



International student exchange programs with the BCCNs

The Bernstein Centers are supporting exchange of students and researchers with other leading centers in the world and are encouraging students to take part in advanced courses and summer schools. Different Bernstein Centers have started formal exchange cooperations with renowned institutions and plan further alliances with other locations. For instance, the Freiburg Center has recently closed formal agreements with the Interdisciplinary Center for Neural Computation (ICNC), Hebrew University (Jerusalem, Israel) and the Graduate Program in Computational Neurobiology, University of California (San Diego, USA). Here, two of the first exchange students describe how they profited from this exchange.

Visit from the West...

I am a graduate student in the Computational Neurobiology PhD program at the University of California, San Diego. This summer I had the great privilege to visit the Bernstein Centers for Computational Neuroscience. I spent two very exciting weeks interacting with research groups at the Centers in Munich, Freiburg, and Göttingen. During a typical day, I would visit laboratories and meet with graduate students, postdocs, and professors to discuss science. I found it very refreshing to also talk about scientific questions not directly related to my own research. Experiencing the breadth of questions addressed with computational and theoretical techniques helped me to better understand the key factors leading to successful computational neuroscience research.

I was impressed by the seamless fashion in which experimental and computational neuroscience research is integrated to form very promising and exciting interdisciplinary projects at the



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Bernstein Centers. Not only did I learn about new techniques and results, but I also made many new friends. I would like to encourage my fellow PhD students on both sides of the ocean to consider an exchange visit as a highly rewarding and excellent opportunity to extend scientific horizons.

- Flavio Fröhlich

...and going to Far-East

I'm a graduate student in the PhD program of the Bernstein Center for Computational Neuroscience Freiburg. My PhD project is concerned with the impact of network coupling structure on the ongoing dynamics of local cortical networks. This summer I had the opportunity to join the Summer Program of RIKEN BSI in Tokyo as an intern in Prof. Fukai's lab. His lab is interested in very similar questions I am. At the BSI nearly every branch of neuroscience is represented, and it was a great experience to be able to discuss my work with the BSI researchers (see photo).

People there are very aware of the German efforts to establish cooperations in the field of computational neuroscience and are extremely supportive of these ideas. I had a great time and got much input for future work. I hope this contact with the BSI will strengthen and allow other BCCN students to take part in this exchange, even beyond the annual Summer Program.

- Birgit Kriener

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