



Experience report: Exchange program at National Sun Yat-Sen University, Taiwan

Rami Ludwig

Faculty/Field: Chemistry

Semester: 4th Master Semester

Host Country: Taiwan

Host University/Institution: National Sun Yet-Sen University

Type of Stay: Research Stay/ Central exchange

Time of Stay: Winter semester 2023/24

Duration of Stay: 5 months

Mobility Program: None

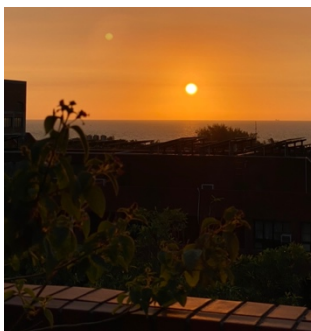
Application Round: November 2022



From September 29, 2023, to January 10, 2024, I had the incredible opportunity to embark on an enriching journey at the National Sun Yat-Sen University in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. This experience was not only academically fulfilling but also provided me with a chance to explore the vibrant culture of Taiwan and neighboring Asian countries.

My mornings at NSYSU were filled with excitement as I delved into the world of marine sports at the Department of Marine Sports. Sailing, windsurfing, stand-up paddling, kayaking, and surfing became not only part of my routine but also a source of joy and physical activity. Twice a week, I dedicated time to a two-hour Mandarin course, laying the foundation for my language skills.

In the afternoons, I had the privilege of participating in marine science courses and engaging in a three-month internship at the Research Lab in Organic Chemistry under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Hsuan Hung Liao. This internship allowed me to work on my projects, focusing on developing an electrolyte additive for lithium-ion batteries. Additionally, I assisted other Ph.D. students with their research projects, gaining valuable hands-on experience in the field.



NSYSU's scenic location at the southern tip of Taiwan, nestled between the sea and a jungle-covered mountain, created a unique and inspiring backdrop. Free-roaming monkeys added a touch of wildlife to the campus atmosphere with mesmerizing sunsets every day. I resided in a spacious twin room with a desk directly on campus, surrounded by street food stalls and food vendors offering a diverse range of culinary delights.



For my day-to-day life the university also helped by participating in the buddy exchange program: My Taiwanese buddy Vivienne gave me recommendations for Kaohsiung and all over Taiwan and I am happy to welcome her once she arrives here in Germany for her own exchange experience next winter semester.

Financially, devoid of external funding, I relied solely on personal savings. Opting for affordable on-campus accommodation at 550€ for the entire semester and allocating 10€ per day for meals, I balanced financial constraints easily.

Despite limited funds, I explored neighboring countries, spending approximately 1500€ on a two-week journey to Seoul, South Korea, and Japan. A three-week exploration of Southeast Asia, costing just under 1000€, added diverse experiences to conclude my semester.

The weather played a significant role in shaping my experience, with the initial two months characterized by hot temperatures ranging from 25 to 35 degrees Celsius and high humidity. As the semester progressed, the weather became cooler, with temperatures ranging from 20 to 25 degrees Celsius and dry air. Experiencing typhoons at the beginning added an unexpected element to my time at NSYSU.

My internship in the Research Lab was a highlight of my academic journey. Working on my electrolyte additive project for lithium-ion batteries was intellectually stimulating, and contributing to the projects of other Ph.D. students provided a comprehensive view of organic chemistry research. On the contrary we also had a weekly running club every Thursday at 5pm, where we would sit together in the streetfood stalls, eat and socialize.



Beyond academia, I dedicated my free time to exploring the rich culture of Taiwan. From the serene beauty of the Matsu and Xiaoliuqiu islands to the bustling city life of Kaohsiung and the majestic landscapes of the Alishan National Park, every moment was an opportunity to immerse myself in the local culture.

The semester's end marked the beginning of a new adventure as I ventured beyond Taiwan to discover the diverse cultures of Japan and South Korea. To conclude my semester, I embarked on a Southeast Asian journey, exploring Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand, creating memories that will stay with me for a lifetime.

My time at NSYSU was a transformative experience, blending academic rigor with cultural exploration, and I am immensely grateful for the memories and knowledge gained during this unforgettable semester abroad.