

JSPS Postgraduate Fellowship (short-term)

Panagiotis Andriotis

I was already feeling privileged before I land to Tokyo. The JSPS Fellowship is a competitive scheme and although I had applied for the short-term path, I knew that it will be an interesting experience. I spent 5 months in Tokyo, working with Professor Atsuhiko Takasu at the National Institute of Informatics (NII), next to the Tokyo Imperial Palace. Moving to Japan can be a stressful experience (especially if you haven't secured your accommodation beforehand); however, I felt that although I did not speak Japanese, their public services were so organised that I had no problem to go through the bureaucratic procedure needed at the beginning (City ward registration, National Insurance and Pension Scheme).

The research environment at NII is very positive. I was based in a room that could accommodate up to 20 researchers. My host organised regular meetings with his lab members, which gave me the opportunity to meet people, present my research and participate in interesting discussions. There are various workshops and events in this 23-floor building and everyone is free to attend. These events allow researchers to meet each other and exchange views about certain problems. The Institute is in an accessible, central area with lots of restaurants around and researchers can also visit their offices and work during the weekend, if they need to meet an urgent deadline. Additionally, my host provided everything I needed to work on my project.

This was my 3rd time in Japan; I had been to Tokyo and NII two times before I got this fellowship (as an intern). I believe that the fact that I did not have to spend any time to adjust to the Japanese way of life, gave me the opportunity to start seriously working on my project from my first day in Tokyo.

As a JSPS London Fellow I would also like to stress the importance of the induction events that are held in London. These events provide a representative view of how it feels like to be in Japan. Japanese people are very polite and organised and researchers that are visiting Japan for their first time might be shocked (in a positive way) by the cultural differences. However, the induction events provide all necessary information and it is a great opportunity for networking. As a matter of fact, I socialised with other JSPS

London Fellows when I went to Kyoto, having met these guys at the JSPS London induction event beforehand.

My Japanese experience as a JSPS London Fellow was priceless. I deeply appreciate the people and their culture and I am looking forward to visiting this great country again.

