

INTERNATIONAL INTERN LEARNS NEW SKILLS IN THE BEAUTIFUL CZECH CAPITAL

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When it comes to international students, Rebecca Gösker is about as international as they come. Born in Singapore to German parents, she spent most of her childhood in China before moving back to Europe in her teen years. After earning a bachelor's degree in political science, she decided to apply for an internship at the Institute of International Relations in Prague for the summer before heading off to University of Leiden to get a master's degree in international politics.



REBECCA GÖSKER

"I really wanted to gather experience in an international relations research institute or think tank, preferably somewhere in the EU that is not necessarily on everyone's immediate radar," she says.

She was attracted to IIR thanks to its prestigious reputation and its location. *"I fell in love with Prague when I came to visit last summer, so IIR was my first choice and I was overjoyed that I got accepted."*

Rebecca already had some experience in international affairs before coming to IIR. She spent most of her extra-curricular time participating in and organizing Model United Nations conferences. During her studies, she worked as a freelance translator and interned at a human rights institute in Vienna.

"I feel like the IIR internship gave me the chance to delve deeper into the topics I know and am interested in, such as Chinese foreign relations and sovereignty debates," she says.

HAVING FUN WHILE LEARNING NEW SKILLS

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While Rebecca did enjoy the research-related tasks she performed as a research assistant, her internship at IIR also gave her the opportunity to develop many other skills. She joined the IIR team shortly after the Prague European Summit took place in late May, and assisted with the event's aftermath where she befriended other interns.

Between the interns, her supervisors and the researchers she worked with, Rebecca was surprised at how friendly and inviting the atmosphere at IIR was.

"If someone tells you about a prestigious research institute with over 60 years of history, you might imagine haughty academics hushing through corridors, too busy to bother with small talk.

This was not at all the case," she says. "As corny as it may sound, I might just have enjoyed the work atmosphere the most."



Rebecca also got a look at what it takes to host conferences and lectures at a research institution. IIR puts on several events each month, from smaller lectures series to large-scale conferences, that deal with topics such as the Eastern Partnership, the Visegrád Four, Russian influence and many more. Rebecca was able to lend a hand with event production by helping put together email newsletters for events and writing conference reports for the website.

WORKING INDEPENDENTLY IN A BEAUTIFUL EUROPEAN CAPITAL

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Compared to other internships, IIR allows its interns to pursue their own interests, which was something Rebecca enjoyed. This combined with her self-starting attitude meant that she was not only able to work on a lot of different projects, but she was also able to mold her work somewhat to her interests.

Considering Rebecca's background, she worked with Dr. Rudolf Fürst whose research focuses on China, especially its geopolitical ambitions in regard to Central and Eastern Europe.

"I really appreciated that opportunity to help with research and learn about Dr. Fürst's experiences," Rebecca says.

Another bonus of interning at IIR was getting to work in Prague for the summer. She was able to find a room close to the city center thanks to numerous Facebook flat share groups, and she's found the Czech capital a perfect setting for her research.

"Despite not speaking the language I didn't feel like an outsider, and I never felt bored," she says. "The culture, the art, the history! Prague is simply wonderful."