

## LBG Career Center

### Expert Internships – Selected experience reports

Since 2018, pre- and post-docs of the Ludwig Boltzmann Society have completed Expert Internships - 2 months of practical experience in a self-chosen host organization outside of science - in the following companies and organizations, for example:

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# AMGEN

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## AMGEN (Vienna)

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### **My Starting Point**

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

Before the Expert Internship, I completed my PhD at the Medical University of Vienna in the field of heart failure.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

I applied for the Expert Internship to gain insight into the pharmaceutical industry and to find out whether a career in this field could be of interest to me. Especially in view of the fact that long-term employment and funding in the university sector are always problematic.

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

During the Expert Internship, it became clear to me that the pharmaceutical sector would appeal to me very much and I can imagine a professional future there very well.

### **The Host Organization**

#### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

I was awarded the Expert Internship with the US biotechnology company AMGEN through the LBG Career Center. AMGEN focuses on making progress in the treatment of serious diseases, and redefining the limits of what is scientifically possible in medicine. This guiding principle of AMGEN fascinated me very much and that is why I finally applied for the Expert Internship at the LBG Career Center.

#### *In which period did you complete your Expert Internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

I did my Expert Internship from November to March. Since I have two small children, it was impossible for me to work full-time for 2 months of the Expert Internship. AMGEN offered me to extend the Expert Internship to 4 months and to work only part-time. I was very grateful for this offer because otherwise I would not have been able to do the Expert Internship.

***Which areas or departments have you been able to gain insight into?***

I worked in the Medical Affairs department, especially in the field of General Medicine. As part of the Medical Team, I got to know the product range of AMGEN. In addition, I gained insight into the work profiles of the Medical Science Liaisons and Medical Advisors. I also had the opportunity to listen to lectures by two renowned professors in the context of an event on hyperlipidemia. In addition, I was able to gain insights into their marketing activities. I learned how cooperation with a medical department looks like and how marketing material is created.

**The Expert Internship**

***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

My tasks in the medical department were very diverse and included the following in particular:

- Spending time in the field with the medical and scientific field service
- Creating a newsletter
- Doing research on the different drugs of AMGEN
- Preparing a side effect overview
- Creating a summary of current literature
- Supporting a Clinical Research Associate of CTM for a clinical study initiation
- Creating presentations

***What was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues like?***

My mentor was simply amazing - kind, socially competent, enormous expertise and always there for you when you had questions! So the cooperation worked perfectly. I very quickly felt at home in the team and was warmly welcomed by everyone. My colleagues were always willing to explain the processes and structures of the company to me and there was also enough time for a private chat over lunch.

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work you did during the Expert Internship?***

A common feature was the reading of scientific publications and the preparation of presentations, which were then presented to the team. The differences to my previous work in academic research were clearly no contact with patients and no supervision of clinical studies or statistical evaluations. During my time at AMGEN I took part in many meetings - a situation I had never known before. Over time, however, I have come to appreciate these meetings very much because the exchange between the different departments is very important.

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

In a large global company like AMGEN, communication is essential. As I am an open, communicative person, I was able to adapt to the company structure and working methods very quickly and approached the employees directly when I had any questions. This made working together much easier.

## **My Personal Reflections**

### ***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

My very personal challenge during this time was to optimally combine work and family. Thanks to great support from my environment, I have in the end succeeded in doing so.

### ***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

My biggest learning experience was getting to know the structures and processes of a large biotechnology company and dealing with different areas.

### ***What is the importance of an Expert Internship in relation to your future career?***

The Expert Internship enables you to have completely new experiences, meet new people, leave your comfort zone, and face new challenges. This is not only invaluable for your further professional career, but also for your personal development! The Expert Internship also had a surprise in store for me because after only two months at AMGEN I was offered the position of Scientific Communication Manager. I accepted the offer and since the middle of March, I have been working part time for AMGEN.

### ***What did you particularly like and what could be improved in the Expert Internship Initiative of the LBG CC?***

I found the whole process very easy. From the first phone call with the LBG Career Center to the job interview, everything went very quickly and smoothly.

### ***Any last comments?***

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the people involved who made this Expert Internship possible and supported me during this time!



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## Bildungshaus Schloss St. Martin (Styria)

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### **My Starting Point**

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

At the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Consequences of War Research (Kriegsfolgenforschung) in Graz.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

My basic motivation was that I had missed one thing in my career so far, namely getting to know structures in the public sector. Since I was already familiar with the Bildungshaus Schloss St. Martin and I had expressed in advance that I would like to be accepted for an internship, the perfect opportunity arose.

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

I would prefer to continue working in research (historical studies) and plan, manage, and carry out research projects with a team of specialists. I would also like to do the associated public relations work on books, websites, newspaper reports, etc.

Since we know how difficult it is to achieve permanent employment in the scientific field (third-party funding!), I can also imagine switching back to the private sector. For me, a higher (management) position is of course an option in the possible areas of publishing, media agencies, private research institutions, or the arts/cultural sector.

In general, I strive for an activity with a high degree of personal responsibility. I am very interested in the publication of popular scientific study results or scientific findings. I think it is important that the population also receives more information about what the scientific community does and how important science - especially foundational science - is for the further development of society across all disciplines.

### **The Host Organization**

***Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?***

I chose the Bildungshaus Schloss St. Martin because, on the one hand, I was already familiar with the institution and, on the other hand, my curiosity was aroused as to how adult education can be put into practice today outside the academic sector.

***In which period did you complete your Expert Internship and were the two months suitable for you?***

Period: March and April. Yes, the two months were enough to get good insight into the organization. Three months would certainly have been even better to deepen certain connections and to be an even more accepted "new" employee in an already very established organization, which sometimes cannot be entered so quickly - but that would be a luxury.

***Which areas or departments have you been able to gain insight into?***

First and foremost, in the "higher" areas of management level and one level below. I worked intensively with my mentor, the director of the Bildungshaus, or with her direct subordinates.

## **The Expert Internship**

***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

I worked in the management and the pedagogical departments.

My tasks were:

- Collaboration in the planning and organization of the 100th anniversary celebration
  - Conception of a historical lecture series for the Bildungshaus Schloss St. Martin
  - Conception of the redesign of the St. Martin Archive
  - Planning, coordinating, executing, and accompanying the presentation of the 100th anniversary publication including the design of the book sale in the Steinberger Room, including guided tours of the castle and its historical rooms
- Besides that, I simply slipped into several daily tasks, i.e., I attended meetings and participated in the daily work routine together with my colleagues.

***What was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues like?***

Very good. I was warmly welcomed from the very beginning. At no time did I feel like a disruptive factor, which can happen during internships, as I know from my own experience. In the end, I already felt like a part of St. Martin and I had to remind myself that the work is only temporary. I also had a very close relationship with my mentor. She gave me a lot of insight into internal matters, which I consider to be particularly valuable. In general, I can say that there is a lot of mutual respect and a good working atmosphere in St. Martin. But there too, of course - as everywhere - there are quarrels from time to time, which I attribute mainly to certain conditions of envy (but which did not affect me).

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work you did during the Expert Internship?***

Not to put it too matter-of-factly but the level. St. Martin is a company "by the people for the people", one is very down-to-earth there, which can be seen in the daily workings of the organization. In my opinion, a different level prevails in science, the educational elite of the country is represented in research, the proximity to the "rest of the people" is not there. In science, one consciously distinguishes oneself from the rest of the population and in St. Martin one consciously seeks proximity to the people whom they serve. Of course, this is also reflected in the work processes. I felt this strongly and experienced it in the routine daily work, e.g., communicating with guests/customers. It is not easy for me to explain this because so much happens on an unconscious level of communication. At least I have noticed that I'm able to be a little reflexive concerning my other behavior in the work world.

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

In St. Martin, I was able to sharpen the focus on the fact that the target group is very much interested in higher education. The current educational program at St. Martin is for the most part very low-threshold and the goal is to reach families. However, I was astonished to learn that the interest in historical, scientific topics (e.g., the history of Straßgang or the education house itself) is immensely high in the target group. We noticed this when we organized the opening evening for a photo exhibition in the castle: we featured 100 pictures from 100 years of St. Martin. During the presentation, there was also a lecture of the district leader, who spoke about the history of Straßgang. This was so well received by the audience that further evenings were organized and finally I, together with my mentor, came up with the idea of offering such evenings more often. In the future, I will offer appointments for the Bildungshaus Schloss St. Martin alone or together with the district head, where we will present scientifically founded information on Graz history for a broad audience. That makes me very happy.

A key competence which I would like to expand and which I noticed especially during the Internship is my rhetorical skills. I was impressed by how my mentor Anna Thaller gave speeches and presentations. I also want to learn how to speak better, more sympathetically, spontaneously, and more freely in front of a large audience. Here I also thought of the LBG CC. Perhaps such a presentation skills seminar would be a possibility for me.

## **My Personal Reflections**

***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

My biggest challenge was not the internship itself and my experiences and work that I had to do, but the fact that there was also a lot to do that was left over from the "normal" working day of the BIK that had to be done.

***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

The conversations with my mentor. She was very open, and I could get good insights on how to manage a stressful position in which you must consider many sensitivities (Styrian politics, employees, target audience...) with relative calmness and great competence. That impressed me.

I also liked the meetings with St. Martin's employees. In my eyes, the decision-making there was very democratic, everyone was heard, every voice was considered important. So, it was not a top-down method, as one often experiences. For me that was a best practice example - should I be in a leadership position again, I would like to act in the same way.

***What is the importance of an Expert Internship in relation to your future career?***

I have opened a new area both for myself and for St. Martin by offering events in the future that will bring scientific findings closer to a broad target audience.

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved in the Expert Internship Initiative of the LBG CC? Any last comments?***

I thought everything was well organized. You must respect the LBG for this initiative. Such knowledge transfer opportunities are priceless in my eyes and they are far too rare. Respect!

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## Boehringer Ingelheim (Vienna)

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### **My Starting Point**

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

I am currently employed at the LBI Applied Diagnostics as a PhD student in Program Line 1 - Molecular Pathology.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

I applied for the internship because I wanted to gain an insight into industrial research and broaden my horizons.

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

After the internship I can say that industrial research would already appeal to me and that I can imagine my professional future there.

### **The Host Organization**

#### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

I did my internship at Boehringer-Ingelheim RCV. Boehringer is one of the world's largest biopharmaceutical companies specializing in lung cancer. Since Boehringer's cancer research location is in Vienna, it was ideal for me to complete the internship there. In addition, Boehringer would be a potential employer after my PhD studies.

#### *In which period did you complete your Expert Internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

I was with Boehringer from January to February and was able to carry out my own small project during the two months, so the period was ideal.

#### *In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?*

My field of activity was experimental cancer research, but I was also able to gain a little insight into other departments or research fields through weekly Science Talks.

#### *In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?*

I was in experimental cancer research and was assigned my own small project there. In general, I used various cell culture techniques and molecular biological methods, some of which I also use in my PhD studies. Roughly speaking it was a CRISPR screen with cells treated with one of Boehringer's substances. The DNA of the treated cells was isolated and sequenced.

***How was the collaboration with your mentor and colleagues?***

I can describe the cooperation in the group as extremely positive, I was well looked after by my mentor and the laboratory technicians were all very helpful.

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and your work during the Expert Internship?***

As a difference to my previous activities in academic research, you must clearly mention the access to resources. Since it is a business-oriented company, Boehringer logically has a lot more research funding available. You will notice this in normal laboratory work. Despite this difference, however, research there is very similar to academic research, albeit perhaps somewhat more limited.

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

I was able to use a wide variety of laboratory techniques that I learned during my PhD studies at Boehringer because, as I said, it was a "completely normal" laboratory for cancer research - except for the money factor. Of course, there were also some methods that I didn't do during my training, but I am very happy to have got to know them at Boehringer. I am particularly interested in the capillary electrophoresis of ProteinSimple.

## **My Personal Reflections**

***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

To be honest, there weren't any big challenges. What comes to mind is that it may not have been so easy for me to return to academic life after the internship. I was a bit spoiled by the industrial laboratory routine, related to ready-made buffer solutions and other products that are normally produced in the academic environment by myself. But after 2 - 3 days I was already inside again.

***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

As my biggest learning at Boehringer I would mention the already mentioned capillary electrophoresis for protein analysis of ProteinSimple. Of course, I also learned what the structures within industrial research, at least at Boehringer, look like and what the processes are.

***What do you think about the importance of Expert Internships for your future career?***

I attach great importance to internships at Boehringer for my future career, as I have also done so to establish contacts with a potential employer, which was made possible by the internship. I also believe that it is generally well received in job interviews if you have such an internship in industry.

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved about the LBG CC's Expert Internship initiative?***

I liked everything, it was also quite pleasant to do something new other than your own projects and try it out. I especially liked the support during the internship by the LBG CC. To be honest, I wouldn't change anything about that.

***Any last comments?***

I would like to thank the LBG CC once again, not only for the good support, but also in general for the opportunity to carry out the internship.



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## CN Systems (Styria)

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### **My Starting Point**

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

I have been working at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Clinical-Forensic Imaging (LBI CFI) in Graz. I was also a DOC Scholar of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. My activities during this period were mainly the completion of my doctoral thesis at the Graz University of Technology and the collaboration in other research projects carried out at the LBI-CFI (e.g., also the supervision of FEMTech interns).

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

My doctoral degree and the uncertainties about a long-term career at LBI CFI or in university were the main motivations for my application. I would describe my previous education as "non-traditional", which means that I do not fit into a classic job description. With my internship, I wanted to gain insights into a medical technology company to determine whether this path is an option for me in the future.

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

For me, there are mainly two career options to choose from. On the one hand, I would like to continue working scientifically. I have noticed over the past few months that such work is also possible outside of research at CNSystems. I see the second career opportunity in project management. The activities in this area correspond very much to my personal characteristics, such as structured work, organizational skills, and pleasure in planning and carrying out activities and projects.

### **The Host Organization**

#### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

For my internship I have chosen the branch medical technology. Due to my recently completed training, this industry offers me many career opportunities.

***In which period did you complete your Expert internship and were the two months suitable for you?***

I completed the internship between October and December at CNSystems. CNSystems is a small company engaged in the development of continuous non-invasive blood pressure monitors. The focus is on clinical evaluation, software and hardware development, as well as quality management of the devices developed there. The 2 months I could spend at CNSystems were suitable for me.

***In which areas or departments could you gain insight?***

On the one hand, I was able to gain insight into the department where I worked - Medical Affairs & Innovation. On the other hand, through conversations with colleagues and participation in test measurements, I also learned something about development and product management.

## **The Expert Internship**

***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

I worked in the Medical Affairs & Innovation department. Specifically, my tasks were the consideration of a literature research strategy according to MEDDEV 2.7 Guidelines on Medical Devices (Clinical Evaluation), the systematic conduct of literature research and the evaluation of clinical studies on the topic of "non-invasive cuff less blood pressure monitors". As an output after my research, I prepared a report and a presentation about my results and summarized my findings for a future scientific publication.

***How was the collaboration with your mentor and colleagues?***

The Medical Affairs & Innovation team took very good care of me. I felt very comfortable and was able to contact my colleagues at any time with questions, e.g., on subject-specific databases and on the clinical evaluation of medical devices according to EU directives. My mentor always asked me about my progress and has always conveyed the impression that my performance is of great importance for the company. At my farewell party he even shared the main results of my research and their economic significance with all colleagues!

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work during the Expert Internship?***

I was lucky to be able to work very scientifically during my internship. I mainly dealt with scientific publications for the technical due diligence of a new product. Nevertheless, I noticed some differences, e.g., how the economic importance (e.g., with investors) of the scientific results differs from the importance in the pure research area.

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

I was able to apply my skills in the areas of planning / time management, research, data synthesis, data presentation, and report/presentation creation. For the evaluation of clinical studies in the field of blood pressure measurement, I sometimes lacked the professional skills, such as the usual accuracy of blood pressure measurements, the usual examination and validation procedures for blood pressure monitors or the landscape of the professional journals.

## **My Personal Reflections**

### ***What was the biggest challenge during your internship and how did you deal with it?***

For me the biggest challenge was the new subject. I had nothing to do with blood pressure and the multitude of influences on its measurement. I already received some documents from my mentor before the internship and was able to prepare myself and get used to it during the first weeks. In addition, on the first day, I asked my colleague to give me a brief overview of the clinical studies supervised by CNSystems. This gave me a good orientation for further research.

### ***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

The biggest learning for me was the realization of how easy it is for me to work in another related area of medical technology. This insight will certainly be useful when looking for future positions outside of research.

### ***What do you think of the importance of Expert Internship for your future career?***

The internship is of medium to high importance for my future career. I was able to learn the basics of various future methods of blood pressure measurement and quality management aspects in connection with the development of medical devices. Rather, the internship has an indirect, personal significance for my career development: namely that I was able to experience for myself how I can contribute my skills and knowledge to a company, whether I am fundamentally interested in the development of medical products, how they work in a (medical technology) company, on which topics value is placed and how procedures such as audits and FDA approval work.

### ***What did you particularly like and what could be improved about the LBG CC Internship Initiative?***

I really liked the unbureaucratic way in which the internship was organized, for which my colleague from the human resources department at CNSystems thanked me.

I think there is potential for improvement in the following areas:

- Application phase: Clarity regarding contact with potential host organizations (contact via the pre- or post-doc or via the Career Center) and submission of the internship factsheet.
- Coordination phase: Transparency in communication between career center, host organization and pre- or post-doc (set in cc)
- Additional documents: Letter of motivation (along with curriculum vitae) sent to host organization

***Any last comments?***

I would like to thank you once again for the great opportunity. The internship was a wonderful experience and I think it's great that the Career Center offers something like this!

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## Horizont 3000 (Vienna)

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### My Starting Point

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

Before the internship, I worked at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights in the team Social Justice (former team Development Cooperation and Economy).

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

My intention to apply for an internship was to use the opportunity to get a taste of a non-scientific field and to try out whether a career there or in a similar field would be possible for me.

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

Before the internship, I had the idea to develop further either in the direction of project work in foundations or in personnel development.

### The Host Organization

#### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

I have decided to work in the Personnel Development Cooperation (PEZA) at Horizont3000. I was aware of it and it was also confirmed in career coaching (via the LBG Career Center) that it is relatively difficult in Austria to move to a new area, such as personnel development in my case. However, since I am very familiar with development cooperation and have worked abroad myself, I could very well imagine an internship in exactly this organization.

#### *In which period did you complete your internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

The internship took place from mid-August to mid October.

#### *In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?*

In the first week I got onboarded in almost all areas of the organization. I had meetings with the managing director, the department heads, the project officers, the financial experts and the colleagues of the PEZA department, i.e., recruitment, returnee work, SDG internship, and with the colleague of the position to be filled.

## **The Expert Internship**

### ***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

I was assigned to PEZA and after one week I took over the leadership of the 6-week preparation course, which started at the beginning of September, as well as the process responsibility for the recruitment of the Regional Director for Central America.

### ***How was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues?***

My mentor as well as my colleagues were very helpful, friendly, and courteous. They welcomed me immediately and accepted me into their team.

### ***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and your work during the internship?***

I see the common ground in the topic of development cooperation and commitment to human rights, as well as in the very precise and reflective work. From my point of view, one big difference is how much more communication - internal and external - must be done with very different people.

### ***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

Inter alia accuracy, independent work, self-reflection, ability to cooperate, intercultural competence, ability to deal with conflicts, and to plan were all skills I used.

## **My Personal Reflections**

### ***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

The biggest challenge was to take over the leadership of the preparation course and with it the responsibility for six professionals. This also involved communicating a lot internally and externally - with people I didn't know and whose expectations I didn't know exactly. I took pleasure in this kind of work due to the challenge and jumped directly into the deep end.

### ***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

It is very positive to be able to use all the knowledge you have acquired so far!

### ***What do you think about the importance of Expert Internship for your future career?***

The internship has a very high value. I was employed after two weeks for 13 hours in addition to those of the internship, and at the end of the internship, the organization took me on into a tidy employer-employee relationship. Thus, I succeeded in the transition into a new field of activity!

### ***Any last comments?***

I also find the support and encouragement from the LBG CC team particularly positive!



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## nFrames (GER, Stuttgart)

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### My Starting Point

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

I was/am a senior researcher at the LBI ArchPro, mainly dealing with airborne remote sensing, data visualization and image-based modelling.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

The combination of the last two techniques resulted in a publication (i.e. Computer graphics meets image fusion) which was found by Konrad Wenzel, the CEO of nFrames (Stuttgart, Germany) when he was looking to implement something similar in their software SURE. This, plus the fact that I know Konrad already from a conference, made him decide to offer me a job at his firm.

SURE stands for SURface Reconstruction. The software does dense-image matching to get a detailed three-dimensional surface model from a collection of overlapping images. In my daily work, I also use dense image-matching as a part of my image-based modelling research. However, I do not use SURE, nor was I interested to solely working on one specific component of all the tools I use in my research. On top of that, I had never pictured myself at a commercial company. So, although flattered, I was initially somewhat reluctant to take the job offer.

After many conversations with my partner and telephone calls with Konrad, I became aware that I had nothing to lose and I could even gain something from it; I would see a friend's company, explore a new city and maybe even get some new insights into the field of dense image matching. The additional living expenses made me a bit skeptical, however. After discussing the idea with some colleagues at the LBI ArchPro, it was our vice-director Immo Trinks who mentioned the internship possibilities offered by the LBG CC. A few telephone calls with Konrad and visits to the LBG CC later, I was convinced that this two-month adventure was the right thing to do. Most travelling and living expenses would be taken care of by the LBG CC, and there was no need to take days off at the LBI ArchPro. Furthermore, it became clear that nFrames would provide the necessary hardware, and I would work on a variety of exciting topics. Finally, I also saw it as the materialization of a possible plan B for my future career. So, in short: this two-month internship proposal presented an ideal opportunity to be part of a young but thriving commercial environment while having the potential to meet experts in the dynamic field of dense image matching and experience new ways of management and information flow. Even if I was initially not planning to stay at the company, I was hoping to learn new management skills, skills that could be very important if – one day – I would have my own research group. So, my long-term goal is to have my own university-based research group. Being part of a young team and seeing how they run daily activities could only be beneficial in that sense.

## The Host Organization

### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

nFrames is a young, high-tech company based in Stuttgart, Germany. They are one of the big players in dense image matching. As explained before, I did not really choose them, they offered me a job. After that proposal, the ball started rolling, and I gradually decided to do an internship with them (and check whether I could take the job they offered). I left Vienna on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February and returned on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April. In between, I came back for one week to attend a workshop that was organized by the LBI ArchPro at the Donau-Universität Krems.

### *In which period did you complete your Expert Internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

Since I do not have a family nor any teaching activities at the beginning of the year, leaving Vienna for two months was possible. Two months is a perfect period, as one can really start to know a company and a city. On the other hand, it is also not too long. A more extended period would have become more problematic (due to the start of the conference season, a Belgian internship student that came for a few months to Vienna, and the fact that one has double housing costs). A period exceeding two months might also not be advisable when one has a partner.

At nFrames, I mainly worked with aerial datasets that had certain issues. Since I have a lot of experience with digital aerial imagery, I could help to solve various problems. Many of these tests were performed in SURE, as such also continuously testing their software.

### *In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?*

I also was involved in some of their running research projects, such as edge detection and texture quantification. The fact that I have a big library with (digital) literature, a literature database and a lot of research code made it more straightforward for me (than for them) to look for proper scientific research and quickly test a few ideas. The simultaneous orientation of airborne laser scanning data and aerial imagery was a third project I was involved in. During this project, I also worked together with Gottfried Mandlbürger of the TUWien, while I could concurrently learn how to use their point cloud software OPALS.

I also attended various types of meetings and the nFrames retreat. As such, I got to learn different forms of communication, meeting protocols, and ways to optimize people management and communication flow.

## The Expert Internship

### *In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?*

My main task was to help/support where I could: testing software or specific algorithms, coming up with solutions for problematic datasets, providing literature or new software packages, giving general data management advice or even getting the prices of the competitors' software for the sales team.

This means that I got to work with almost everybody in the team: all the programmers, the support and sales team, but also the CEO, CCO and CTO.

### ***How was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues?***

The contact with all these people worked flawlessly. We had a lot of fun together, I learned a lot from them, and I think they also learned quite a few things from me. Whereas I enjoyed their openness, in-depth knowledge, and welcoming nature, they apparently enjoyed my energy, humor, and problem-oriented mind. Since Konrad shared his office with me, we talked very often on all possible topics (from politics and management to what he would like me to do at nFrames), and in a very informal way. Overall, the general teamwork was excellent. nFrames is a high-tech company dealing with dense image matching, whereas I only use that as one step in my 3D modelling pipeline. Moreover, the latter is even just a small part of my archaeological research. As such, it is hard to compare both at the same level.

### ***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work during the Expert Internship?***

In academia, everything revolves around research especially in-depth research. For instance, when developing a method / writing a paper, one tries to exhaustively research all existing methods / read all relevant literature on that topic. Commercial environments usually trade this comprehensiveness for code implementation and speed of execution, two components that are typically absent in academic archaeological research. So, at nFrames, I could spend some time researching a specific method, but not as much as I usually would. This research would also never materialize in a scientific publication. On the other hand, research at nFrames would directly benefit customers worldwide, whereas my academic research will maximally influence a handful of scholars. Writing a novel paper and seeing a new algorithm commercialized are both very satisfying, but almost impossible to achieve in the same working environment.

Apart from that, the most significant difference lies in the day-to-day goals, teamwork, and communication strategies. As a final example, I can mention the different meeting cultures: nFrames meetings come in four varieties, depending on their aim. One always has different meetings – and type of meetings – per week (and some employees even per day) to carefully observe progress and react rapidly. Academic meetings might take up less time because they are much less frequent, but this renders many of them almost automatically boringly long and much less productive (sometimes even without clear outcomes).

### ***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

What helped me a lot at nFrames is my passion for imaging data especially related to their structured management of solving imagery-related problems. I consider both skills as qualifications that are possessed only to a lesser degree by the current nFrames staff, but this can largely be explained by the age difference (about a decade on average). Besides, I also have an extensive literature database (plus books and articles), which makes it easy to find the correct scientific research about a topic very quickly. This is something that most scholars do possess, and which is indeed not found in a commercial company. My experience in writing texts also made it straightforward to write short texts or to-the-point emails whenever necessary. Finally, I mastered Metashape, which is a software that can be used for orienting images (something that SURE cannot do, nor is anybody at nFrames familiar with Metashape). As such, I had to adapt all datasets that came without orientation or which had a problematic orientation.

On the one hand, a thorough knowledge of C++ programming could have been beneficial, although this is something that almost no archaeologist masters. Moreover, nFrames has their dedicated developers, so from that point of view, I would most likely never have been involved in C++ coding (even if I would have mastered it). On the other hand, mastering MATLAB (a more accessible programming language) was very useful for prototyping algorithms. This helped me to substantially contribute to Konstantin Hoppe's master thesis, which he wrote at nFrames during my stay. A more engineering-specific background could also have helped when I was dealing with specific problems, although I think this was never really expected by the nFrames team.

## My Personal Reflections

### *What was the biggest challenge during your internship and how did you deal with it?*

I did not really have any significant challenge during my internship. It was problematic to find an affordable and pleasant place to stay for these two months, however. During my stay, everything went smooth. What could have made the visit even less stressful is a (partial) payment of the living expenses by the LBG CC before or during the internship as opposed to only after the internship.

### *What was your biggest lesson learned?*

For me, the whole team-experience and information-culture were the two primary positive outcomes. So far, I had only worked in pure (or more) academically-oriented environments. Although research projects usually involve teamwork, most scholars still have their own goals (e.g., a PhD, professorship). Moreover, physically different working places and the use of old meeting routines typically lead to far less-optimal collaborations and information flows. This situation turned out to be completely different at nFrames, where everybody shared the same two goals: make the image matching software better and satisfy the customer. Supported by an excellent infrastructure, this created a very collaborative working atmosphere that I had never experienced before. However, it remains essential to highlight that also the CEO, CCO and CTO of nFrames do everything to nourish that cooperative spirit and maximize the internal communication. They introduce new meeting forms (such as stand-ups or starting a meeting with an appreciation of some sort), resort to dedicated communication tools like Slack, offer individual coaching for project leaders, and provide many "extras" (e.g., unlimited drinks and bio-fruit, free massage or fitness subscriptions). Since almost all employees fell in the same age category, they effortlessly took that spirit outside the office hours and often met for cooking or other events.

Although the LBI ArchPro has also invested a lot into the optimization of its internal working, I have learnt quite a few new tricks at nFrames. I predominantly learned new ways to organize and motivate a team as well as new approaches to optimize meetings and exchange of communication. Although this skill-set is often implicitly assumed for academics, scholars usually lack any proper education in this regard. If I ever have my own research team (which is my carrier goal), these newly acquired (or optimized) skills will be the most valuable. Besides that, I also made many new friends whom I can always rely on to provide expert advice; I got to know Stuttgart, which turned out to be a much more pleasant city than what everybody told me before. Finally, I also have a much better overview of the key players and

customers in the dense image matching industry. So next to the commercially-oriented aspects, I certainly broadened my horizons also from an academic point of view.

***What do you think about the importance of an Expert Internship for your future career?***

For me, the LBG CC initiative was very positive because it did not involve a lot of effort from my side. Just establishing the contact between nFrames and LBG CC and looking for a place to stay. Moreover, the housing costs and one back-and-forth trip to the internship city will be refunded. That said, it would be beneficial if (part of) these costs were already paid by the LBG CC before or during the internship. Since one has double living costs during that period, these two months can become very expensive.

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved in the Expert Internship Initiative of the LBG CC?***

Finally, I would like to say that the LBG CC should advertise this initiative more as it is an outstanding opportunity to get to know totally new working environments. Although I could initially never picture this, it was, in the end, tough to make a choice between the LBI ArchPro in Vienna and nFrames in Stuttgart. I finally choose to stay at the LBI ArchPro because of the love for academic research and Vienna, but I will never forget the fantastic atmosphere and team-experience at nFrames!

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## Novartis (Vienna)

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### **My Starting Point**

#### ***Where were you working before the Expert Internship?***

I have been working at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Experimental and Clinical Traumatology. I have been the head of the Department of Gene Therapy and Molecular Biology with a focus on tissue regeneration. I received my PhD in Molecular Biology (at the University of Vienna) and will complete my second part-time study in Bioprocess Engineering soon.

#### ***What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship? How would you like to develop professionally?***

The overarching aspect of the direct link between science and industry as well as the potential industrial application of research ideas fascinated me right from the start. Although I am still very interested in scientific work (you never know what the next working day will bring), I noticed that I would like to look beyond what I've already experienced. That's why the first step I took was to start an extra-occupational course of study that would tie in with industry and business.

In general, I noticed that from year to year I have grown more and more into new tasks of various kinds and have accepted them with great pleasure, which then became part of my everyday work (from project management to initial contact with research and investment partners). This gave me the impression that I often got a glimpse of the "other side" and noticed that I was also very interested in tasks outside my science-oriented "in-the-box thinking". For some time, I was therefore somewhat indifferent to potential future possibilities that I was becoming aware of and, above all, possibilities that I was not yet aware of. This led me to many questions concerning the economic and industrial aspects of research, such as product- and service-oriented thinking, exploitation potentials, and work structures in biotechnology companies, to understand not only the technology but also the underlying business. In my opinion, the more you see how companies are positioned on the market and who their competitors are, the more you can contribute to meetings and discussions and the more valuable the contribution you can return.

I have the impression that I am at a fork in the road, with the question: industry or science, or is both possible?

This raises questions for me regarding product-oriented companies: How does project management work and how are internal structures structured? Which positions are there or are there positions or areas of responsibility (scientific, industrial, or interdisciplinary) that would be of interest to me? What are the work processes or the working environment like and what is the importance of teamwork? Do you run the risk of becoming an inconspicuous cogwheel in a large company/gearbox or are there possibilities for individual or creative development?

## The Host Organization

### *In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?*

The Career Center gave me the unique opportunity to gain very interesting insights into the pharmaceutical company Novartis. I was interested in Novartis because of its corporate philosophy, its unique product range, and its diversity in terms of work-related development opportunities. I was particularly pleased that the contact initiated by the Career Center worked well right from the start and that I was invited to an initial meeting with the HR department and the friendly Medical Director. The interview was a kind of work and interest based "anamnesis interview" to find out about my interests and motivation for the internship and the company.

I completed the internship from mid-February to mid-April. Both parties also showed great flexibility and willingness to compromise when it came to scheduling an appointment. During an initial meeting, I was asked which areas I was most interested in and what my motives for the internship were. Since I had to communicate to my "shame" that I didn't know many areas of work and that getting to know areas of responsibility and positions was part of my motivation, a rotation was suggested to me - perfect for me and my starting position. For three days I worked in the Medical Team, while on Thursdays and Fridays I helped with other tasks in the Clinical Trial Management Organization Team. Furthermore, from the first week I was given the opportunity to participate in policy discussions about the company (innovation, reputation, working atmosphere, etc.), philosophy and responsibilities. I was invited several times to offsite meetings outside the company building and my opinion was gladly heard and appreciated.

In the Medical Team I was able to gain many insights into various working methods and structures. Tasks of a Medical Advisor, Medical Science Liaison, cooperation with Commercial & Marketing Team, interaction with physicians/Health Care Professionals, opinion research, graphic design or implementation of information materials as well as declarations of consent.

Two days a week, the team of the Trial Management Organization gave me an insight into the bureaucratic and organizational processes of clinical trials, statistics, visits, cooperation with the external team, and the ethics committee.

### *In which period did you complete your internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

Unfortunately, the time has passed far too quickly. However, two months is a good time to get some insights and impressions. If you actively bring yourself in from the beginning and you are also trusted, you will quickly get good insights and leave the status of "puppy protection" in relation to tasks. To get to know people and not only to greet them fleetingly has also been possible. I am happy about numerous new friendships and exciting contacts!

## The Expert Internship

### *In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?*

My activities covered the entire medical department for oncology (solid tumors and hematology). My tasks included:

- Scientific support/assistance in medical collaborations and patient and physician care.
- Assistance and monitoring of local scientific projects (studies, advisory boards, scientific meetings)
- Offsite Meetings/Brainstorming (Inter- and Intra-matters)
- Preparation of patient information/ consent forms/study information
- Checking information and promotional material for medical and scientific correctness and compliance with project objectives
- Data Collection/Statistics/Visite Clinical Trials

#### ***How was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues?***

The cooperation was very good and based on mutual trust. I gained the trust of my colleagues from the very beginning and was immediately involved in medical, advisory, and bureaucratic activities. Despite a tight schedule, the Medical Head regularly took time for me to hold personal status meetings. In addition to these status meetings, it was pleasant that we also talked a lot about other topics, among others about the philosophy of the company and the employees, where the company stands now, where it wants to go, which skills/qualities/personalities are required for which tasks, etc. The teams I worked with were highly motivated and led by very good and friendly group leaders. It was immediately obvious that everyone was in the same boat and pulling together with a basic family idea and that they also liked to see this work as part of themselves. It was a dynamic environment based on free will and intrinsic motivation. Teamwork was very much in the foreground and colleagues were also interested in other team members' development.

#### ***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work during the Expert Internship?***

Although research is also interdisciplinary and cooperative between groups, personal professional development is always more important in scientific research. Publishing, improving track records, obtaining grants, presenting oneself at congresses, etc. In addition to your work, you also must push yourself forward. In a pharmaceutical company, you develop further, but this is a more passive process, which you automatically "fall into" when you set yourself goals. The group or the company and the goals are increasingly in the foreground here and you step back a little and fit into a gear system. Although this was a deterrent for me in the beginning, I found this process and this circumstance very pleasant (and paradoxically very beneficial for my own development), since I always tend to find my niche where I can unfold and build something creatively. I was pleasantly surprised by the fact that these opportunities exist in countless ways, especially in a pharmaceutical company. There were numerous possibilities in this company everywhere, in terms of medical aspects, graphic solutions, communication or information management, health issues, digitalization, etc.

#### ***Which interdisciplinary skills could you apply, and which were you missing?***

I am very flexible and learn very fast. This was communicated to me several times by the team at the end of the internship. They were surprised at how quickly I learned and adapted and quickly became a full and useful member. If you have always faced problems in general - no matter in which environment, whether in research or at home - you will see that the tasks or problems and bottlenecks in all industries do not differ so much from each other. I was very satisfied with my priority setting and my time management - a facet that I had to perfect laboriously over the years.

Above all, courage brought me forward. Courage to take on tasks and actively seek them, with the danger of stumbling. But if you yourself have often stumbled and notice that this stumbling or falling does not mean the end of the world, then a certain self-confidence carries you through everyday life. That helped a lot. The head of the franchise department once asked me what he could do so that I could develop my potential and grow in character. I thought he should just throw me in at the deep end. That doesn't mean that I don't need any support. It was only important to me that the trust was there on the other side and that I could also fulfil the tasks, whether it be at the first, second, or third attempt.

## **My Personal Reflections**

### ***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

The biggest challenge was the initial "culture shock" regarding different ways of working, priorities and mindset. Also, an almost specially developed language based on monosyllabic abbreviations of technical terms and definitions made me scream internally for a universal dictionary. But before I knew it, the abbreviations were known, and one was literally assimilated by this language. Furthermore, the flat hierarchy was very refreshing for me. Ideas were accepted and considered, "bossiness" is not present, everyone pulls in the same direction.

### ***What was your greatest lesson learned?***

The most important insight for me was the successful answer to the questions: How well am I personally fitting in at an international, big player in the pharmaceutical industry and where am I positioned within this network with my skills, knowledge, and interpersonal communication? Although thinking and acting are shaped by different goals and priorities, I became more and more aware of the fact that at the end of the day, everyone puts their pants on one leg at a time.

Routine was a rare item on the agenda. One was always confronted with new problems/tasks and was thus able to slowly move away from the familiar comfort zone and develop personally. It was also very good for me to see that my creativity, which I had so far only seen in science, was also an enormous help during my non-scientific work. That was very gratifying! Be it creativity in project management, creativity to solve conflicts or problems, creativity to break new ground, creativity to approach patients, etc. And the good thing about it: both old and new ways of working and approaches were welcome. Apart from ethical and legal points, there were no limits to how projects could be approached. Some approaches had proven their worth for years, others were just being honed for optimization. There was a matrix instead of fixed hierarchies, a constructive discussion culture, and principle of "un-bossing". I noticed that my thinking and actions fit very well into these structures and this team. Much more important: My fear - or rather, a certain destructive reverence - crumbled there very quickly. Since I myself am a proactive and helpful person and, if necessary, can also win a project, I was able to convince myself in the first days of settling in that I was able to do valuable, universal, and good work that was helpful for the teams despite my intern status. I was very motivated to get a lot of positive feedback from the group leaders and heads about my work and my general nature.

### ***What do you think is the importance of Expert Internship for your future career?***

The internship had (and has!) a very high value for my further career. Every week I learned more (also on a character level) than in the last two years. I have seen and confirmed to myself that it is healthy to leave one's comfort zone and trust oneself. To be ready to get involved in new tasks and to see that you can get along without problems; and even to see that the other side can learn a lot from you in terms of thinking and working, persistence and optimism. New contact persons and friendly relations were also possible with ease due to the very pleasant team. Through this internship, I am still very motivated to develop professionally in this direction and to continue to promote and challenge myself in a healthy way. The contact with Novartis will be maintained and expanded on both sides!

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved about the LBG CC Internship Initiative?***

The uncomplicated and quick handling of bureaucratic questions and the possible alternatives offered (Plan B, Plan C, ...) make this program unique. The trial and error without running the risk of losing one's job is an enormous help to develop professionally and personally.

I have thought longer about what could be improved - and normally I always think of something ;-), but I must admit that the process and benefits of this initiative have been very successful!

***Any last comments?***

I would like to thank you very much for giving me this great opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange through the internship! The team at the Career Center does excellent work, is always highly motivated, is enthusiastic about the services on offer and they continue to develop them - iteratively and always with feedback in mind. I am very happy that this initiative exists and that it is supported by such a capable and friendly team. Thank you very much!

PS: My farewell party at Novartis was very successful, with a card signed by the whole department and many goodies for me and my travels. ;-)

The only shortcoming was my "experiment": I was shocked about the general tenor regarding taste and health. Mozartkugel, Ferrero Rocher and Raffaello just couldn't compete with good old tomatoes and radishes. ;-)





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## Rechnungshof Österreich (Vienna)

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### My Starting Point

*Where were you working before the Expert Internship? What was your motivation to apply for an internship? How did you want to develop professionally?*

I have been working as a project manager at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights and mainly work on human rights projects in the context of EU enlargement. We advise public institutions on how to align their legal standards with those of the EU and support them in implementing these standards in practice. In addition, I work at my institute as a coordinator and expert on governance issues in development cooperations. Before my time at LBI, I worked in the field of good governance and dealt with the subject of administrative reform. However, most of my work focused on the implementation of reforms in partner countries. Over the course of time, I developed a better and better understanding of public administration in the African and South Eastern European context but was not familiar with public administration in Austria. For this reason, I had long wished to gain a better insight into an Austrian public institution and to learn what measures are being implemented here for administrative reform. When I read about the LBG Expert Internship, I thought this was an ideal opportunity to work for a limited time in a public institution and to experience the daily working life there.

### The Host Organization

*Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

I have listed the Austrian Court of Audit as my first preference in my application and was able to complete my two-month internship there. For my choice it was important that the Court of Audit is a public institution and contributes with its reports to the reform of the public administration in Austria. Although I had read RH reports before, I had no concrete idea of how the Court of Auditors works, how its audits work, and how it comes to its recommendations.

*In which period did you complete your internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

I did my internship at the Court of Audit from 1 October to 30 November. I found the period of two months a very appropriate time. While a month is too short to get good insight into an organization, after two months, I had the feeling that I had worked at the Court of Audit every day. On the other hand, two months of absence at the LBI are to be managed with good planning and a supporting team, whereas a longer absence would have been an even greater challenge both for me and for the remaining colleagues.

***In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?***

At the Court of Audit, I worked in an audit department and the allocation was a good fit for me. In addition, my mentor organized short visits and occasional contributions to other departments to gain a better understanding of the Court's work. For example, I got a glimpse of the report editing department and the public relations department and learned which revision steps are necessary for a RH report and what happens after a report has been published.

## **The Expert Internship**

***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

I worked in an audit department at the Court of Auditors. In addition to taking part in team meetings and general procedures, this gave me an insight into the current audit activities.

***What was the cooperation like with your mentor and colleagues like?***

The cooperation with my mentor and the colleagues was extraordinarily good. I was very warmly welcomed and well-integrated into the work of the team right from the start. The helpfulness of the colleagues made it possible for me to always find a contact person for small and large questions and made it easy for me to quickly find my way into everyday life at the Court of Audit. The staff of the Court of Audit were very interested in my work at the LBI and tried to promote the exchange in a targeted way. This ranged from individual meetings to an invitation to a lecture in the context of the internal "International Knowledge Community", where I presented the work of my LBI in administrative reform and twinning and discussed the experiences made with the participants.

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work during the Expert Internship?***

There were some similarities between my regular work in project management and the work at the Court of Audit. Just like a human rights project, the preparation of a RH report requires research on the topic, foresighted time and resource planning, clear communication, and good management in implementation. One big difference lay in the regional focus: While the Court of Audit works exclusively in the Austrian context, the work on my LBI has a strong international orientation and is mostly conducted in English.

## **My Personal Reflections**

***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

The biggest challenge during my internship was getting used to an organization I didn't know. After a few weeks of working and reading a lot of reports, attending meetings and holding meetings, it was easier for me to get actively involved.

***What was your biggest lesson learned?***

I would describe my greatest lesson as having gained good insight into how the Court works and how it works during the short period of the internship.

***What do you think, what significance does the internship have for your future career?***

The internship is certainly a great experience for my future career! The insight into the Austrian administration now gives me a better understanding of the institutions with which I work abroad.

***Any last comments?***

Otherwise I would like to point out again that the internship is a great initiative, which makes an insight possible, which I would not have got otherwise! Especially since I am already in a fixed employment relationship, it is a very extraordinary opportunity to get a taste of a completely different industry for a period of two months. The good initiation, organization, and accompanying support by the Career Center have contributed to the success and I am grateful for this enriching experience.



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## Roche Diagnostics (Vienna)

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### My Starting Point

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

Before the internship, I worked as a Post-Doc at the LBI for Cancer Research. I am currently working as a trainee for Quality and Regulatory Affairs at Roche Diagnostics GmbH.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

The current situation in basic research leaves little room for development for junior staff. It is difficult or almost impossible to get into positions where you can help shape processes. One of the goals of the internship was therefore professional development, also to seek new challenges in a different environment. Furthermore, the financing of basic research over many years is uncertain and is mostly managed by third-party funds that do not allow long-term perspectives for employees.

#### *How do you want to develop professionally?*

Personally, I find the combination of science and law or admission an interesting topic.

### The Host Organization

#### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

I have chosen the in vitro diagnostics industry and Roche Diagnostics. From a scientific point of view, in vitro diagnostics is a "familiar" area for me, as the devices often work with procedures or techniques that I have applied or developed myself in the laboratory. Roche is known as a leading company in in vitro diagnostics, has a state-of-the-art product portfolio and offers its employees many development opportunities.

#### *In which period did you complete your Expert Internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

I completed my internship within a period of two months. Of course, a longer period would be desirable, because as a basic researcher you need some time to get an overview of the "unrelated" processes.

***In which areas or departments could you gain insight into?***

I worked in the Quality Regulatory and Compliance department, but also gained insight into many other departments.

**The Expert Internship**

***In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?***

As I said, I worked in the Quality, Regulatory and Compliance department. My tasks were:

- Quality management based on the standards ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 13485:2016
- Evaluation and process assessment of current conditions and implementation of risk-based measures
- Monitoring of environmental aspects and standard requirements according to ISO 14001:2015/EMAS
- Familiarization with legal requirements according to IVDR and MDR
- Collaboration in the implementation of new corporate strategies in the context of change management

***How was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues?***

The cooperation with my colleagues and my mentor was very good and I found all the resources and prerequisites to complete my tasks efficiently. All colleagues were also very willing to answer questions and explain processes and structures.

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in research and the work during the Expert Internship?***

The biggest difference probably lies in the speed at which decisions are made. There is also much more transparency when it comes to decisions. Another big difference is the efficiency with which tasks and projects are handled, as responsibilities are clearly defined and who must do when and what is clearly communicated. There is also a difference in thinking. Where research usually pursues fact-oriented thinking, there is a more process-oriented way of thinking in the in vitro diagnostics / medical device industry.

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you apply, and which were you missing?***

As a trained scientist, I think you have a very good skills set to quickly understand the processes and procedures on-site. A statistical and technical understanding of the products is of great use. What is missing is an understanding of the more global connections and structures in industry, which of course you don't necessarily get to know as a scientific employee.

**My Personal Reflections**

***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

The biggest challenge so far has been analyzing the affiliate notification process. This is a global post-market surveillance process of Roche. The complexity of the process makes it difficult to grasp and understand it. As a trained scientist, however, you have learned to deal with complex problems and to build up the necessary frustration tolerance to successfully cope with setbacks.

***What was your greatest lesson learned?***

My greatest learning was to get to know and understand the structures and processes at Roche Diagnostics.

***What do you think, what significance does Expert Internship have for your future career?***

The internship gave me a good overview of the processes and structures in the in vitro diagnostics / medical devices industry. This will make my further career easier, as I can now better assess what is expected in certain functions in companies.

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved about the LBG CC Internship Initiative?***

The LBG CC is a very good initiative to pave possible career paths for young researchers outside the university. For me, the courses offered and the networking with other young scientists who are in a similar situation was very helpful. What I think is still missing is a person or consultant who has industry experience, knows the processes and role models, and has the necessary networking to enable internships in different positions for others.

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## Steiermärkische Landesregierung

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### My Starting Point

#### *Where were you working before the Expert Internship?*

I have been a post-doctoral fellow at the LBI for Consequences of War Research, after having been employed at the same institute as a research assistant in various projects. After my internship, I will continue to be responsible for projects at the LBI for Consequences of War Research in a managerial and operational capacity, and as before, a program line manager for War and War Consequences.

#### *What was your motivation to apply for an Expert Internship?*

I have spent most of my career in active research. Already during my university education, I was able to gain a foothold in this field and know both the university and non-university research landscape. I have always been involved in the acquisition of funding and third-party funding. The basic idea behind the internship was to look outside the box and gain insights into the other side, the donor side - namely into public science funding. The province of Styria, which, with a funding share of more than 5% of GDP, sees itself as a pioneer among the Austrian provinces and explicitly defines itself as a research state. It was important for me to become acquainted with the range covered by the province of Styria. What opportunities does a regional funding agency have to further develop the research landscape? What are the strategic considerations and processes behind the individual funding programs? What tasks does a public office perform in the field of science and research?

#### *How would you like to develop professionally?*

The current position at the LBI for Consequences of War Research offers me the opportunity as a historian to largely cover my specialist areas. However, the professional field of the researcher, as diverse and varied as it may be, can only be planned in short periods of time. Above all, project work based on third-party funds may often stand in the way of long-term life planning. The next "logical" academic career step, the habilitation, I do not want to aim for anymore. Ideally, according to my professional concept for the future, I will be able to stay in science soon before I reorient myself. Then I can imagine being employed in public administration, adult education, museums, or the like.

## The Host Organization

### *Which industry or host organization did you choose and why?*

At first, I didn't take the consideration of an internship at the Department of Science and Research of the Province of Styria seriously - I just thought it would be very attractive to be able to approve project proposals myself. But the thought I had once had remained the same and over time I liked it more and more. My idea of getting to know the "other side" of the scientific world became more attractive the more I learned about the department. So, I had known about a few funding tracks that seemed relevant for the LBI for Consequences of War Research and for me personally, but most of the areas of the department had remained foreign to me. Just as strange and closed to me were the administrative procedures behind the calls for proposals and the people behind them. Thus, I recognized the chance to get to know the closely linked and interlocked area of public science funding from my own experience. On the one hand, to see whether science administration is at all a field in which I could (also) imagine my professional future, and to look behind the hitherto anonymous and abstract worlds of calls for proposals and project commitments as well as cancellations. In other words, it was a matter of breaking down prejudices against offices. So, I was grateful that the Department 8 of the Styrian State Government agreed to the possibility of completing an internship at the Department of Science and Research.

### *In which period did you complete your internship and were the two months suitable for you?*

The internship was originally planned for January-February. Due to some delays, which were mainly since Department 8 still had to legally check whether it was possible in principle to complete the internship offered by the CC, the period from April to May was fixed. In the end, this time span was even better than the original one, as it lay exactly between the completion of one project and the start of the next.

### *In which areas or departments did you gain insight into?*

The Department of Science and Research with its 18 employees is very manageable, but the tasks performed are very varied. They range from procurement (St:Wuk), participation in state-owned corporations (FH Joanneum, Joanneum Research) to classical funding of institutions, projects as well as scientists (various branches such as future funds of the state of Styria or publication, conference and travel grants as well as science prizes). The responsible speakers each cover one of the departmental tasks in their area of responsibility. Against this background, the intensity of the immersion in one of the areas of the Department of Science and Research was firstly in my own interest - I had the express permission to ask the respective staff members to show me their subarea - and secondly in the availability (this was at least partly restricted by teleworking or waiting times).

While the core tasks "Science and Research" mainly consist in the participation management of the state-owned research centers such as Joanneum Research and FH Joanneum and have formal-legal tasks on the surface, the Faculty of Science and University Support was the area in which I wanted and was able to gain the most insights during the internship.

I would like to highlight five sub-areas in which I was in close contact with the responsible speakers:

- Promotion of publications and scientific events
- Research Awards Styria
- Styria Future Fund
- Pentecost Dialogue, Spirit and Presence
- Doctoral colleges, special research areas

At this point, it is worth mentioning the occasional insights into extraordinary grants that the Province of Styria is jointly providing with other funding agencies, such as the scholarship program for students at the Diplomatic Academy, initiatives for networking SMEs and Styrian research, as well as two concrete projects by St:Wuk, in which long-term unemployed people who are difficult to place are integrated into art and science projects in order to facilitate their (re-)entry into working life.

## **The Expert Internship**

### *In which department did you work and what were your concrete tasks?*

My tasks in the department "Science and Research" were limited to being curious. An assignment of a partial work area would have narrowed me very much, moreover the benefit for the department would have been very manageable, since my manpower would have been available only a few weeks after a school enrolment. In this respect, I am very grateful to the two heads of unit, who explicitly did not formulate any tasks, but enabled me to get to know the diverse tasks of the department, to get a closer look at some areas, to attend meetings and meetings and to open doors to me, which would not have been possible without internship. At the same time, they asked me to give my opinion on the processes from "practice" and as a humanities scholar and to present my view on the strategic orientation of Styrian science research. In addition, I was able to give an insight into the working worlds of contemporary science and point out problems that the department was often not so aware of. Another part of my tasks was to think about the modalities of how science is promoted. Are there neutral and objective selection criteria for funding? What could be indicators? To what extent are the indicators currently used enough, and where do they need to be sharpened?

### *How was the cooperation with your mentor and colleagues?*

My two mentors were very courteous and placed great trust in me. This was expressed in the fact that they not only took me to confidential meetings, but also repeatedly discussed the problems that the unit as a public office sometimes inevitably must deal with and their consequences. In the Unit itself, there was a collegial atmosphere in which I felt very comfortable and found myself very quickly. In the early days, I had to actively approach the staff to get to know their areas of work. All in all, I was very well received and felt welcome after a few days and accepted as fully-fledged by the staff.

***What similarities and differences do you see between your previous work in the Research and that during the Expert Internship?***

The differences between the internship and my activity in research are considerable. Of course, this is primarily due to my "active inactivity" in the internship. However, the decelerated operation of the Science and Research Department must not obscure the fact that the tasks of the department are extremely varied and that the busy work of the department initiates and effects a lot. Processes in administration and in (bureaucratized) science may also be similar. The discussions about fundamental problems in the Austrian science landscape are very similar in science administration and in research. From this point of view, the complementary field to active research, the administration of research, cannot be separated from active research. And it is good to have gained some insight here!

***Which interdisciplinary skills could you use, and which were you missing?***

As already mentioned, I was able to draw on my own experience in science. My key qualifications as a historian were naturally less in demand than my knowledge of research trends, the functioning of research networks, etc. Unfortunately, with increasing specialization, one is also restricted by one's own subject. So - despite studying for several semesters - I have lost aspects of business management. I had to relearn these to question and understand the structures of the department.

## **My Personal Reflections**

***What was the biggest challenge during your Expert Internship and how did you deal with it?***

The biggest challenge was that during the internship I left my work at the LBI for Consequences of War Research. But all in all, I was able to distance myself from the everyday work of the LBI for Consequences of War Research and use the time for the internship agendas.

***What was your greatest lesson learned?***

The biggest lesson was probably not directly at the Department of Science and Research, but the visit to Joanneum Research initiated and made possible by the Department. For two days I was a guest at the largest non-university Styrian research institution and was able to exchange ideas with persons from the management, with institute directors and researchers. The head of department gave me access to information and areas that are otherwise not accessible to outsiders.

***What do you think, what significance does the Expert Internship have for your further career?***

In my opinion, the value of the internship cannot yet be fully assessed. An essential point was getting to know the people and networking, which does not only focus on the department science and research, but in a much more important part on the corporations belonging to the department like Joanneum Research and FH Joanneum. This is where the contact established through the internship has already added significant value. However, there may be opportunities for the LBI for War Consequences Research as well as for myself that have not yet been considered. The internship is in any case more than just another line in my curriculum vitae!

***What did you particularly like and what could be improved about the LBG CC Internship Initiative?***

I generally like the idea of giving employees an internship, giving them the chance to experience something new, something unfamiliar. In this context, the initiation, processing and bureaucracy taken over by the LBG CC is a relief that cannot be emphasized often enough. LBG has set an example here!

***Any last comments?***

Thank you very much! :-)