

# Field Report – Marshall Plan Scholarship

Student: Martin Pahr, BSc

Home university: University of Applied Sciences Technikum Vienna, Austria

Host university: University of Miami, USA

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## General impression of the research stay abroad

First, I have to say, that doing a research stay abroad was one of the best decisions I have made in my life so far. The University of Miami's International Office and my American supervisor supported me a lot. Starting from the first day, I felt welcome at the laboratory, where I have done my work. I found new friends who showed me the most interesting points of Miami which is a fascinating city beside its beautiful beaches. Miami is a city where different cultures meet, especially when talking about nightlife and food as well.

When someone is interested in doing a research stay abroad, I could say nothing else than 'give it a try'. For me, it was the first time travelling alone. This was very exciting as well as time-consuming starting from organizing the accommodation, the flight or the visa, but I am proud to say that I became much more independent during the stay.

The most difficult part of planning the research stay was finding a place to live, unfortunately. I have tried to find a shared accommodation at the campus, first, but nothing was available at this point. So, I have tried it with off-campus housing, and it turns out that nothing was available again. In the end, I found a very good-looking and comfortable flat via Airbnb not far away from the University of Miami (UM) campus. The public transport is very good in Miami and I have used the train to Coral Gables, where UM is located, every day.

I had the privilege to work with people who share the same interests in helping to develop technology every day. This research stay gave me the opportunity to extend my knowledge in programming and I am thankful for every day I have spent in Miami.

## Quality of the host institution

The host institution was just impressive. Especially, the Shalala Student Center was fascinating for me because of its great architecture. Within the campus is a huge lake with a lot of palms, what suits perfectly to the rest of Miami. The campus at Coral Gables has a food court, which was a good place to spend time and meet friends.

The laboratory, which is located at UM's School of Architecture, was well equipped with different technological gadgets and my supervisor supported me to get further utilities which I needed for my research project as fast as any possible.

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

My supervisor, Christopher Chung, supported me in every situation. He showed me everything on campus, introduced me to colleagues and gave his best to make this stay unforgettable for me. In addition, the Dean of the School of Architecture, Rodolphe el-Khoury, gave me some very useful advices for my research and I have learned a lot from his impressive experience. From the first day, I felt as a part of the team.

### **Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows**

One important recommendation is to start thinking about the research topic as soon as possible because that is the basis of your application at a host university. Try to think about what topics interest you the most. In addition, please do not wait too long until you search for accommodation.

The first day of your research stay abroad will be very exciting and you may be nervous because of meeting new people and being alone in a country, but that is okay. The best way of getting familiar with the new environment is to start making friends. One colleague of my laboratory asked me to join a course at the University where they went around in Miami to see some of its most interesting architectural sights. This was an amazing experience because I saw some very interesting spots and met a lot of new people there.