

Student Seminar 2017 in Amsterdam

The MAINZ Student Seminar 2017 took place from the 5th to the 9th of October in Amsterdam. After a rainy busdrive we arrived at The Student Hotel on time and started the by now traditional City Rallye in almost sunny weather. Nine groups set out to each find the eight spots around Amsterdam hidden behind the tasks, furthermore, they had to find some typical Amsterdam-things like cheese, a brewery and a boat on a gracht and finally they had to trade a MAINZ pen and some chocolate for even more interesting prizes. Even though that is a lot to do, quite a number of teams were very successful and the collection of prizes as well as photos were really impressive. The first evening was concluded in a brewery called "De bekeerde suster" which roughly translates to "The converted nun". However, more interesting for the majority of participants was their homemade beer (having interesting names like the blonde barber).



Friday was "the day of talks" with scientific talks by the students, but also talks on extra activities like the Buddy Program, the Lecture series and Secondments. In the afternoon the two professors Mark Golden and Daniel Bonn from the University of Amsterdam gave guest talks on spintronics materials and friction and how that relates to everyday life. Before the poster session in the evening nine students gave a one-minute-poster-pitch to advertise their poster and their research. The pitches were a colorful mixture of everyday-life-analogies, in-depth-science, jokes and good explanations. Even though the posters were a bit crowded in the seminar room and on the corridor there was enough room to find out more about our fellow students projects.

On Saturday three Alumni with different career paths talked about their experiences: Dr. Désirée Weller works at Bosch, Dr. Thomas Jagau is a junior research group leader in Munich and Dr. Sebastian Golde works at PA Consulting. Each talk inspired the audience to many questions and obviously all three career options were also relevant for the students. In the afternoon, the students had free time to explore Amsterdam on their own. While some went to an exhibition on microbes, others simply roamed around the old town while others took a trip to the seaside, despite the stormy weather.

Since one of the aims of the Student Seminar is for the students to get to know each other, the teambuilding activity on Sunday was a central part. This year, it was a mixture of Geocaching where we had to find little "treasures" (well, little boxes with questions) according to a roughly sketched map and a GPS-device and do team-challenges with (or against) other teams. This outdoor activity was greatly supported by the sun. We finished the day with a delicious three-course menu at "Humphrey's", well deserved after all the outdoor activity.



Monday morning we started with our last talk session. Besides some student talks about their research we also had two guest speakers within this session. Michel Orrit from the Leiden Institute of Physics



and Bas de Bruin from the University of Amsterdam talked about single molecule optics and homogenous catalysis. After our last lunch in Amsterdam and four intense days of networking, scientific discussions and lots of fun we had to take the bus back home.