

Jack - Umea University, Sweden

My experience has significantly improved my confidence in practical science and public speaking, having given me the opportunity to present at the 23rd Swedish Conference on Macromolecular Structure and Function in Tällberg. This was a fantastic and enlightening experience and allowed me to present myself to many scientists in the field of structural biology.

Because of my time here, I now have a concrete aim for future study and know where I want to go and what I want to do, and have developed the scientific contacts to support me in this. Furthermore, the friends I have made here had a positive impact on my life, and we're already planning trips to meet and hang out in the future.



Studying abroad has definitely taught me independence due to the lack of safety nets and having to deal with difficult stuff without much support, especially financial and administrative matters with regards to being an international student. For example, paying for internet using paper cheques in a foreign language, getting a Swedish phone contract, organising where to get medication for asthma abroad, keeping on top of my credit card (and getting one in the first place to avoid hefty international transaction charges on my debit card).

Travelling with friends can be a lot more fun and a lot safer, but I've also found that going by myself can be really peaceful (whereas back in the UK I rarely if ever would go on trips alone). I think this is probably one of the main ways in which I will have changed since coming to Sweden, in that I feel more independent not just in terms of day-to-day activities, but in how content I am to do things without a crowd.