Final traineeship report [C1]
ERASMUS traineeship – Academic Year 2024 / 2025

Version: February 2020

Please fill this form out on a computer, not by hand, and send it as an email attachment to the EU-ServicePoint: eu-servicepoint@international.uni-mainz.de

Your report will be made available to other students looking for traineeships. Therefore, please make sure to provide important websites and other helpful information!

GENERAL INFORMATION

Host country:	**Switzerland**
Program of study:	Cognitive Science
Home university:	**Rheinland Palatinate Technical University Kaiserslautern**
Professional field of traineeship:	**Research in Neuropsychology**
Language of work:	English
Duration of traineeship:	from 21.10.2024 to 14.02.2025 (dd / mm / yyyy)

ORGANISATION/ENTERPRISE OF THE TRAINEESHIP

Name of receiving organization/enterprise	University of Zurich
Street/P.O. Box:	Ramistrasse 102
Postal code and city:	8006 Urich
Country:	Switzerland
Website:	USZ – Universitätsspital Zürich - University Hospital Zurich
Email:	martin.wolf@usz.ch

BEFORE – Information about preparing for the traineeship abroad

Please fill the following fields in in a detailed manner and give exact information about your search and preparation (websites, tips, contacts, etc.) for the traineeship.

Search for traineeship:	Direct Email to University Professors

Application (process, unsolicited application, interview, etc.):	Interview, then acceptance
Search for accommodation:	University Dorm
Insurances:	German insurance - TK
Telephone/Internet access in the host country:	Lyka network
Bank/opening an account:	Wise – worldwide used
Helpful websites / Other things:	SBB for travel

INFORMATIONE ABOUT THE TRAINEESHIP

Please fill the following fields in in a detailed manner and give exact information about the traineeship as such (websites, tips, contacts, etc.).

Type of traineeship:	Research internship in cognitive neuroscience and biomedical imaging
Tasks within the traineeship: Could you apply learned skills and knowledge? Were the tasks too much / not enough? etc.	I was independently responsible for a full research project titled *"Effects of Smoking-Related Cues on Cognitive Performance: A SPA-fNIRS Study"*. My tasks included conducting a literature review, designing the experimental paradigm, setting up the equipment and software (PsychoPy), conducting pilot testing, participant recruitment, data acquisition using SPA-fNIRS, preprocessing and analyzing data (MATLAB, Jupyter), and presenting the results. Yes, I could fully apply the theoretical knowledge and technical skills I acquired during my studies, and I significantly expanded them. The workload was intensive but very rewarding and appropriate for the time frame and my academic level. I was fully engaged and never felt under-challenged.
Supervision (introductory/concluding conversation, weekly/monthly feedback, etc.)	Supervision was excellent. I had an **introductory meeting**, and we maintained regular check-ins—usually weekly—with **Prof. Martin Wolf** and **Dr. Sabino Guglielmini**, who were both approachable and highly supportive. I also received constructive feedback

	throughout and a concluding conversation to reflect on my progress and contributions.
Social contacts during the traineeship:	I interacted regularly with other researchers, PhD students, and technical staff in the lab. The working environment was friendly, international, and collaborative. Outside of the lab, I was able to build social contacts through university events and local community groups in Zurich.
Language skills (benefits, improvements, etc.):	The working language was English, which helped reinforce my academic and professional communication skills. I also had the chance to practice basic German in everyday life, which improved my confidence in a multilingual setting.
Short overall evaluation of your stay abroad: Private / professional benefit? What were your expectations? Were these fulfilled? What was particularly good / not so good?	The internship exceeded my expectations both professionally and personally. I gained practical experience in high-level neuroimaging techniques, improved my analytical and programming skills, and contributed meaningfully to an active research project. Privately, living in Zurich was enriching and offered a great balance of culture and nature. Particularly good: autonomy, lab environment, and the quality of mentorship. Nothing in particular stood out as negative, though navigating some administrative processes in German required extra time.
Duration of the traineeship: Too short, just right, too long? Recommendations for an optimal length of time?	The 4-month duration was **just right** for the scope of the project. It allowed enough time to go through the full research cycle from design to results. **Recommendation**: 3–6 months is optimal for similar research internships.
Average monthly expenses abroad in €; Additional costs in contrast to expenses in Germany:	1200 euros/month. Higher cost of living, especially **rent, insurance, and food** in Zurich. Public transportation and health insurance were also more expensive than in Germany
What should one absolutely know / keep in mind?	• Be prepared for Zurich's high cost of living; budget accordingly. • Organize housing well in advance, as student accommodation is limited. • A basic understanding of German is helpful for everyday life, even if the lab operates in English.

	• Bring a laptop powerful enough for data analysis (MATLAB, Python).
Are you of the opinion that the traineeship will benefit you in your future professional career? If yes, how? If not, why?	**Yes, absolutely.** This traineeship has given me hands-on experience with SPA-fNIRS, a cutting-edge neuroimaging tool, and improved my technical, analytical, and research communication skills. It has also deepened my interest in cognitive neuroscience and has strengthened my CV and motivation for future academic or industry roles in brain research or biomedical engineering.
Can you recommend this traineeship? (Please be sure to elaborate) If yes, would the organization/enterprise accept trainees in the future?	Yes, the **Biomedical Optics Research Laboratory** regularly hosts interns and offers a structured and rewarding research environment. Students with strong technical or neuroscience backgrounds are likely to thrive here.
Helpful websites / Other things:	• https://www.usz.ch/en — University Hospital Zurich • https://www.neonatology.uzh.ch/en — Department of Neonatology • https://www.psychopy.org — Software used for experimental tasks • https://www.uzh.ch — University of Zurich main page

Do you agree with the anonymous publication of your report on the www.eu-servicepoint.de website?

Yes ☒ No ☐