

TO: Nakatani Foundation

Nakatani RIES GE 2019 Report

Your Name: Noemi Sulamith Flubacher

Your University: Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

Host Lab in Japan: Prof. Takayuki Kohchi, Graduate School of Biostudies at Kyoto University

Meaning of Nakatani RIES Fellowship: How would you describe the meaning/impact of the Nakatani RIES Fellowship

It was a great opportunity to connect with researchers abroad and learn new methods for my own research.

Complete the following sentences with the intended audience for these responses being potential applicants to the Nakatani RIES Fellowship.

- My favorite experience in Japan was...
 - To meet very kind and nice people to work with and visit all the historical places around Kyoto
- Before I left for Japan, I wish I had...
 - Meet the fellow students from Germany to connect with each other
- While I was in Japan, I wish I had...
 - Learned more Japanese to communicate a little bit in the local language

Research Internship Overview: Provide a description of your research project and experience during your research internship. How did your project relate to your current or future academic interests? What was the experience of working in an international research setting like? What will you take away from your research experience this summer and what impact do you think this has had or will have on your future academic career or research interests?

At Prof. Kohchi lab I worked at the purification of PML, a protein involved in the light-dependent chloroplast movement of *Marchantia polymorpha*. I have also learned how to generate knockout mutants with CRISPR/ Cas9 and gateway cloning what is a very useful technique for further studies. To work in an international lab encourages me, to consider a PhD abroad and brought *M. polymorpha* as an upcoming model organism to my interests.

Lab Environment Overview: Provide an overview of what the personal environment of the lab was like. Describe the personality and working style of your research group? What was it like working with your research mentor/s and the overall group dynamic in the lab?

The research group was a team of several Bachelor-, Master- and PhD students and postdoctoral research fellows. Everybody was working on its own project which was related to the general

topic of plastid movement in *M. polymorpha*. Therefore, as a new student I could ask everybody for help if my supervisor was not around. My mentor was very kind and patient and spend a lot of his time to teach me methods and help with my project.

Daily Life in Japan: Provide an overview of what your daily life was like in Japan. This could include the people you interacted with outside the lab on a day-to-day basis, food, your housing/living experience, your travels around Japan and the challenges you faced and the rewarding experiences you encountered over the course of the summer.

At a typical day in Kyoto, I would wake up early around 6am to either explore the city or do some housekeeping and cooking. After breakfast, I walked along two jinja to university to meet my mentor and start my experiments between 9 and 10. During the lunch break most times I ate my bento box at the labs kitchen which had the best view over the city or went to the canteen which has great soba, before I continued experiments or did some paper work until 6pm. After work I would meet some other fellows to do grocery shopping and try new food or go to a restaurant for dinner. As a vegetarian it was quite difficult to find non-meat dishes in the beginning but there are some options. Later in the evening we would meet for cooking or playing some card games together, or even going for some short trips to visit for example Fushimi Inari-Taisha at night.

On the weekends, we would meet in the mornings to explore Kyoto area and Osaka at day trips by bus and train. The use of an icoca card provides easy riding with all transports and allowed us to be spontaneous with sightseeing.

Experiences with Japanese Culture: Provide an overview of your most meaningful experiences with Japanese culture. This could be program activities or interactions you had with your lab or within your daily life in Japan that you think best exemplify aspects of Japanese culture or values. What did the experience/s teach you about Japan? What did they teach you about yourself?

The Japanese culture attaches great importance to kindness. Whenever I was in doubt and had to ask strangers about something, I was given nice advices and help. My best day in Japan, I was hiking in the mountains all by myself and meet a very old lady on the way who gave me mint drops because I seemed exhausted. We couldn't talk because I am not able to speak Japanese and she didn't understand English, but she wanted to give me those drops to help me. This kindness is something I miss back in Germany and want to practice for myself.