Researcher Mobility Travel Grants and their Impact

The Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), which the University of Rochester joined in 2012, encourages the personal and academic development of researchers, particularly those early in their careers, through a researcher mobility program amongst its 18 members.

Following are several examples of recent researcher mobility travel grants funded by researchers’ home institution. The UR International Collaboration Fund seeks to provide its faculty and graduate students will similar opportunities and outcomes.

History
University of Sydney post-colonial researcher Alecia Simmonds spent a semester exploring the British Library after attending the WUN-sponsored seminar “Nation, Empire, Globe”. The experience gave her access to rare documents; conversations with scholars in the UK led to new and unexpected directions in her research.

Science
Dr. Ishaq A. Mian attributes many of his recent professional achievements to his visit as a postgraduate to the University of Western Australia in 2010, funded by the University of York’s WUN research mobility program. His research on drainage water led to a number of international awards and enabled him to author twelve research publications in high-impact peer-reviewed international journals.

Science
Reciprocal visits, sponsored by WUN, have proved invaluable in cementing the working relationship between students and faculty in Materials at the University of Southampton and Pennsylvania State University over the course of seven years. The collaborative project has yielded numerous journal publications, patent filings and, most significantly, the joint invention of semiconductor functionalized microstructured optical fibres, opening up exciting avenues for more efficient and faster future telecommunications.

Engineering
The visit by Francesco Fornetti, PhD student at the Centre for Communications Research at the University of Bristol, to the University of Sydney has brought numerous personal and academic benefits to himself and his colleagues in Sydney. Most significantly, it has shaped how radio frequency and microwave engineering are taught at both universities. The visit has also resulted in two joint publications to date on novel semiconductor materials and devices. A reciprocal visit by Sydney to Bristol has deepened the research and teaching collaborations forged from Francesco’s initial visit.

Media
Katherine Duarte, a PhD student in the Department of Information Science and Media Studie, received a USD4,000 grant from the University of Bergen for her research project on the challenges of communicating about climate change in the media. The grant enabled her to pursue research at WUN partner the University of Cape Town. It also facilitated her participation in the COP17 United Nations summit on climate change in Durban, where she conducted several interviews that provided invaluable input for her PhD project.