



IT University Travel Report

Dear Student, this is a template – the aim is to inspire other students who may wish to follow in your footsteps. You are free to give your report the shape you want and to go beyond the questions, as long as you cover the information asked for below. You are also very welcome to include pictures and contact information – but you need not. Remember that the report will be made available on the intranet.

Host University: None. I attended the conference 4S – The Society of Social Studies of Science.

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Innovation and Management

Activity Abroad: Conference participation (presenting paper)

Exchange Period: Autumn 2019

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay abroad:

My stay abroad was due to a conference participation. I presented the research I did for my master thesis, alongside near 2000 scholars from the global STS community. The conference was held in New Orleans. Each day the conference would run from 8am-18pm with talks and presentations non-stop. Attendance was optional and people organised in different ways. I presented my paper on the second day. In the evenings there were dinners followed by conference receptions and trips to local bars.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

I had applied to the conference by sending an early abstract. As such, I applied before my research was completely finished, which is less scary than it sounds. The conference does not expect you to present EXACTLY what you initially pitched. My motivation was twofold; first of all, I wanted to test if I was accepted and secondly, I wanted experience with presenting my own material. Both expectations were exceeded! (See below).

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?

I learned a lot from presenting in this format – I had 12 minutes and needed to distill a thesis of 107 pages into this. Furthermore, I absorbed a lot on the conference itself! Listening to other people present their research was rewarding as I saw different ways of applying concepts, presenting material and doing fieldwork. I also became much more attuned to the workings of the international academic community. It was a great networking opportunity and also exposed me to the variety within that community – people do research and manage their careers in many different and inspirational ways!

Arranging your stay

Please give a short description of the process involved in arranging your stay:

After getting my application approved, I received a formal letter of invitation to speak at the conference. I then asked my supervisor for tricks on conference accommodations like; is it a good idea to stay close to the conference venue (yes!), do people from ITU usually travel together (no) etc.

I continued by buying my plane tickets, opting for many lay overs but lower prices. My supervisor had referred me to PhD students from elsewhere who were also going, and I contacted them about sharing housing to minimize costs.

Having my expenses in order, I began applying for funds. As preparation for this I arranged to get a letter of recommendation from my supervisor and documentation from the conference.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?

I asked advice from my thesis supervisor, who directed me to PhD students and other ITU staff that had experience with conference participation. Usually the conference administration itself is also a useful reference.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I booked a shared house with other ITU staff through Airbnb. We researched the conditions and problems with Airbnb in the local area and made steps to mitigate some of these issues by checking the conditions properly.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Flight: Ca. 3800 DKK.

Airbnb: 1575 DKK (shared).

Conference registration fee: 1018 DKK.

Pocket-money: Too much.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?

Yes. And try Dansk Tennis fond and Oticon Fonden.

Recommendations for other students:

Conference participation is a good and valuable experience in terms of presentations, public speaking. However, you should know that almost no grants support conference participation for students under PhD level. It's a bit of a grey area because most funds are designed to accommodate master students in a semester abroad with a minimum of three months. Most of my applications were rejected because conference participation is not a priority for grant committees. But go if you can, it's intense and academically rewarding!

