

Report

I'm Arun Ashokan. I'm currently doing my Ph.D. at the University of Melbourne under the supervision of Prof. Paul Mulvaney. I spent 2 weeks in Germany as part of the Bayreuth-Melbourne colloid/polymer network exchange program. First and foremost, I need to thank Sylvia and Melanie for coordinating and helping with visa processing for our stay in Germany. In the first week, I attended the workshop organized by the network which had some interesting lectures from speakers from the network. During that time itself, the network has organized some lab tours and dinner events which helped us to get connected within the network. I also did a one-week research stay in the group of Prof. Tobias Kraus at INM Saarbrücken where I was measuring the temperature-dependent aggregation of colloidal semiconductor nanocrystals using small angle X-ray scattering(SAXS). I didn't find any difficulty with integration into the team since Tobias and his group were very friendly and helpful. One Ph.D. student and postdoc in his group helped me to do the measurements as well as with my stay in Saarbrücken. Unfortunately, by the end of my stay, there were some technical issues with the SAXS machine. Therefore I had to leave the rest of my sample with them to finish the experiment. Apart from that, the initial measurements were promising and were in agreement with our hypothesis.

During my short stay, I traveled to few new places and was able to connect with some of my old friends who were in Europe including an exchange PhD student who was there in our lab in the previous year. I highly recommend traveling through Germany and outside if possible. There are a lot of exciting things to explore. To conclude, this exchange program had given me the opportunity of working with another research group and learn new techniques from them. Altogether it was a nice experience which will be cherished always.

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