

MARSHALL PLAN SCHOLARSHIP

Field report by Maximilian Sexpl, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston MA, September 2021 to February 2022

Bsc. Student at the IMC Krems in the study program Medical and Pharmaceutical Biotechnology.

General impression of my research stay abroad:

My stay in Boston was truly inspiring. The city is beautiful and has a good quality of life. The research facilities in Boston are leading in their respective fields and are full of interesting personalities. The experience of living in the U.S. for the brief time of 6 months has made me grow personally. The toughest thing in Boston is housing. Housing prices are awful and if there is a possibility of someone trusted taking over the search for an apartment, I would highly recommend it. The relationships I have been able to build during my stay both at work and outside are something that I will have long-lasting fond memories about.

Quality of the host institution:

The DFCI is placed in the heart of Boston's Longwood Medical Area (LMA). This area houses 8 hospitals and research institutions like the Brigham Women's Hospital and the Boston Children's hospital, both close associates to the DFCI. In addition to the institutions mentioned above the LMA is also home to numerous universities, most prominently the Harvard Medical school, also a close associate to the DFCI. The proximity of all the universities, research institutions and hospitals make the LMA and the DFCI a unique workplace. While working in the LMA you are always surrounded by health care professionals that all have a common interest: Research and medicine.

The quality of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, the Harvard Medical School and other institutions in the LMA is incredible.

Contacts within the host institution, inclusion in the organization:

I have had very nice colleagues that I am still in contact with. Due to the COVID situation social contacts were very limited.

Recommendations for the future Marshall plan students and fellows:

Do it, it's worth it! The toughest thing is housing and I cannot stress this enough. Put a big priority on housing and try to get together with people you know that are also leaving to Boston. Look into transportation and how to get to work this is very important. There are some areas you don't want to be staying in. They are not super dangerous but there are nicer spots to live. Always check on Google Street View and look at Boston crime maps. Lastly I highly recommend to pack warm clothes for the winter. Do not hesitate to contact students that have already been in Boston.