ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT AUSLANDSPRAKTIKUM

ANGABEN ZUM AUSLANDSPRAKTIKUM

- Name des Gastunternehmens, Stadt, Land
- Zeitraum (WiSe / SoSe, Jahr)
- Fakultät und Studiengang
- Name und E-Mail Adresse (Angabe freiwillig; bitte BEACHTEN Sie, dass Ihr Erfahrungsbericht im International Blog veröffentlicht wird, wenn Sie hiermit einverstanden sind)

Institut Européen des Membranes (IEM, UMR 5635), Université de Montpellier – Montpellier, Frankreich
Sommersemester 2026 (Mai – Oktober 2026)
Masterstudiengang Hydrogen Technology, TH Rosenheim
Rhea Jennifer Joy

VORBEREITUNG

- Planung, Organisation und Bewerbung um eine Praktikumsstelle



Sète

Ever since I was a child, I had dreamed of living and working in France one day, so when I came across an internship position at the Institut Européen des Membranes (IEM) in Montpellier on LinkedIn, it felt like a chance to turn that dream into reality. I reached out to the research group, submitted my application with my resume and a letter of motivation, and was soon invited for an interview. The very next day I received the reply — I was in. I can still remember how excited and grateful I felt in that moment; a childhood wish was finally coming true.

From there, the journey was made so much easier by the people who supported me along the way. My host institution was wonderfully helpful with all the paperwork, my supervisor, Dr. Damien Voiry, and the institute's HR representative, Fabienne Biondi, patiently guided me through every formality. On the home side, I connected with the Erasmus team at TH Rosenheim, and although I was working under some time constraints, Tina Kaffl and Johannes Völkl supported me throughout the entire application and helped me manage all the documents with great care and patience.

The visa process, which I had been most anxious about, turned out to be surprisingly smooth. I travelled to the consulate in Frankfurt, completed the procedure there, and received my visa without any trouble — a moment of real happiness and relief, knowing that everything was finally falling into place.

Looking back, my biggest piece of advice is simple: don't stress too much, and plan everything in an orderly way. Take each step one at a time — the application, the paperwork, the visa and the apartment search — and start early. With supportive people around you and a little organisation, what feels overwhelming at the beginning becomes a smooth and truly rewarding adventure. If, like me, you've ever dreamed of working abroad, my advice is: go for it.

UNTERKUNFT

- Wo hast du gewohnt? Wie hast du die Wohnung gefunden? Was hast du gezahlt? Wie bist du vom Flughafen zur Wohnung gekommen?

During my stay I lived in a studio apartment at the CIHEAM student residence in Agropolis, Montpellier, which turned out to be a wonderful place to call home. My colleagues at the institute kindly helped me with the apartment search, which made the whole process so much easier and less stressful.
The rent was about 550 € per month, with a deposit of 400 €. The apartment itself was lovely — there was a big shared garden where my friends and I would hang out all the time, have picnics and simply enjoy the sunny Montpellier weather together. Those everyday moments quickly became some of my favourite memories of the stay.
I arrived in Montpellier by FlixBus, getting off at the Sabines stop. From there, the city's excellent tram network made everything easy: I took the tram to Plan des Quatre Seigneurs, which is right next to the residence. The tram system in Montpellier is very well connected and became my main way of getting around in daily life.



Visum – Konsulat, Frankfurt

PRAKTIKUM IM GASTUNTERNEHMEN

- Inhalte des Praktikums, empfehlenswerte Abteilungen im Unternehmen, Lerneffekt etc.

During the internship, sound practical and theoretical knowledge of electrochemical CO_2 reduction and MEA / zero-gap technology was acquired. The intern is now able to independently assemble and operate MEA cells and stacks, carry out electrochemical measurements (LSV, galvanostatic tests) and product analysis by gas chromatography, and diagnose typical sources of error (leaks, flooding, HER dominance). In addition, skills were developed in evaluating and interpreting key performance metrics (Faradaic efficiency, single-pass conversion and utilisation) and in scientific data processing and report writing. The internship also strengthened independent, careful and safe laboratory work as well as collaboration within an international research team.

ALLTAG UND FREIZEIT

- Kontaktmöglichkeiten innerhalb des Unternehmens / außerhalb
- Was man gesehen und getan haben sollte am Ort / außerhalb

Within the institute there were always plenty of ways to connect with people — over shared lunch breaks, group meetings and conversations with the other interns and PhD students. The working atmosphere was international, open and welcoming, and I quickly felt at home. My colleagues even organised a surprise birthday party for me, which touched me deeply. We also had a lovely gathering at the office before the summer break, with plenty of food and a warm, friendly atmosphere — it was there that I tried paella for the very first time, and it was absolutely delicious. Over the months I genuinely felt that I had created a little family in France, something I will always be grateful for. The experience also gave me the chance to pick up a new language, which made everyday life even more rewarding.
Outside of work, Montpellier has so much to offer. The historic old town (Écusson) with the Place de la Comédie, the Cathédrale Saint-Pierre, and the many cafés and markets are all well worth exploring. Being close to the Mediterranean, the city is perfect for trips to the beach — Palavas-les-Flots and Carnon are lovely, and Sète was another beautiful spot I got to visit and really enjoyed.
And of course, no stay in France would be complete without the food: a freshly baked croissant is absolutely worth trying, and the pain au chocolat quickly became one of my little daily joys.



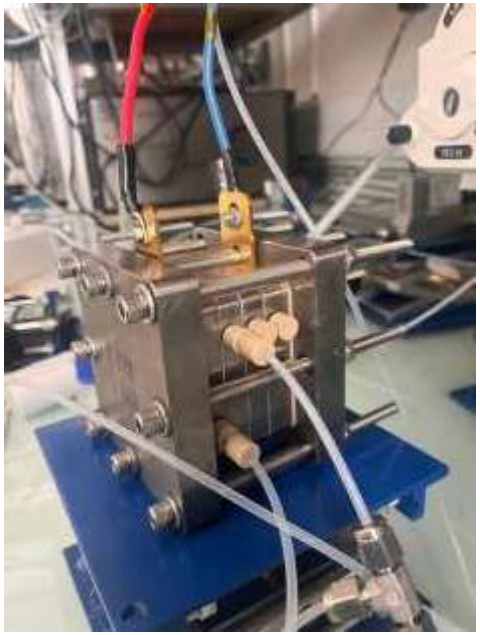
Montpellier

FAZIT

z.B. beste und schlechteste Erfahrung / Sonstiges

Overall, my internship at the IEM was an incredibly valuable experience — both professionally and personally. Professionally, I had the chance to work on a current and exciting research topic in an international team, which taught me so much and strengthened both my technical and scientific skills. Personally, living in the south of France, making lifelong friends and feeling part of a little “family” made the whole stay unforgettable.
Honestly, I can say that I did not have a single bad experience during my time there. From the supportive people and the welcoming work environment to the beautiful surroundings and everyday moments, everything came together to make it a truly wonderful chapter of my life.

I can wholeheartedly recommend an internship at the IEM in Montpellier, and I would choose it again without a moment’s hesitation. To anyone considering a stay abroad: take the leap — it may become one of the best decisions you ever make



MEA-Elektrolysezelle am IEM



Mein Team



Meine erste Paella