

Research Internship at University of Bristol

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Purpose: I have been doing research on pedestrian dynamics in an urban environment since last year, apart from my graduation project. Although I had experienced theoretical research in this topic, I lacked an experience with an empirical work. I was lucky to find a researcher at University of Bristol who shares the same interest as I do and let me join his laboratory as a research intern. I started working with him remotely since April this year to plan our project. The purpose of my stay in Bristol was to have further discussion in person and conduct experiments by recruiting participants.

What I did: The project proceeded mostly as planned. During the first two weeks, I finished up creating the experiment, which is like a computer mini game where participants control a pedestrian agent in a food market-like environment. After that, I conducted the experiment on campus. I had an interesting experience during the data collection. I recruited participants by directly talking to random people on campus, asking “I am looking for participants who join this experiment. Would you be interested?” To be honest I was worried that I may get rejected by many people. Surprisingly, however, people I met at the University of Bristol were so kind and friendly that most of them were happy to join the experiment. Sometimes I had a nice small talk with participants after the experiment and got to learn about the people who are part of this university.

Thanks to these generous people I ended up collecting valid data from 123 people. Now I am in the middle of data analysis and hoping to present the research result in a conference or to publish the work in a journal. Overall, I got to experience the entire research flow in a very international environment. I am going to study this topic in a graduate school, and I am sure that what I learned in Bristol will help my research a lot.

Gratitude to Tazaki foundation: I would like to show my gratitude for the financial support I received from Tazaki foundation. With the support, I built new skills and insights that are very valuable for an aspiring researcher. Moreover, through the interaction with the diverse people, I learned about their life in Bristol and UK. Now I am even more motivated to work globally than before. I would like to grow more both as a researcher and a global citizen to contribute to the society by utilizing the experience and skills I have gained and will gain.

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