My name is Yinan Shao, a PhD student from the University of Utah, and I was very happy to join the DAAD RISE Professional internship this summer. This was one of the best decisions I have made, since it gave me the chance to apply my professional knowledge to solve real-world problems, and allowed me to explore Germany and even Europe along the way.

I did my internship at BioResQ gGmbH in Greifswald, working on the "Flaxinuum" research project. The goal of this project is to develop an innovative food product based on flaxseed meal. I independently built an E2E data analytics process, calling APIs to collect market data on 968 German plant based drink products, and performed NLP based on TF-IDF text vectorization, and applied ML methods (K-means/LDA/logistic regression) to identify market gaps, product positioning, and pricing characteristics, guiding to concrete directions for product development and marketing aligned with market demand. I also matched plant based drink purchase data to German counties using geolocation, and ran a spatial regression with county level indicators to identify what actually drives price differences, informing market entry decisions and regional pricing strategy. In addition, I built a hedonic pricing OLS regression model with 3 robustness checks, providing support for the pricing strategy of a new flaxseed based plant milk product.

I really enjoyed my internship environment. Everyone at the company was very friendly, especially the two colleagues in my office, who actively helped me find housing and settle in after relocating. Since there were almost no other DAAD interns nearby, I often traveled with my colleagues to nearby German cities, and we quickly became close friends. We would talk about the differences between Germany and other countries, explore German culture together, and share German food. Every city in Germany has its own character. Cities like Lübeck and Rostock in the north still preserve the architectural style of the Hanseatic League period, and their old town areas are beautifully and carefully preserved. Cities like Berlin and Frankfurt, as major hubs, are gathering places for diverse cultures, and their modern architecture has a very distinct design style of its own.

Museums across Germany are also something I strongly recommend visiting. The designers not only give the museum buildings themselves a distinctive look, but the exhibitions inside also combine sound, light, and other modern technologies in a highly interactive way, allowing visitors to gain knowledge from many different angles.

The Heidelberg trip organized by DAAD was also wonderful. There, I was able to immerse myself in exploring the city of Heidelberg and its history and culture, and also

exchange experiences about life in Germany with other students who were going through similar journeys. The academic exchange events organized by DAAD were equally impressive, bringing together students from different fields to present their research, broadening our thinking, and expanding our interdisciplinary knowledge.

Overall, I highly recommend this practical training program. Here, you not only get to meet many friends and exchange academic ideas, but you also get to apply your professional knowledge to solve real problems, all while having the chance to explore Germany and Europe in your free time.

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.

Yinan Shao