

Marshall Plan Scholarship - Field Report

General impressions

I am profoundly gratified with my research experience in the Fuchs lab at the Rockefeller University. The Rockefeller was humming with brilliant scientists, which provided a great environment to fuel my passion for science. As well as, the Rockefeller, the city had a lot to offer. New York seemingly attracts people who are the greatest in their field. In terms of science, this allowed me to attend multiple conferences and symposiums to learn from remarkable scientists coming from all across the world. These experiences were inspiring and provided me with insight into the most recent advances made within academic sciences today - conveyed from people who have truly made a difference in the world. More personally, I enjoyed the high turnover of people in New York, which enabled me to meet multiple people from various fields of study – from the arts till politics and finance. The vibrant art scene is certainly one to explore. For me, the arts brought great variety into my life when not engaging with scientific activities. All in all, I would more than love to return to the city to pursue science!

Quality of the host institution

The Rockefeller University may be one of the best research institutes within life-sciences in the world. Rather than being divided into departments, the Rockefeller has an open structure. This opens for cross talk between scientist from multiple different fields of science. It consists of 75 independent laboratories which all pursue world-class research on a daily basis. Many of the labs are led by scientists who have received impressive awards, and some of whom won the noble price. One of the greatest offers of the Rockefeller was the many symposiums. These were held multiple times a week and was free and easy to attend.

Contacts within the host institution, inclusion in the organization

The Fuchs lab was a lab of approximately 30 scientists who either were phd-students, md-phd-students, post-docs or technicians. Lab-meetings were held weekly and also sub-group meetings. The lab would also occasionally gather for special occasions to celebrate birthdays, publications and visiting scientists. Most of the lab members were open and willing to teach me instruments and lend a helping hand when needed. I also benefitted from many scientific conversations and advice from my colleagues. I always felt that I could reach out. Additionally, we would often go as a group to lunch and to talks, and also sometimes gather in the faculty bar.

Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and Fellows

I sincerely recommend future Marshall Plan students/fellows to pursue a research internship at the Rockefeller University if they feel enthusiastic to engage in a high-paced scientific environment and are curious to learn not only how to conduct research, but also to be inspired by many different fields of science. When applying to the Rockefeller one need to be prepared to be in a pressured academic environment, and though challenging, I think this yields a lot of great minds, discussions and experiences. In my opinion, the institution provides a great arena for a young scientist to develop. A more general advice would be to use the Marshall Plan Award to pursue your own interests. I think it is good to have an idea of what you want to get out of the experience before pursuing it. As most things in life, I think you get out this experience what you put into it. Personally, I am grateful for being awarded the scholarship, and I hope that the next Marshall recipients will enjoy it as much as I did.

For any questions regarding the content of this report I can be contacted on thereseilertsen@gmail.com