

Field Report of James McAuley, Marshall Scholar

Summer, 2019

FH Oberösterreich (University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria)

Florida State University

A. General impression of your research stay abroad

I learned a great deal during my time at FH Oberösterreich. It was a valuable experience to live and travel in Austria, and I found the time I spent in the lab to be productive both professionally and personally. I did have some problems with acquiring a visa, which I will discuss in section D, but my general impression was very positive. I would encourage others to participate in this program, subject to resolution of some of the recommendations I have in section D.

B. Quality of the host institution

I was very impressed with the quality of the research lab available at FH Oberösterreich. Unlike many European institutions, FH Oberösterreich is new, with very modern labs. The Faraday cage in which I performed most of my experiments was in excellent condition, and constructed of first quality materials. The institution also had all of the necessary telecommunications equipment needed to stay in touch with the other four laboratories participating in the research.

C. Contacts within the host institution, inclusion in the organization

The staff and students at FH Oberösterreich were extraordinarily helpful and kind. From my first day to my last day they made me feel welcome and included. I received very significant help in designing and building experimental circuits, and good supervision throughout the summer. I wish to note, in particular, the assistance of Dr. Peter Zeller and Dr. Christoph Diendorfer for their contributions to the success of this project both professionally and personally. Also very helpful to me for administrative matters, both prior to my arrival and during the time I was in Austria was Angela Ahgow-Puehringer. She provided invaluable assistance in acquiring housing, and arranged for me to be met at the dormitory when I arrived in Austria on a weekend.

D. Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows

Prior to my departure, the support provided by Florida State University in assisting me in acquiring a visa was inadequate. In retrospect, I could have flown to Washington to get a visa

prior to my departure, but that would have been prohibitively expensive based on my location in the US and the stipend provided to Marshall Scholars. Although the Austrian State Department website did disclose that students could seek visas once they'd arrived, I did not receive the information from any source that said the visa had to be issued with in excess of 91 days remaining in the EU. As a result, I had to leave the EU prior to my original departure date. I was, fortunately, able to complete the required experiments, and completed the paper for submission after my return to the US.

For future Marshall Plan students and fellows, I would recommend they have a stipend in addition to the Marshall Plan stipend. I was fortunate to have funding, in addition to the Marshall Plan stipend, as a Florida State University Presidential Scholar. The Marshall Plan stipend alone does not cover all the expenses of travel to and from Europe, as well as living expenses. Additional funding would also allow future Marshall Plan students and fellows to pay for needed travel to acquire a visa prior to departure for Austria, which would prevent the unfortunate circumstance I encountered.