

Three months in Ghent, Belgium (June – Sep 2018)

I decided to go on an internship abroad after completing two semesters of my Masters in Computational Science and Engineering. Although it was not the regular application period for IAESTE internships, I still managed to find an internship of my interest at Ghent University in Belgium. The selection process consisted of a Skype interview, after which I was informed of my selection. Further documentation was completed with help from IAESTE Rostock. The other formalities including registration at the University and application for accommodation were quickly and efficiently taken care of by IAESTE Ghent and the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at Ghent University. As the internship period was less than 90 days and I had a German residence card, I was not required to apply for a VISA.

I arrived at Ghent two days before my date of joining and was received by my “buddy” from IAESTE Ghent. She had already contacted me on Facebook and gave all the relevant details. She helped me get to my accommodation (which was already arranged), which was just next to the tram station and quite near to my work place, as I later learned. I received a cool goody bag from IAESTE Ghent, dropped my luggage and went with her for a mini tour of the town. We had a nice dinner and she showed me around the University and other important places in Ghent. I already knew that my stay in Ghent was going to be exciting, after having seen how beautiful the city was. I rented a bike the very next week and was all set for work.

My work was related to a research project under the Research group “Flow, Heat and Combustion mechanics”. My area of responsibility was clearly defined and which gave me some level of autonomy along with timely guidance from my supervisor, who was pursuing her PhD there. I was tasked to run computer simulations which would help

predict the dependence of geometric parameters on the performance of a composite heat exchanger. Although I had received some basic training in the required software during my first two semesters, working on complicated cases did challenge my knowledge and patience. I got to learn a lot of new things through the tasks and interaction with my supervisor. The research



group was really diverse with people from all over Europe, Asia and South America. Everyone was friendlier than I expected and was there to help whenever I needed it. All were proficient in English, which made things easier for me. We had occasional BBQs and drinks together and of course the daily lunch, which made the workplace real fun.

IAESTE Ghent made sure that all trainees spent minimum time at their rooms after work. I had the time of my life with trainees there as the entire internship period was jam packed with events including national evenings, hiking events, kayaking, music festivals, world cup match screenings and so on. We had around 20-25 trainees at any given time and there was huge diversity as I met people from all over the world. I recount having endless conversations about culture, languages, places, science, religion and what not. Soon I made friends with couple of trainees and we even went on trips on our own and visited cities like Brussels and Paris. Later, I realised that Ghent has enough places within its walls, that it would keep me occupied during my entire stay there. I would go on solo evening bike rides through the city centre and often spend time by the numerous canals that criss-crossed the city as they were reminiscent of my own hometown



Overall, the whole internship was a satisfying experience, both personally and professionally. I am sure that some of the lessons I learned especially in networking and cultural awareness is going to stay with me for the rest of my life.