



## Abschlussbericht

### über Ihre Stipendienzeit

Nachname, Vorname*	-
E-Mail-Adresse*	-
Stipendienprogramm	RISE WELTWEIT
Förderzeitraum	07/2023 – 09/2023
Gastland/-ort	Vereinigtes Königreich, Wales, Bangor
Gastinstitution	Bangor University

\*Im Rahmen des Abschlussberichts haben Sie die Möglichkeit, freiwillige weitere Angaben zu machen. Sie können Ihren Namen und Ihre E-Mail-Adresse angeben, falls Sie mit einer **Weitergabe dieser Daten an künftige Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten** und einer **Kontaktaufnahme** durch diesen Personenkreis einverstanden sind. Bitte beachten Sie, dass diese Angaben nicht erforderlich sind und Sie allein entscheiden, ob Sie diese Daten mitteilen möchten. Eine Einwilligung können Sie jederzeit widerrufen, ohne dass die Rechtmäßigkeit der aufgrund der Einwilligung bis zum Widerruf erfolgten Verarbeitung berührt wird. Richten Sie ggf. Ihren Widerruf über das Portal an den DAAD.

#### Hinweise:

Der Abschlussbericht ist **spätestens zwei Monate nach Förderende** einzureichen. Er soll Hinweise auf die Situation des Studienfaches im Gastland und die Arbeitssituation an der Hochschule/dem Gastlabor/der Praktikumsstelle enthalten. Insbesondere sollten Sie über die Ergebnisse des Aufenthaltes im Hinblick auf Erfolge und ggf. Hindernisse berichten. Besuche von Fachtagungen und Konferenzen sind ebenfalls von Interesse sowie Anregungen, die der Verbesserung der Arbeit des DAAD dienen.

**Kurzstipendiatinnen und -stipendiaten** (bis zu einer Förderdauer von 6 Monaten) sollten ergänzend auf folgende praktische Aspekte des Aufenthalts eingehen: Vorbereitung des Aufenthalts, Kontaktaufnahme zur Gastinstitution, Visum/Aufenthaltsgenehmigung, Zahlungsverkehr, Zimmersuche und Miethöhe, Freizeitgestaltung, nützliche Adressen im Gastland. Mit Annahme des Stipendiums (lt. Ziffer 10 der „Allgemeinen Bedingungen für Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten des DAAD im Ausland“) haben Sie sich bereit erklärt, dass dieser Bericht ohne Nennung Ihres Namens und Ihrer Kontaktdaten an künftige Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten des DAAD zur Information weitergegeben werden kann. Wenn Sie Ihren Namen und Ihre E-Mail-Adresse jedoch gerne mitteilen möchten, um eine eventuelle Kontaktaufnahme zu ermöglichen, tragen Sie Ihre Kontaktdaten bitte oben ein. Aus Gründen des Datenschutzes bitten wir Sie, in Ihrem Abschlussbericht keine personenbezogenen Daten Dritter zu nennen. Dazu gehören alle Informationen, die sich auf eine identifizierte oder identifizierbare natürliche Person beziehen, z.B. Namen, Kontaktdaten, Position im Institut, etc.

Weitere Einzelheiten zur Berichtspflicht sind ggf. in den "Besonderen Bedingungen" enthalten.

Bitte laden Sie den Bericht im PDF-Format über das DAAD-Portal unter dem Menüpunkt „**Berichte – Abschlussbericht**“ hoch.

**Verlauf des Vorhabens** (Textfeld erweitert sich nach Eingabe automatisch; Formatierungen sind jedoch nicht möglich. Für eine bessere Strukturierung können Sie dieses Formular als Deckblatt nutzen und den Bericht als Anlage beifügen.)

The report can be seen below, this page is only used as a Title page.

## General Part

### Getting an internship offer and contact with the professor

After submitting my applications for two internships with RISE in a timely manner in December of 2022, I received an offer for a DAAD scholarship for an internship at Bangor University, Wales towards the end of February 2023. The deadline to confirm my participation as well as the dates was the end of March 2023. I was also immediately contacted by my supervisor, Paul Downing at Bangor University, who proposed possible dates. In the end, we agreed on my 8-week internship from the middle of July until the beginning of September, which we promptly communicated to the DAAD. I kept in contact with my supervisor leading up to the internship by having monthly online meetings where we discussed possible research ideas and scientific literature that might be useful for me to read before coming to Wales.

### Visa

The visa question for EU citizens for interning in the UK depends on how the internship or the visit is framed. I contacted the international office at Bangor ([internationalwelfare@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:internationalwelfare@bangor.ac.uk)) and have gotten an answer that for my situation I would not need a visa. Further, I have gotten a letter from the university signed by my supervisor stating that I will be coming for a short academic visit and thus would not need a visa. I had it printed out with me while coming to the UK in case someone at the border would check, but as I ended up using the self-service gates at the airport, no one asked me any further questions or documents.

### Accommodation

Bangor is a student city and thus has quite a selection of student housing, although one needs to be careful to mention that one comes only for a short visit as usually contracts are created for an academic year - but it is not that big of a problem during the summer when all of the usual students are away at home. I ended up booking accommodation at the University Halls through the Conference Booking portal ([conference@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:conference@bangor.ac.uk)) as a visitor to the university rather than as a student. It is a more expensive option (about 25 pounds per day), but I felt was the most secure one. If you book through conference you would be living in the normal student halls where you share a flat and thus a kitchen with 7 other people, but you have your own en-suite bathroom. During summer, however, there was hardly anyone there and I do not think I had more than 2 to 3 other people living with me at any given time during my stay. As it is in a sense somewhat similar to a hotel, apart from the furniture you also get pillows, blankets and bedding in your room as well as towels. The room is then serviced and cleaned once a week for you. I found the experience of living in halls quite alright, so would recommend it to everyone, although the communication between the conference team and the

people working in the halls was sometimes not perfect, so one had to make a few phone calls in case things were not going as planned. But any issues were solved fast, so I cannot complain!

## The city and daily life

Bangor is quite a small city, yet once you get acquainted with it, you can't help but like it! There is a nice pier, where you can enjoy beautiful sunsets and sea views, as well as several good routes for walks including the newly created part of Wales Coastal Path through the woods all the way to the beach. Walking around the old University buildings is also quite lovely, as one feels like in a movie.

If there is one thing in abundance in Bangor, it is the supermarkets. There is a big selection of them, so you can find groceries for any price point that you wish. There are also a few nice pubs and cafes (The Castle, Cafe am Pier, Blue Skies, Voltaire), in case you fancy going out for a meal. An alternative for a great lunch is the Teras Cafe or more specifically the hot lunches they started offering to help with the cost of living crisis, every weekday you can get meals there for only 2 pounds - there are always two dishes, one of them vegan or vegetarian, to choose from. It is just a 2-minute walk from the Brigantia Building where the Psychology department of the University is located.

## Free time

Bangor lies perfectly within North Wales which allows both city trips with a train or a visit to nature by bus. If you want to visit cities like Manchester, Liverpool or London it will only take you 2,5 to 3,5 hours by train, depending on the destination and the day chosen. If you are someone who plans to travel by train a lot and is between 16 and 25 years old, I recommend getting a Railcard, which costs only 30 pounds and is valid for a year, allowing you to buy cheaper train tickets

([https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/?\\_gl=1\\*ye6w80\\*\\_ga\\*MTgxNzczMzcyMS4xNjk2NjA1OTUx\\*\\_ga\\_37VVL99SEK\\*MTY5NjYwNTk1MC4xLjAuMTY5NjYwNTk1Ny4wLjAuMA..&\\_ga=2.237559299.267142546.1696605951-1817733721.1696605951](https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/?_gl=1*ye6w80*_ga*MTgxNzczMzcyMS4xNjk2NjA1OTUx*_ga_37VVL99SEK*MTY5NjYwNTk1MC4xLjAuMTY5NjYwNTk1Ny4wLjAuMA..&_ga=2.237559299.267142546.1696605951-1817733721.1696605951)). Other places

accessible by train from Bangor include a rocky beach on the coast of the Irish Sea at Pennmaenmaewr (only a 12-minute ride!) or the city of Holyhead (about 30 minutes away), from which you can take a ferry to Dublin.

Other towns I recommend visiting, which are accessible by bus are Caernarfon and Beaumaris, both of which have a castle and a rather pretty old town.

Where Wales really shines though, is of course its nature. The possibilities for hikes and climbing are endless, and nature parks like Snowdonia are well connected to Bangor by bus. The day ticket for a bus costs only 6 pounds and to some of the places like Ogwen cottage, from where you could hike Mount Tryfan or hike around Llyn Idwal (lake Idwal) the bus from Bangor takes only 20 minutes and a return ticket costs around 3,5 pounds. I truly fell in love with Wales in my time there as I was going on hikes with friends and alone almost every

weekend, and although we explored seemingly a small part of North Wales in terms of size - we saw so many different views and landscapes - if you head to Anglesey you can expect beautiful beaches but can also hike a small rocky 300 m Holyhead mountain; if you go to Beddgelert - your hike starts in woods, but then landscapes change and you see a waterfall and exotic looking plants, while the last part leads you to the mountains again from which the views are breathtaking. Another must-visit is of course Mount Snowdon - it is the highest mountain in Wales (1085 m), one can either hike there using the routes of different difficulty levels or take a train up there. The most commonly used routes - Miners Track and Pyg Track are pretty well fitted for anyone with an average fitness level and the hike is more about endurance, but you do not need any special skill to hike it as even children do it. You should wear comfortable shoes though of course and be careful when going back down on the rocky path! The views both from Mount Snowdon itself and on the way there are absolutely stunning!

If you are someone who is into hiking or you want to become that someone (like I did during my time here!), definitely pack your hiking shoes and a rain jacket. Although of course, you can always buy it in the many outdoor sports shops that you find all around Wales.

## Contact with others

Apart from me, there were three other German interns with DAAD who all had different supervisors, but we ended up being in Bangor at pretty much the same time. We were connected and given each other's E-mails by our supervisors before we came to Wales, so we could already build the first contact with each other and ask for advice. During the internship itself, we also became very close, often having lunches together, and going on walks or hiking! It was such a welcoming atmosphere and I am happy to have made great friends! We also had some contact with PhD students from all around the UK and the world who were working with our supervisors, so it was also a great time getting to know them and asking them about the academic side but also about life in Wales.

## Thematic part

### General information about the internship

I interned at the DowningLab at Bangor University, Wales which is led by Prof. Paul Downing. His work focuses on social vision and social interaction, and Paul himself is one of the pioneers in the research concerning the Extrastriate Body Area (EBA). During online meetings leading up to the internship we have already discussed some of the general ideas of what I could be doing during my time in Bangor and Paul has sent me some of the relevant literature. When I arrived at the University, we further discussed the topic and agreed on my research on the processing of interaction in right and left EBA. Together with Paul, we have planned a small project revolving around the aforementioned topic for my internship. Paul was very attentive when it came to listening to my own ideas and always made sure that the project I was to work on was interesting to me! Having an opportunity to propose my own

research questions and directions was incredibly valuable for me, and I was very grateful for the opportunity and the responsibility that came with it.

## Tasks during the internship

The first week my tasks included mostly getting familiar with the university systems and reading different literature related to the topic. Especially I was focused on one of the papers, from which the open-source dataset that we were using in the project came from. Apart from that paper, some of the papers that were relevant were co-written by Paul himself and other colleagues from Bangor University, so I had a precious opportunity to ask the authors directly if some of the ideas from the papers were unclear to me. This was a valuable experience.

After the background reading was done, the data collection for the project started. It was made in a two-step manner. Part of the data needed for my project came from an open-source dataset of images of natural scenes that were viewed by eight study participants and fMRI images of their brain responses from the paper by Allen et al. (2022, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41593-021-00962-x>), which Paul further worked with and identified regions of interest in the brains relevant for our topic and shared the brain data of EBA responses with me. Another step, which I did myself was to select a semi-random sample of images of the natural scenes, which I did by creating an algorithm in R. Then I developed an experiment using a platform called Gorilla, where I uploaded the images and allowed the possibility to rate them on a scale from No to Strong Interaction that can be seen on the image. We then used the Prolific System with Paul to collect subjective ratings from people online, where each participant rated 200 images out of 1580 image samples.

We also used a neural network system called YOLO to collect objective information about the images used in the study by getting information about the number of people in the pictures, the number of faces and later on the coordinates of the people. All this information was used in my analysis to measure the predictors for EBA responses.

After data collection was done, I worked on data analysis, for which I was using RStudio. I have analysed how the amount of interaction on the images corresponded with the response of right and left EBA. Moreover, there were several other predictors of objective information that Paul and I have collected from the images that I used for the analysis as well. Generally, in my analysis, I used Linear Models and Generalized Additive Models to compare the effects of several parameters on the EBA responses and draw conclusions.

## Conclusion

During my internship, I have learned a lot about work in academia and the creation and development of a research project starting from background reading to data collection and analysis. I have also become more confident in my skills in R language as I have learned a lot

more about statistical approaches while working with the data. The whole experience was incredibly valuable for my education and future career.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank DAAD for an incredibly valuable opportunity of academic exchange to complete an internship! I would also like to thank Paul Downing and Bangor University as an institution for providing incredible academic guidance during the internship.