



BERICHTSFORMULAR

Non-EU Student Exchange Programm

2019/2020

BewerbungsID 2578

Nominierte Studienrichtung: 066/864 Studienrichtung Masterstudium Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Ostasiens

Angaben zum Aufenthalt:

Gastinstitution: Meiji University - (Japan)

Aufenthaltszeitraum: Winter- und Sommersemester 2019/2020

Aufenthaltsbeginn: 16.09.2019 Aufenthaltsende: 30.07.2020

STIPENDIUM	
Stipendium Uni Wien gesamt laut Zuerkennung: (inkl. Zuschüsse für Reisekosten und Sprachtest)	€ 4.100,00
	Rückforderung: nein Rückgeforderter Betrag: € Rückforderungsgrund:
Weitere Stipendien (zB Jasso, Studienbeihilfe):	Weitere Stipendien: Nein <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipendium des Gastlandes: nein () • Bundesländerstipendium: nein • Studienbeihilfe: nein • Sonstiges Stipendium:
Summe weiterer Stipendien:	€ 0,00
Gesamtsumme aller Stipendien:	€ 4.500,00

KOSTEN DES AUSLANDSAUFENTHALTS	
Unterkunft:	€ 7.500,00
Art der Unterkunft:	Studierendenwohnheim
Reisekosten:	€ 1.400,00
Lebenshaltungskosten:	€ 12.000,00
Studienkosten:	€ 0,00
Versicherungskosten	€ 800,00
Visakosten:	€ 40,00
Gesamtkosten des Auslandsaufenthalts:	€ 22.000,00

Bericht veröffentlichen:



PERSÖNLICHER BERICHT

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Verfassen Sie bitte einen persönlichen Bericht über den Studienaufenthalt

- # **Mindestumfang:** Fließtext 1 Seite DinA4
- # **Inhalt:** Gastuniversität, Kurse, Prüfungen, Mitstudierende, Unterkunft, etwaige Schwierigkeiten etc.

BERICHT ÜBER DEN STUDIENAUFENTHALT

My experiences at Meiji University in Tokyo

To start things off, I have to say, that coming to Japan has been this seemingly completely unrealistic and unattainable dream of mine since early childhood, so when I got my confirmation e-mail that I have actually made it and I could go, that was the absolute best Christmas present of my life. It came on the 18th I think. Because of this, my expectations were obviously not very realistic. Once there and talking to people, I realized, that it was the same for everyone going on exchange to a place like Tokyo: basically to have the best year ever and make huge progress in basically every single area of my life.

It did work out for the most part, however. If you come to Japan with an interest in the culture and having some previous knowledge about it, most stuff about the society and your new surroundings, in general, will not come as a surprise to you. Things are nice, clean, orderly, people are polite, the food is great, nature is gorgeous. Things that will maybe come as a surprise to you – or at least for me, they did – are that people are not „cold and robotic” at all – which is a stereotype in the West that is very prevalent – and also, while everything has to do with machines and infrastructure does, in fact, work perfectly, processes have to do with people, however – bureaucracy – is extremely slow and tedious. Also, something that people tend to underestimate is just how much Japanese people like to have fun, and how great it is to hang out with them.

Hanging out with them was however much more difficult than anticipated. I have been told in advance, that East Asian universities have extensive buddy programs and student activities to facilitate exchange students and locals getting together and socialize. At Meiji University this was almost completely missing.

I went there with one year of studying Japanese, meaning that I could hardly speak when I arrived. English proficiency is significantly worse than I thought, meaning that in the degree program I enrolled in – taught in English – there was not a single Japanese person. Out of the two



dorms offered for exchange students, one was only for foreigners, and while the other was half and half Japanese and non-Japanese, the two groups did not really merge there either. Student clubs and activities are overwhelmingly only in Japanese. And the buddy program which would aid foreign students was basically non-existent.

This was actually my biggest issue overall – and probably my only regret about an otherwise absolutely magical year – that University support in non-schooling matters were lackluster – I got very lucky with my coordinator at my graduate school, because she spoke very good English and just was a very kind and reliable help at all times, but my friends from other schools were not so lucky – and this complete separation from Japanese students in general.

Orientation went through university rules and regulations, the IT system et cetera, but when it comes to other crucial things, such as getting a phone/internet subscription or a bank account you were very much on your own. Student volunteers were brought along with us in the first week to register us at the ward office, but they disappeared after, and we only learned later that they had no idea that we had issues with anything and that we were actually in need of their help. It seems like the university did not really see that hanging out together and having events where foreigners and Japanese people could become friends would be something desirable. This is something Meiji should definitely improve upon as this is a huge missed opportunity in my opinion.

Other than that, however, everything was ranging from good to wonderful. While taking care of official matters was a challenge with not very good Japanese – to say the least – people were always doing their utmost to help you, stopping what they were doing completely to sort your problem out, and were just very kind and welcoming in general. Tokyo is the warmest and sweetest big city I have ever been to and is not at all like the overwhelming oppressive concrete jungle people think it is.

When it comes to Meiji itself and schoolwork, there is not much to worry about. The main campus is a highrise building in the downtown area, with sweeping views of the entire city, sometimes as far as Mount Fuji. All staff at Meiji University that I have met was just like the Japanese people outside the university. My professors and also administrators were really nice and helpful. The level of classes was not that high in general, so someone from UniWien should have no problems there. As for the Japanese language classes, I was on the main campus and had a very positive experience, but students from other campuses did have their issues, so this seemed to depend on the approach of the headteacher. From my experience, I can say, that the vast majority of people spending time there did manage to improve their Japanese knowledge substantially. Of course, that is not only due to classwork, just like back in Europe a lot of self-study is required on that front, while being in the native environment is a huge boost as well. All in all, I cannot recommend going on an exchange like this enough. There will be a few bumps along the way, as there always are, but over the course of this year, I have not met a single person – exchange student or otherwise – who would have said that they don't like Japan or regret coming here.

Of course Meiji University and Japan are not perfect, and being away from home and fitting in at such a different place will have its challenges – and you will feel down occasionally – the personal growth an experience like this can provide you with is immense. I personally did manage to fulfill most of my completely unrealistic list of achievements, and saying that I came back as a changed man sounds really cheesy but is actually not that much of a stretch. I have met the most wonderful people during my stay, and if you would like to have a good balance between having fun, a central location and convenience, and being at a good university, Meiji offers the perfect balance I think. Even when it was the most difficult and I was at my lowest point, I did not for a second regret going.

I hope this little write-up was helpful, and wish all of you going on exchange after me to have an equally fulfilling experience I had this year.