

# Field Report

## General impression of your research stay abroad

This research stay, at Columbia University, in the group of Prof. Gang has been a very positive experience and a worthwhile investment both at a personal and professional level. It opened new possibilities for my current PhD research project, and provided much needed external point of view, where a young researcher like me can reevaluate his\her position in the field. In this way, given that I am a theorist, learning to communicate and navigate a laboratory setting that Prof. Gangs group provided, I feel improved me as a scientist and as a coworker tremendously. This is something that I highly recommend to any researcher. Furthermore, a research stay at an institution as prestigious as Columbia University, and working with an experts such as Prof. Gang, puts one in the position where you have to become the best possible version of your self, scientifically, as you can be. The work we were able to do together, in such a short time, proved to be of tremendous importance for my further research, and really laid the groundwork for a close collaboration on this project, for years to come. This of course wouldn't have been realised were not for the support of the Marshall foundation. Because of this I'm a grateful both for the personal and professional benefits I enjoy now.

## Quality of the host institution

Columbia University as a host institution in particularly the group of Prof. Gang, was really an excellent environment for me to conduct my research. It is a highly competitive, excellence oriented institution, where it was always possible for me to access the provisions needed to conduct my research, whether this was experimental equipment, samples, or computational resources. Furthermore, given that Prof. Gang is also a group leader at Brookhaven National Laboratories (BNL), I gained access to their facilities, and support of theory scientific staff as an extension to the benefits of being appointed at Columbia University. Given this, I couldn't imagine a better environment for conduction this research.

## Contacts within the host institution, inclusion in the organisation

I was treated as a full member of Prof. Gangs research group. As such, I had constant interaction with his staff, and really was able to participate in collaborative research in the full sense of the word. As I mentioned, given that Prof. Gang is also a group leader at BNL, I gained access to their facilities, and support of theory scientific staff as an extension to the benefits of being appointed at Columbia University. As a consequence of this, I gained many contacts, that are very relevant to my research, and am still very much in touch and being supported. This is the case so much so that I still have access to the computational resources at BNL, as we continue to push this project further, and am working closely together with PhD students within Prof. Gangs group at Columbia University.

## Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows

Regardless of in institution or research topic, planing and having "backup" plans is absolutely a necessity, if conducting collaborative research abroad is to be worthwhile. Clear line of communication with the host is paramount, in order that everyone is on the same page with expectations, timeframe, resources etc. 3-4 months is a good timespan, to do enough to make an impact and establish a project as feasible, but not long enough that any results can reasonably be expected without absolutely flawless coordination of manpower and effort, especially in an experimental setting.