



Please insert here at least one **PHOTO** of your traineeship stay abroad! Preferred motives are photos of your accommodation, of your work place, of being at work. Attention! Due to legal considerations we kindly ask you to send us only photos that have been taken by yourself!





STUDENT DETAILS

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| University department / faculty: | FB4: Design |
| Field of study: | M.A. Integrated Design |
| Home university: | Hochschule Anhalt |
| Nationality: | Canadian |
| Duration of traineeship (<i>from ...to...</i>): | 25/02/2021 to 26/07/2021 |

TRAINEESHIP INSTITUTION

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Country: | Portugal |
| Name of traineeship institution: | Bios |
| Web page: | https://biostech.co/ |
| Address: | Rua Cidade Nova Lisboa 11, Lisbon, 1800-107 |
| Contact person: | Michael Parkes |
| Telephone / E-Mail: | +351960490868 / michael@biostech.co |

EXPERIENCE REPORT (approx. 3 pages + more photos if applicable)

1) Traineeship institution

Please give a brief description of your host traineeship institution.

Bios is a green technology start-up company based in Lisbon, Portugal, where their purpose aims to integrate nature and technology to develop healthy living spaces for sustainable communities and commerce. By utilizing the waste energy of existing buildings, Bios' solution transforms buildings' technical areas with Greenhouse technology to exploit waste energy and reduce GHG emissions, while producing clean and fresh food for local communities.

2) Searching for a traineeship

How did you find your traineeship? Are there any recommendable links or other helpful tips you would like to share?

I found my traineeship directly from the erasmusintern.org website while I was searching through potential internships and digital opportunities that felt like the right fit for me.

I would recommend first searching through the official Erasmus Intern website for any opportunities you might like... because it felt like the easiest way for me to ensure that the traineeship met the requirements to receive the Erasmus grant. If finances are not a concern for you, LinkedIn and Indeed usually have a decent amount of job postings available.

3) Preparation

How did you prepare for your traineeship in terms of language, intercultural, professional and organisational aspects? Are there any recommendable links or other helpful tips you would like to share?

In terms of knowing that I'd be moving to Portugal, specifically Lisbon, I didn't really need to prepare much... other than packing for a new climate zone. I had been to Lisbon once before, back in 2017, so I felt comfortable moving to a city that I was already quite familiar with. In terms of language, I was aware the company I was working operated entirely in English, so I felt comfortable moving to the city only knowing the basics of Portuguese to get by.

4) Accommodation

How did you find your accommodation? Are there any recommendable links or other helpful tips you would like to share?

I booked an AirBnB for 1 month to get settled in and find more suitable long-term accommodation. I would highly recommend doing something similar to start, because it is the safest and most reliable option in terms of avoiding any scams when it comes to renting a new place. Since I booked 1 full month at the AirBnB, I received a 30% discount for my total booking fee, which made the price close to par with Lisbon's average rental prices.

After that, I found several groups on Facebook with other students and expats also looking for accommodation. I searched and visited a few places (in-person) before deciding on a shared flat that I liked, which I then rented for 3 months.

5) Traineeship

Please describe the tasks and / or the projects carried out during your traineeship. In which way were you mentored and integrated? How were the working conditions? Did you have especially positive or negative experiences?

Jack-of-all-Trades would probably be the simplest way to describe the tasks and projects I carried out while working with Bios... but I'll elaborate. Since I was the only team member with a diversified design background, the majority of my tasks and projects revolved around strategically designing and executing various levels of content using different design inputs and outputs; with a heavy emphasis on motion graphics and film production. One of my largest roles was to independently film, direct, edit, and produce an original short-film that was used as the official launch video for a global crowdfunding campaign. Another project I worked on was centred around UX design, where I created a number of different wireframes to visually represent Bios SaAS for their new Greenhouse technology. These wireframes were used at official stakeholder and partner meetings alike, where I was also in charge of other graphic and visual communication elements (preparing pitch decks, creating infographics and other data visualization tools, etc.). Although my role was heavily focused around design projects and tasks, due to my dual background in business and design, I also played a significant role in the strategic elements of the business operations. Some of these tasks included applying for grants, which required extensive knowledge around sustainability and innovation across business practices in order to fill out the applications.

6) Acquired qualifications

Which qualifications and skills could you acquire or improve during your traineeship?

The first thing that comes to my mind when I think about this question, has to do with the technical aspects of design skills. Due to the nature of the traineeship (as in working with a small start-up company with no established design team), I don't think I had much of an opportunity to improve my technical design qualifications. That being said, because of the large amount of hands-on experience, I definitely improved my skills overall and learned a lot by doing. I also think I could have improved my communication skills. With such a small team, it's very important to check in with others on a regular basis, even just to let them know where you're at with certain projects or tasks. As quite an independent worker, I don't think I did the best job at that, so it's definitely something I'm improving.

7) Country-specific features

Are there any specific traineeship regulations in the target country that affected you as an Erasmus trainee (e.g. France: housing allowance, convention de stage? If yes, which ones? Are there any recommendable links or other helpful tips you would like to share?

I don't think there are any specific regulations that would affect a traineeship in Portugal? None that I can think of, at least.

8) Visa, residence and work permit (only for international students)

Which prearrangements had to be made in terms of visa, residence and work permit? Are there any recommendable links or other helpful tips you would like to share?

All I needed was my EU Residence Permit, which I obtained from Germany (my home country where I'm completing my Master's degree). I'm originally from Canada, so I also brought my national passport with me (of course).

9) Other

Is there anything else you want to let other students know?

Yes - if you are someone who is concerned about finances... make sure you check and confirm that your host traineeship institution financially compensates you! The Erasmus grant is wonderful, but essentially (on average), only covers your rent for the duration of the internship. So If your host institution does not compensate you... it is a very difficult amount to live off of. However, if they do compensate you - with the help of the Erasmus grant, together they both make up a fair remuneration, which should allow you to enjoy your stay without needing to go (too much) into your savings.

This is the only thing I wish I thought about more clearly. The job posting I found for my traineeship said, "financial compensation". However, during my interview, I found out the financial compensation was only provided as a food voucher for 100 Euros/month. Because of how perfect I felt the opportunity was for me (aside from the \$\$\$)... I decided to accept the offer and do the traineeship with only the support of the Erasmus grant. This was not enough to comfortably live in Lisbon... or really anywhere in Portugal. And because of the nature of a start-up company's cash flow... Bios was not able to offer me any additional financial compensation. I definitely do not regret the experience, by any means, I just wish I had thought about this more before making my decision.

10) Conclusion

What is the conclusion drawn after your traineeship experience abroad?

I would recommend it to anyone in a heartbeat. It's such an amazing experience if you are looking to both work and travel. When you are passionate about your work (and/or studies) and experiencing new parts of the world, if there's an opportunity that helps you foster both these things simultaneously... you take it! It will truly be up there as one of the highlights in this lifetime.

Declaration of consent

I hereby agree to the publication of this report on the website of the Leonardo Office Saxony-Anhalt.

I assure that the photos used in this report do not violate the rights of other persons or companies (personal rights, copyrights etc.).

Please send this report by email to angela.wittkamp@ovgu.de!
Acceptable file formats: [.doc], [.docx], [.rtf], [.odt].