

Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation
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Berkeley-Austria Exchange program 2016/2017 – Field Report

I had the chance to participate in the Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Berkeley-Austria Exchange program 2016/2017 and spend three months (end of October 2016 – end of January 2017) at the Institute of European Studies at UC Berkeley. The institute provided office space and the staff was very helpful to gain orientation and get integrated. I participated in the institute's seminars, events, and workshops, which was a valuable experience.

Additionally, I was able to establish contacts with the *Fisher Center for Real Estate & Urban Economics* at the Haas School of Business. I had the opportunity to participate in their research seminars and had valuable discussions about my research project with staff members and other graduate students. The Fisher Center is a well-known research hub in my field and I am glad that I had the opportunity to build up this connection.

During my stay in Berkeley I also used the opportunity to audit courses. The course work offered by the university is broad and of highest quality and I was able to widen my knowledge and gain some inspiration for future teaching duties. Auditing courses is something I would highly recommend to every future scholarship holder.

As a visiting scholar one is also invited to participate in a wide range of trainings and events particularly designed for (recent) graduates. I could highly benefit from a two-days career development bootcamp, a scientific writing workshop, and discussions about challenges for women in academia. All visiting scholars are automatically added to the

email list and thus receive information about these events.

The Bay Area has a very lively Austrian expat community with regular meetings and events including for instance “Stammtische” and Christmas parties. (The easiest way to connect with fellow Austrians is to join the Facebook group “Austrians in San Francisco & Bay Area.”) There is also an Austrian ASciNA (network of Austrian scientists and scholars in America) chapter which is worth joining (www.ascina.at).

All in all, I could highly benefit from this exchange program. I broadened by scientific networks, got valuable feedback on my research by leading scholars, improved my intercultural and language skills (in both English and Spanish due to the large Latin American community in the Bay Area), and enjoyed California’s magnificent natural and cultural landscapes.



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