IT University Travel Report

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Host University: University of Amsterdam

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Innovation and Management

Activity Abroad: Digital Methods Summer School 2016

Exchange Period: Summer 2016 – Equalling an elective for the fall semester 2016

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay abroad:

I participated in the Digital Methods Summer School 2016 at the University of Amsterdam. The theme of the summer school was Only Connect? A Critical Appraisal of Connecting Practices in the Age of Social Media (MA level). It was an intensive summer school of two weeks working from 9-17 every day. The programme consisted of lectures, tool sessions and project work in groups.

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

My motivation for attending the summer school was to further the knowledge I had achieved from the course Navigating Complexity: Mapping Visualisation and Decision-making. In the course I had learned different digital tools and my hope was that during the summer school I would become better at these tools but also learn new tools and ways of doing internet research.

The summer school is hosted by the Digital Methods Initiative, and I also found it valuable to be able to attend one of Europe’s leading Internet Studies research groups, and meeting people with the same interest as myself.

The summer school met all my expectations.

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?

Attending the Digital Methods Summer School was rewarding for me both personally and academically.
I learned various new tools and ways of doing research with the internet. For instance, repurposing Google for getting insights into societal trends and doing search as research.

By participating in two data sprints I also learned about the method and the roles and competencies that needs to be present during a data sprint, which is knowledge and reflections I can use directly in a project I am working on now.

I also build a network of acquaintances with students and researchers within the field of digital methods and with people with similar interest as my self. From the other students I also learned how it is to live and study in Amsterdam and also at other universities around the world.

**Arranging your stay**

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

When applying for the Digital Methods Summer School you need to sent your CV, a short bio and a picture of your passport. Make sure to check their webpage for deadlines and requirements as these might change from year to year.

The summer school is 6 ECTS. You need to apply for pre-approval for the course from SAP. In order to get 7,5 ECTS, besides attending the summer school I also needed to write an essay for 1,5 ECTS.

After getting your pre-approval you can start looking for accommodation in Amsterdam, plane tickets, and SU Udlandsstipendium.

You need to book a stay as early as possible since it can be difficult finding accommodation in Amsterdam.

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

I found it very helpful to talk to a student from ITU that had already attended the summer school.

**How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?**

I rented an apartment through Airbnb with two fellow students who where also attending the summer school. It was very difficult and expensive to find a place to stay, and we ended up paying 14.000 DKK for a two week stay.

However, it was really nice to have an apartment of our own so we could cook and prepare a packed lunch everyday. I believe this saved us some money.
Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Expenses connected to my stay:

- Tuition fee (This was covered by SU udlandsstipendium)
- Plane tickets – T/R 3.082 DKK
- Airbnb apartment – 14.000 DKK (divided between three people)
- Bike rental – 74 EUR
- Meals (Breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- Sights (museums, boat trip)

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

Yes, I applied for the SU udlandsstipendium and ITU travel pool. I recommend all to apply for these two. I also recommend applying for more scholarships, since what I was granted from the travel pool only covered half of my plane ticket, and accommodation is the biggest expense during your stay.

Attending the summer school ended up being a really large cost for me, but I don’t regret spending this money. It was worth the trip.

Recommendations for other students:

Amsterdam is a really nice city and I recommend staying in the city longer than the two weeks, since it is difficult finding the time to really explore the city during the duration of the course.

I also recommend renting a bike since Amsterdam is a bike city just like Copenhagen. I learned that it is really expensive to rent a bike for two weeks, so it can be more affordable to buy a used bike at a flea market.