My summer in the RISE Professional internship program was incredible, and I made so many wonderful memories in Germany! From June 1 to August 31, my internship was hosted by the Fraunhofer Institute for Wind Energy Systems (IWES). My project focused on characterizing turbulence intensity measured by dual-Doppler radar during a recent research campaign. Although the initial internship posting listed Bremerhaven as the workplace, IWES also had a coworking space in the larger nearby city of Bremen, where my mentor, Arianna Jordan, was based. Before the internship, I would have been willing to live in any city without a strong preference. After living in Bremen for three months, however, I came to appreciate being in a more central and well-connected location. It facilitated a summer full of professional development, travel, and cultural experiences.

I first learned about the DAAD RISE program from a colleague in my PhD program who had completed the internship the previous summer. He spoke highly of his time abroad, and the opportunity sounded especially interesting to someone who had only ever lived in the United States. The timing also worked out well. In my program, we take a qualifying exam during our third year to achieve PhD candidacy, and I had just completed this milestone in the spring. I love traveling, and the opportunity not only to visit another country but also to live there for a significant period seemed like the perfect next step after reaching the midpoint of my doctoral studies. Additionally, because I hope to work in industry after graduation, I had planned to apply for summer internships to gain experience in different fields.

To prepare for my summer, I asked my RISE alumnus colleague many questions about his experience. He recommended that I open a Wise account to receive payments via IBAN, post on WG-Gesucht to begin searching for a sublet, and organize my visa paperwork as soon as possible. In hindsight, I realize that I was fortunate with housing. I found a student at the University of Bremen who was subletting their room while preparing for a summer internship of their own. At the time, however, the search was stressful because there were few available sublets and demand was quite high; some listings I responded to had also been contacted by more than 50 other people. The visa application process was also new to me, as I needed additional documentation because I planned to remain in Europe for more than 90 days. Luckily, the German Consulate responsible for my region was located in Chicago, where my university is based. After securing an appointment, I was able to obtain a type D visa in May, shortly before leaving for my internship. I strongly recommend applying for an appointment as soon as the internship is confirmed, since availability was limited and appointments were booked weeks in advance.

When I began my summer in Germany, I encountered several cultural differences. Some were small, such as bedsheets having zippers and household waste being meticulously separated. I also enjoyed Germany's extensive public transit network of trams and buses. I became accustomed to walking to the local Aldi for weekly groceries and storing them in a refrigerator the same size as the one I had in my undergraduate dorm, rather than driving to a supermarket, buying in bulk, and using a much larger refrigerator. In America, I typically did chores such as grocery shopping and laundry on Sundays, but that was no longer feasible because most

businesses observed Sunday as a day of rest. Instead, I moved those tasks to weekdays after work.

My internship featured a highly supportive team of colleagues with whom I bonded over the summer. My mentor was also from the United States and, coincidentally, had also grown up in California, so we immediately had something in common. IWES was quite multicultural overall, making English the standard language in the workplace. I met many people, including those outside my subgroup, by joining colleagues for lunch whenever they were in the office. My role allowed for remote or hybrid work, but I initially made an effort to work in person because I wanted to get to know everyone—and that habit stuck. My work involved analyzing data from a wind measurement campaign that had concluded in May, so the data I processed was brand new. My subgroup was particularly interested in my findings because no one had previously measured turbulence intensity using some of the instruments deployed during the campaign.

Some of the highlights of my summer were the many weekend trips I was able to take. Most Friday nights, I boarded a train to another city in Germany or a neighboring country, returning home on Sunday night only to stumble into work exhausted on Monday morning. Although eleven weekends of travel were not especially healthy for my wallet, they were a dream come true. I was able to see a great deal of Germany and Western Europe.
Another highlight was my roommate. She was also a student at the University of Bremen and had grown up in the city, so she was able to show me around, help me with translations, and recommend places to visit and foods to try.

All in all, I wholeheartedly recommend this experience to any graduate student interested in temporarily living and working in Europe.

“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.”