

Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation
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Field Report

General impression of your research stay abroad

Despite the challenges presented by the global pandemic, I consider my internship at the Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, a positive experience. During the past eight months I had the chance to work in one of the most advanced, yet competitive environments for the field of science I am involved in. I consider myself lucky, as the lockdown made me stop wet lab work for just a little over a month and I could therefore complete my master thesis project as initially planned. Moreover, I invested the time at home to practice on scientific writing, as the group gave me the amazing opportunity to write a review as an author. At the end of the day, it felt like I never stopped working. They were months of hard work, but I am happy of my decision and I think they were a good investment for my future.

Quality of the host institution

The lab group of Prof. William Pu is a great place where to research. Scientists have a lot of freedom in the organization of their own work and Prof. Pu is very understanding and involved without being pressing. The technologies used in the lab are generally high end, and one good thing about doing science in Boston is that everything can be done fast. Together with no budgeting problems, it allows you to be very creative and efficient in your work.

Contacts within the host institution, inclusion in the organization

The environment was extremely stimulating and the people I had the honor to work with were very professional. In particular, my supervisor Dr. Prondzynski had a great influence on me and I had a lot to learn from him as a young scientist. As a matter of fact, we are still both involved in the writing of the review and will be in touch to collaborate on a paper presenting the results produced for my master's thesis.

Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows

I strongly recommend students such experience. I find research work in the United States very different from what we are used to in Europe and an internship abroad is a great opportunity to widen ones' knowledge and network. It helps you in becoming more flexible and keeping an open mind, as you are in touch with people from all over the world doing exactly what you love too: science.