a cell culture facility, a NGS facility. The University has a great connection to its partner University in Denver, the interaction with the core facilities there also worked without any problems. The working atmosphere is very interactive and people from different labs work together to solve experimental problems. Also worth mentioning is the seminar series with weekly talks from top-ranked invited speakers giving insight into their work.

Contacts within the host institution:

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS): Department of the University of Colorado Boulder specialized on helping incoming students with their Visa applications

Email: adviser@colorado.edu, Phone: (303) 492-8057

The employers of the ISSS take care of all incoming students from outside US. The welcoming session includes the final registration that is necessary for keeping the visa status, a detailed introduction about the upcoming steps and helpful advises for getting familiar with the University organization and campus. They also organize weekly meetings to get in contact with other visiting students.

Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows:

For me the trickiest part was to find an appropriate accommodation. Since I stayed only 3 months – less than one semester – I wasn't eligible for student housing and also the off-campus housing options were mostly unfurnished apartments, what is not the best solution for such a short stay. In the end I found a room in a shared apartment via Airbnb. Another really useful webpage is www.craigslist.com there you can also find a lot of room offers.

Concerning the visa application for the stay in US, it is really helpful to start preparing the documents in advance, it takes a while until all the paperwork is done, since also the host group leader needs to fill out a lot of forms and some forms need to be sent per regular mail and can't be sent by email.

Contact E-mail after completion of research stay:

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