

Testimonial: Research Stay within the DAAD Bayreuth-Melbourne Colloid/Polymer Network in Australia, Dec 2017 – Mar 2018

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During my PhD studies in the group of Prof. Andreas Fery, I had the opportunity to spend a research stay at Monash University within the Bayreuth-Melbourne Colloid/Polymer Network. Hosted by Dr. Rico Tabor, I conducted an AFM study on interactions of photo-responsive surfactants, combining the research expertise of both groups.

Having met Ragesh Prathapan from Rico's SMaC Lab (Soft Materials and Colloids Lab) already during his stay in our group in Dresden, I was no less excited to meet Rico's team. From the very first moment, I felt welcome. Despite staying a couple of weeks only, I enjoyed that I quickly could feel like a part of the group. Whenever I stumbled upon problems in the lab or any administrative challenges, I was lucky that my lab mates were always there to help!

Accommodated in Normanby House on the outskirts of Monash Clayton Campus, already the daily walk to work was a memorable experience. Located right in suburban Melbourne, it is a park-like area with vast dimensions being home for birds and other animals, especially in the Aboriginal Garden.

During my stay, I was able to attend the Australian Colloid and Surface Science Student Conference. Besides having the chance to present my work and exchange with Australian colloid scientists, this trip took me to the other end of the famous Great Ocean Road, the surfing hot spot Warrnambool.

The conference was also part of a DAAD network workshop. Its second part back in Melbourne lead us to various research groups and facilities within the network.

After roughly three months, I left Melbourne with lots of great impressions, interesting scientific (but also non-scientific) exchange, and unforgettable experiences with new friends. Therefore, thanks to Rico and his team for hosting me, thanks to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for financial support through its thematic network "Bayreuth-Melbourne Polymer/Colloid Network", sponsored from funds of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), and thanks to everyone else helping to realize this research stay. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Elite Study Program "Macromolecular Science" at the University of Bayreuth for its support.



Aboriginal Garden at Monash Clayton Campus.



Bayreuth/Melbourne network workshop at Monash.