

DAAD



# DAAD Scholarship Report

**Project name:** Strategic partnerships for joint  
innovations-KIT in the Jiangsu and  
the Shanghai Metropolitan Region

**Participating schools:** Tongji University & Karlsruhe  
Institute of Technology

**Reporter:** WANG Yichen

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My name is Wang Yichen, studying now automobile engineering and mechatronics in KIT (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology). Two years ago, I finished my undergraduate courses and decided to study further in automotive field. At that time, I got a good chance to further my study in Germany through the partnership between Tongji University and German universities. Actually Germany is always a good choice and target country for students whose major is automobile engineering, because on Germany is well known all over the world for its automotive industry, many corporations are from Germany and there are also here many good universities strong in mechanics. Furthermore, my university – Tongji University in Shanghai, has a long cooperation history with German universities and companies, which provides kinds of different ways for further learning and researching in Germany.

Then I made my mind to enroll in Sino-German College in Tongji to proceed my master degree. And I succeeded one year later to get access to the double master program between Tongji and KIT. As honored as I was, I got the scholarship from DAAD, as a support of studying and living here in Karlsruhe. For me it is acknowledge for all my endeavor in the past, as well as encourage for more achievements in the future.

A new life in a foreign country is always difficult. Fortunately, we had precious experience from our senior schoolmates when we were still in China and prepared all the papers and documents. With their help, we finished all the work early and got the visa 2 week before classes began. Here we should also thank to the staffs from KIT international office, who were all very nice and patient. Without them can we never have such a good and convenient dormitory to live in and searching for a suitable place to live also cost people much time. With all the people's help I have mentioned above, we finish our registration in KIT and in city hall in 2 days after our arrival, which is unbelievable fast. Also Mr. Klotz from IPEK gave us a detailed introduction about the study plan in KIT, which is different from Tongji University. Thanks to his patient explanation, we can have a completely understanding about the rules in KIT and choose the correct courses which also interest us.

After two-week-adaption to Karlsruhe, we finally began our study in KIT. The biggest problem, I think may be for every Chinese student, was the language. We could not totally understand what the professor said in the class. The language we've learned is too inflexible and not enough, as native speakers the Germans speak quite fast and flexibly. Although we have already pass TestDaF, but using German in daily life is totally different from a single test. It really bothered me at first. Then in the advice from upperclassman I found a way, previewing all contents of the next class so I got familiar with them and it helped a lot to understand next time I went for the class. After class I always used hours to review the content, because sometimes preview will skip some important things that I'm not aware of. Of course, the ultimate way was to

improve the German skill by talking more and more with classmates, professors, roommates and etc. Also listening news and watching videos in German. Actually, I use the second method much more often than the first one, because in the beginning months I'm too shy to use more German in public. I thought it was only a matter of time when I was willing to talk and listen more. Thankfully my roommates are so kind to talk to me in German although my German is not fluent, they try their best to help me to improve my language and be used to the custom and culture in Germany. So far my German is much better and good enough to understand most contents in the class, but I think I should keep on learning and improving it. My language is still far away from the level with which I can live and work in Germany without any problems.

Besides how to get along with loneliness and making new friends are also common problems for maybe every Chinese student. On one side I live separately with my Chinese friends, on the other hand getting used to German culture and make new friends is necessary for everyone. Living alone happens truly to us. Dealing with and overcoming loneliness is always a great issue for us. The first thing one should learn here would be learning how to get along with yourself and loneliness. It's not only about lonely emotion and homesick but also planning your own time efficiently and meaningfully. To be honest I often felt lonely, because after 6 or 7p.m. my friends in China are all asleep. I have few people to talk with. Due to loneliness I will have negative motions sometimes at night. But luckily now we live in a time of internet. I have made many new friends online. Even I've met some of them in reality.

After dealing with loneliness, making foreign friends is also important. As we all know and admit, Chinese students almost only get along with Chinese. I cannot say this phenomenon is good or not. But when living in Germany, I must make some foreign friends, especially Germans. At the beginning I'm not used to talk and take part in parties held by Germans. Language, customs, hobbies are the barriers to make more contact with Germans. I started to make friends with them during the excursion week. During the week I've found some same hobbies and interests with them, then we become friends on Facebook and have more communication. Chinese cuisine is a great topic to make us closer. Through it I've made several friends. Sometimes they need me to teach them how to pronounce Chinese so that they can order correctly in Chinese restaurants. After the tough beginning, we will have more topics to talk with. Sometimes we can talk about video games and sometimes we watch sport games together. Till now I've made several good foreign friends, I think this is just a beginning, in the next years I will be more used to the culture and people here.

I am really grateful and appreciate the double master program between Tongji and KIT. It gives me a quick and convenient way to get access to my dreaming university and to Europe, which is different from china in many ways. It is a great chance to

extend my horizon. The DAAD project provides me a financial supporting, which eases the burden of my parents and makes me more independent. With the scholarship I can travel to more countries and experience more. And acknowledge of credits between both universities makes our study diverse, so that we can experience two different education systems and benefit from both, but I still have some suggestions.

Firstly, I hope this double master program may contain internship part, so we can get more practical experience and I think it's also beneficial to quickly get used to live in Germany and improve both oral and hearing ability. The project would also be more profound and attractive. Actually, because we'll study only one and a half year in Germany, so that it will be more difficult for us to find an internship if we don't postpone our graduation for one or two semesters. If we postpone our graduation, I think it will cost us more time than normal students who is not in this double master program, which is not positive for us.

Secondly, because the courses in Tongji University is not the same as in KIT, I think that after enrollment KIT can provide some specific scripts or information about some specific courses. For example, we don't have chance to take course 'Modelbuilding', which will be taken by every other student in KIT. This is somehow a regret. If we can have the corresponding documents for self-learning, we can learn more professional knowledge and adapt to the senior courses in KIT more quickly.

Finally, I think there could be more forms of cooperation between both universities, for example like sending students to each other to do research together, this makes a team international and brings different thinking ways in it. And more off-line activities like a theme day or culture experience are also good for students from both sides to know each other and a different culture. It's a pity that this year we still don't have enough chance to introduce China and Tongji University to German students.

In the end I sincerely wish the double master program and the DAAD scholarship project to become more and more professional and profound, and more and more students can benefit from them and make their contribution to the communication of German and Chinese culture.