



Travel Story 2015

Name: Sara Sandman

Year and line of study at KTH: 5th year at Industrial Engineering and Biotechnology

Which university did you visit? (Name, city, state) Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

Time frame: 10 weeks

Visa type: J1

Insurance: Gouda

Scholarship: \$1500

Project description

I had my internship at a relatively young lab at Michigan State University. My task was to perform conformational epitope mapping for antibodies targeting Pertussis toxin and the cancer target TROP2. The epitope mapping will enable a rational design of vaccines, therapeutics and prophylactics. I got the opportunity to work with several different methods such as performing yeast display, titrations, FACS sorting, PCR, as well as analyzing deep sequencing data.

Before and during my stay I had great support from the professor. He made sure to find a project that suited my interests and knowledge. He also gave me a chance to plan my own work under his supervision, ensuring my detailed understanding of every part of the project. A day at the lab could vary from 5 to 10 hours depending on the phase of the project. It was a great experience to put my theoretical knowledge into practice.

Campus life

The campus in East Lansing is green and beautiful, perfectly suited for biking. It is also within traveling distance to Chicago, Detroit and the beautiful beaches by Michigan Lake. I found a nice, but dated, apartment at Craigslist, located within biking distance to the lab. I stayed with three roommates in a student area with access to pool and gym. MSU also offered free summer workout for grad students which me and my colleagues gladly utilized.

Funding

Most of my expenses were covered by private funding. Although, I did get a scholarship of \$1500 from MSU, but that barely covered rent. Living and food expenses are comparable with the prices in Stockholm, the public transportation is way cheaper. I would have preferred to get funding support from Sweden since I now got a more complicated process of getting a working

visa, had to pay a more expensive insurance and pay for an American account, social security number etc.

Application

As most applications there was a long process of paperwork before my trip. The university needed a proof of funding, an English Proficiency form, a J-1 questionnaire, proof of insurance, proof of studies and grade transcript, as well as a copy of my curriculum vita and passport. The Embassy asked for the DS-2019, DS-160, I-901, “120 personbevis- alla relationer” and an invitation letter from the host university.

If you have any questions feel free to email me at ssandman@kth.se!