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I would like to thank you for the opportunity to do an internship in Germany as part of the DAAD RISE program. I was delighted and extremely grateful when I heard that I was the recipient of this award.

I am a Canadian student entering the third year of my Bachelor of Science. I know that I want to complete my BSc with a major in physics and hope to continue onto a graduate astrophysics program. However, I am using this time to continue to figure out exactly what I want to pursue and what parts of astrophysics are most suited to my interests and capabilities. I applied because there was a large variety of related opportunities and projects on the DAAD database. At the time, actually doing an internship in Germany seemed like an exciting but distant possibility.

When I heard that I had matched with a project and supervisor, I was elated, but was also hit with the realization that there was lots of preparation to do before I left. As a Canadian, I did not need a visa to enter and stay in Germany for up to 90 days (the length of my internship), although now that my time is almost up, I wouldn't mind staying a little longer. I also did not need a German bank account as the Canadian organization Mitacs teams up with the DAAD to fund this program. And although it was stressful finding housing and getting and submitting the required documents to both the DAAD and Mitacs in the weeks leading up to my departure, I made it!

Once I got here, I will admit my first week was hard. I was jet lagged and trying to adjust to living in a completely new country and starting a new job all at once. I had a very limited understanding of the language and only really knew my supervisor. Now, less than 3 months later, I know I will cry when I get on the plane home next week because I will miss everyone and my life here.

At some point during the summer, I was hit with the realization that I had made a life for myself in Germany. On weekdays, I get up and take the train to be at the university by around 9:30am, spend some time working at my computer and desk in the office, gather with everyone in the physics department to go to lunch together at 1pm, finish up my work for the day and head home before 5pm and then go out to dinner or exploring with some friends in the evening. On weekends, I go on adventures to different German cities with the other RISE students I have become quite close with. It's weird to think that in just a few months I have friends and a job in Germany that I don't want to leave.

Now that I have lived here, I am seriously considering coming back for my graduate degree or, at least, a long visit in order to see everyone here and all the places in the country I didn't have enough time to get to. I am grateful for the award as it allowed me to experience working in the field I am interested in and further my education. I was also able to attend a few conferences and saw the value of research being done in Germany and some of the extensive

networks of people working on academic projects together. I have also met some amazing friends and colleagues that I hope to stay in contact with.

My project was based on exploring uncertainty measures for deep learning-based imaging in radio interferometry. I couldn't have asked for a better supervisor. He encouraged me to ask questions and helped me learn from any mistakes I made. I learned a tremendous amount from this experience as it was my first time working with AI and a team like his. It took a little while to get accustomed to the work but I have thoroughly enjoyed my internship and learned about how research is conducted in this field.

I think living and working in another country has been a big personal success. I had to learn to navigate living independently, the differences in the ways of life, and find work arounds for the language divide (although I did pick up a few words and phrases during my time in Germany). I definitely feel like my brain has grown five sizes just from existing in a different place, and another five from all that I have learned at work.

Finally, I am fortunate to have met some awesome students who were also doing RISE internships nearby. Our little group is starting to split up as we each head home to different parts of North America but I have no doubt we will stay in contact. Almost every weekend we went on adventures to different places and cities around Germany, and even to a few of the neighboring countries! I missed the water from back home so I loved Hamburg, but every city we visited was different from the last and had some pretty amazing sights (sites) to see! We loved the awesome network of public transportation and got lucky with the 9 euro ticket being introduced. Some of the greatest highlights of my trip - outside of the research I was doing - were traveling around with my new friends, including getting stuck when the trains were delayed and sitting at dinner and chatting for hours while we waited.

Each time I accomplished something, I celebrated learning a little more. I believe the most valuable thing I learned was that research is not continuous progress. Often you get stuck on a problem and have to find new ways to approach it. However, with each failure, I developed new ways of thinking that will help me solve problems in the future. So again, thank you so much for this incredible opportunity. I hope the research I was able to conduct will help my team with future developments in their project and I am more confident in my decision to pursue a career in research in the field. I am forever thankful for this award and the experiences I was able to have because of it. I will definitely be recommending the RISE program.