Research project at Caltech

Conversatıon with

Dalia Morcillo
Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung (BAM)

My experience as a visiting student with Okumura’s Group.
March 20th
My research stay with Prof. Okumura’s group at Caltech during the last 4 months has been a very rewarding and enriching experience for me, both in academic and personal aspects. This project has allowed me to work in a different academic area than my current work in Germany, expanding my knowledge in chemical physics.

It was very exciting to build our own experiment! Working on another continent, in a different institution and in a different research group, has also allowed me to get to know a new work culture and to expand my academic network and make new friendships.
Prof. Okumura’s group is admirable for their intelligence, sense of humor and kindness. They welcomed me as a real family, making me participate in numerous activities and enriching discussions.
Regarding Caltech, as an institute, I would highlight its privileged campus facilities: laboratories, libraries, sport centers, gardens. These are continuously available for the enjoyment of the students, generating an atmosphere of scientific community and participation, which promotes dialogue between students and researchers. The change in my environment was also a reminder of how fortunate we are in Europe in some respects, for example, in terms of inequality and citizen accessibility to health and transport systems.
This stay took place at a perfect time for me, at the end of my second year of my PhD. It has brought fresh air to my work in Germany and given me a lot of energy to face the final phase of my PhD.

I would definitely recommend a research stay at another institution to those PhD students who have this possibility.