

Expedition Funds Report: My Summer School in Vienna, Austria

What are my expectations of my summer holiday this year?

How can I make better use of this year's summer holiday as compared to previous years?

Why not try something completely different?

These are the questions I had in mind before applying for the Expedition Fund for my summer school in Vienna. I wanted a change this summer. I wanted to make use of my university knowledge and apply it to the real world. More than ever, I wanted a challenge.

I have never been to Austria, never attended a summer school, and cannot speak German. Despite all these, I can say that this summer school has been very beneficial to both my studies and international networking.



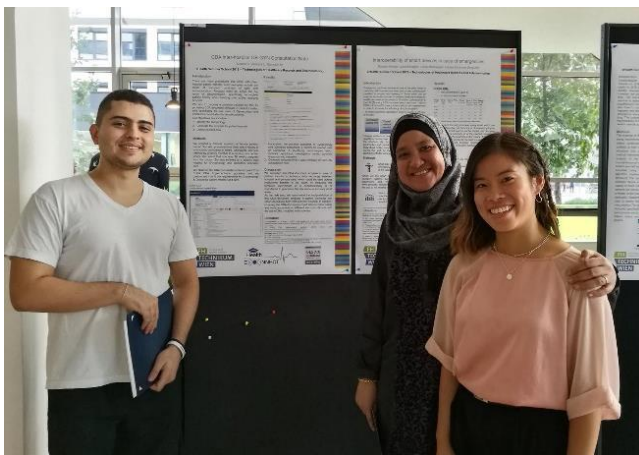
I spent a week at FH Technikum Wien (University of Applied Sciences) in Vienna, Austria in September on a summer school on eHealth, encompassing the topics of technologies of healthcare records and telemonitoring. It was a very productive and intense week, and it was exhilarating to meet international students ranging from undergraduate, masters and PhD levels and diverse backgrounds, where we could all contribute our knowledge and insights from home countries into this topic of eHealth- an evolving and hot topic in the technology and science world.

Throughout the week, we had lectures Monday to Thursday, and was given 1.5 days on preparing our own project in small groups and to deliver a presentation on an eHealth topic of our choice at the end of the week.

The lectures delivered during the week include the structure of the Austrian healthcare system, ELGA (the system used by Austrian healthcare), which I would like to highlight, we had the privilege to be lectured by professional speakers such as Dr. Günter Rauchegger- the site managing director of ELGA (pictured).



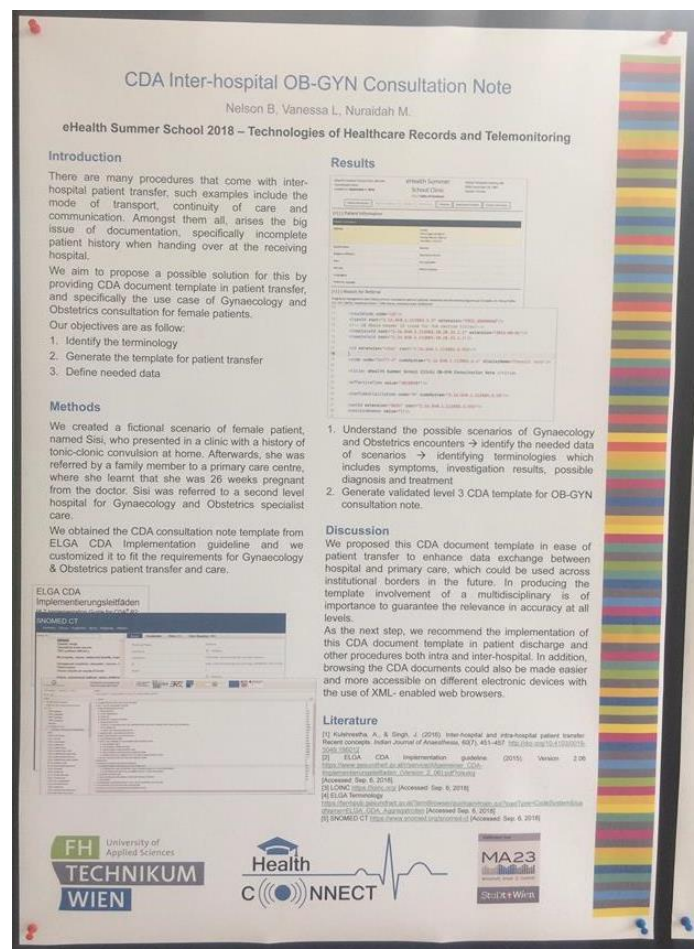
The aim of the group project is to gather these newly acquired knowledge and suggest a solution or improvement for an issue related to the Austrian healthcare system.



In aid of patient discharge, we provided a possible solution of using a Clinical Document Architecture (CDA) document. We created codes and finalised the template for this e-document, which not only could be utilised on patient discharge, but could also be implemented in patients inter- and intra-hospitals. This solution will complement well with the e-documents that the ELGA system uses in all Austrian hospitals.

This was a challenging project because I have never been exposed to computer coding, languages like XHTML and x37 did not make any sense to me before the summer school, now I am more comfortable with these terms.

My group decided to target the problem of patient discharge inter-hospitals, specifically in the aspect of documentation, which is the most important, yet often neglected issue.





Despite all the hesitations, attending a summer school this September has been the best decision, and a great end to my summer holiday. I have obtained an valuable insight in the topic of eHealth, got to explore Vienna as a tourist, and best of all, having the opportunity to meet such diverse pool of students has been a pleasure. Having been exposed to coding during the group project has also contributed greatly to one of my current second year modules of

Scientific programming!



I have always had a strong interest in working for the NHS, this experience enabled me to compare the Austrian healthcare system to the NHS, and has made me realise that there is still a lot of work to be done in the NHS, starting with first e-documents to enable accuracy and efficiency. At the same time, there are barriers such as sharing data and records amongst patients to be overcome.

Being granted this expeditions fund has assisted a lot with my accommodation and food in Vienna, which was expensive (living costs are more expensive than in London), and this leaves me to spend some of my savings to explore Vienna when we finish class at 17:00 during the week, it was an enjoyable and productive week and I am very grateful for this Expedition Fund to allow me to have this experience and pushing myself out of my comfort zone to travel alone for the first time!