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DAAD Final Report

To begin, I am extremely thankful for being given the opportunity to perform research in Germany; I cannot imagine spending my summer in a better way. Some background: I performed research at the Technische Universität in Berlin, working in the Institute of Theoretical Physics but also in tandem with the Institute of Mathematics. Overall, my goal was to look at networks of connected nodes and use abstract algebra tools to discover “symmetries” in them. These symmetries are important because they allow many problems in Nonlinear Dynamics to be greatly simplified from the onset.

Because most of my work was computational, a typical day would be me sitting down to think and program. It involved various cycles of success, failure, desperation, and elation when everything finally worked. I could always get in contact with my supervisor, and the atmosphere was very relaxed.

Fortunately, being in Berlin allowed me to meet up with many other DAAD interns, and this became the highlight of my experience on a personal level. I remember traveling to Krumme Lanke, both swimming and barbecuing with several amazing people under a lunar eclipse—it is events like these that made my DAAD experience so memorable.

Enough about my experience though—I hope to give some advice on how others can enjoy their experience and conquer the niceties that come along with living abroad. The largest struggle I faced began before I even arrived: finding housing in Berlin. In the end, I discovered a single apartment in Kreuzberg through <https://www.spotahome.com/berlin>, but it would not be my first choice simply because their prices are *usually* higher than what the apartment is actually worth being leased for. Instead, I know many people saved money and found great places on <https://www.wg-gesucht.de/>. You will undoubtedly have to contact many leasers (in English or German) and perhaps move to a different apartment during your internship, but it is by far the most affordable option. Lastly, Spotahome provides excellent customer service in case you are struggling to find an apartment, which may justify their generally higher price.

In order to get my stipend, I needed a German bank account. At first this seemed daunting, but luckily the bank **N26** exists. Every interaction with the bank is through their app, available on both Android and IOS; all you have to do is download the app and go through their verification procedure. Once it was completed, I was able to receive my DAAD stipend via the IBAN and BIC in my app and received a physical debit card for the account through the mail. I used my account throughout Europe with no issues. As a side-note, you can transfer money from your international bank account to your **N26** account with the app **TransferWise**.

Finally, I have some remarks about public transportation and traveling. Because you are a student, you can get the student-discount on your city’s public transformation card. Simply print out all of your DAAD forms (on the DAAD portal) and go to your nearest Reisezentrum; they will provide you with a small card that proves you are a student. Then

you can buy the *student* public transportation pass at any ticket machine in the city, which is usually 50% less expensive than the normal price. When traveling to other places—in my case, I went to Prague—I recommend Flixbus or Flixtrain. It is much less expensive than the Deutsche Bahn. However, if you plan to travel much more than I did, you can buy the Deutsche Bahn summer pass, which I heard was well worth the money.

Living in Germany for 3 months can be difficult logistically, but it was well worth it. Thank you DAAD for giving me the opportunity to connect with such amazing people, both personally and professionally, and for allowing me to spend this past summer in a city and country I now feel bound to. I hope that my advice can help others prepare to experience the same.

I agree that my report and accompanying pictures may be used by the DAAD in printed materials, presentations, and on websites in order to inform funding organizations, sponsors, and students about the RISE program.