Experience Job Shadowing

Explore New Perspectives Abroad

Your guide to planning your international mobility experience with “UNIversInternational”

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Dear colleagues,

You want to boost your professional development, get exposed to new ideas and benefit from an exchange with colleagues abroad? Job shadowing may be exactly what you are looking for. Concise, practice oriented and designed with you and your daily work in mind, this guide will help you get an idea of what job shadowing is.

Read on to find out what your job shadowing experience could look like, how you can prepare and follow up, and how your work can benefit from it. We at Professional Development want to encourage you to actively seek opportunities to gain international experience – experience that will be valuable both for your own development and for your team.

What is „job shadowing“

and how can you benefit from it?

Have you ever considered participating in an international staff mobility?

Then you have probably come across the **“staff weeks”**, offered under the Erasmus+ **“Staff Training Mobility”**-programme. And you may have noticed that the staff weeks on offer do not match your area of responsibility. Or that they are taking place on dates that do not work with your schedule.

If you are looking for greater flexibility regarding dates and topics, we warmly recommend “job shadowing” as a good alternative to “staff weeks”.

Job shadowing is a form of work-related learning in which one person (“the shadower”) learns about the job of another person who works in a comparable role (“the host”).

As a shadower, you will observe how your counterpart carries out specific workflows and processes and how they deal with the challenges typically faced in their role.

As a host, you will receive a visitor and will show them what you do and what a typical day at your workplace looks like.

This short-term learning experience and the exchange on specific, pre-agreed topics from your shared work environment help you look beyond your usual scope, spark new ideas for your own tasks, and give you a deeper understanding of the university as a workplace.

Along the way, you gain new professional inspiration and strengthen your language and intercultural skills.

As a member of staff of our university, you benefit directly from the international outlook and strong competitive standing of your employer. Our extensive global network of partnerships and alliances – including CHARM-EU – offers many opportunities for you to broaden your professional perspective.

As a member of staff, you are part of these structures, you play an active role in shaping international collaboration and make a concrete contribution to bringing our university's internationalisation strategy to life.

How can you plan your Job Shadowing

as part of 'UNIversInternational'?

You are planning to participate in a job shadowing? We, the team at Professional Development, and our colleagues at the Service Centre InterNational Transfer (SINT) will be happy to speak to you about what your stay could look like.

Together with the SINT team, we regularly host information events about our "UNIversInternational" certification programme. Information about the programme can also be found on our web pages.

Designed specifically for our support staff, the UNIversInternational programme will help you enhance your intercultural competencies and will equip you with valuable skills for working in an increasingly international environment.

Your job shadowing experience is at the heart of the certification programme. The other two modules, i.e. our job-related English language and intercultural training courses, will prepare you for your stay abroad.

The certification programme allows you to tailor your job shadowing experience to your specific wants and needs.

The team at Professional Development will provide active support to help you take your ideas for your job shadowing from abstract to concrete:

We will help you find the format that best fits your goals, get in touch with an international colleague that works in a comparable role, create the right framework for your stay and reflect on your experiences and how they will benefit your personal development. We will be happy to answer any questions that you may have about job shadowing and to speak to you about what options are available to you!

How can you prepare for your job shadowing effectively?

Consult with your manager as soon as possible. Speak to them about what you hope to gain from the job shadowing, what your manager's perspective is, and how you can share the experience gained during the exchange with the team at your organisational unit (Dean's Office, Faculty, Institute, Chair, Department, Unit, Office etc.).

Prepare thoroughly for the meeting with your manager. Being well prepared is also an expression of appreciation.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- How can a job shadowing support my development?
- How can I make use of job shadowing in the context of the UNIversInternational certification programme?
- What are my specific training and development needs?
- What projects or topics do I want to work on during the job shadowing?
- What positive impact can the job shadowing have on my work? What do I hope to gain from it?
- How can I share what I have learned with my team?
- How can my team benefit from my experience?
- To which international university could I go? Do I already know a potential job shadowing partner? Does my manager have an idea? Or the team at Professional Development?
- What goals do I want to reach as a shadower abroad? And what do I have to offer as a host during my partner's return visit?
- When do I want to go on a job shadowing visit? And how much time do I want to spend on it?

After you have spoken with your manager, you can start putting your plans into action together with the teams at Professional Development and SINT.

Start out by checking with SINT to find out what funding opportunities are available to you.

When you have done so, contact Professional Development to receive assistance with finding and/or getting in touch with a suitable tandem partner and defining the concrete topics or projects on which you would like to work during your stay.

How can you get your work with your tandem partner off to a good start?

Once you have found a tandem partner, contact them directly to arrange a first virtual meeting on Zoom.

Use this meeting to get to know each other and get oriented. This meeting will give you the opportunity to find out if you and your partner have the same expectations for the job shadowing, to discuss your interests and to explore potential topics for you to work on together.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOUR VIRTUAL MEETING

Before your meeting, once again think through the topics you would like to focus on during the job shadowing.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What (new) tasks am I about to take on?
- What challenges am I facing in my daily work? What new challenges lie ahead for me?
- Where do I see a need and/or potential to optimise workflows from a timing, conceptual, or technical perspective?

Thinking about these questions can help you identify topics on which an exchange would be productive and beneficial for you.

You are free to choose the topic of the job shadowing and tailor it to your specific role to ensure that you take away as much as possible for your work.

EXAMPLES OF TOPICS

CHOSEN BY OTHER PARTICIPANTS FROM OUR UNIVERSITY

Below, you will find a list of topics that were chosen by your colleagues that we hope will provide you with some inspiration and ideas for your own job shadowing:

- Organisation of exams at Dean's Office level
- Introduction of an international Master's programme
- Strengthening internal networks and collaboration at the university
- Strategies for promoting gender equality
- Strategies for providing advising and support to (international) students
- Marketing activities to promote new and existing degree programmes
- Using cross-university software solutions to optimise internal processes
- Strategies for attracting (international) students
- Collaboration with international teachers/researchers/universities

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STUDENT ADMINISTRATION & EXAMS

- Recognition of/dealing with foreign qualifications
- Organisation of exams and deadline management
- Communicating with students in multilingual contexts
- Using digital campus management systems (e.g. HISinOne)

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FINANCE & MANAGEMENT OF THIRD-PARTY FUNDS

- Administration of international sponsored projects (e.g. Horizon Europe, Erasmus+)
- Travel expense accounting under national and EU law
- Procurement processes and solicitations in an international context
- Budget planning and drawing down funds for funded projects

3 PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Recruitment of international employees (visa, recognition, contract types)
- Organising training courses together with international partners
- Introduction of digital HR systems and self-service portals

4 IT

- Support structures for international students and employees
- Introduction and administration of learning platforms (e.g. Moodle)
- Data protection and IT security in an international context
- Interface management between the central administration and the individual faculties

5 LIBRARY & RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

- Open access publishing and advising on publishing-related matters
- Dealing with international licensing models
- Research data management and archiving
- Services for international researchers and students

6 INTERNATIONAL OFFICE & ADVISING ABOUT MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Organising staff mobilities under the Erasmus+ programme
- Coordinating international partnerships and alliances (e.g. CHARM-EU)
- Providing advising about residence permits, insurance, and intercultural preparation
- Managing events for incoming/outgoing staff

TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST VIRTUAL MEETING

You can use the following warm-up questions to get the first conversation with your potential tandem partner started.

Having a more detailed insight into each other's work can be helpful later on when you agree on the topics for the job shadowing.

1. What raised your interest in participating in the job shadowing?
2. Which department do you work for?
3. What are your main tasks?
4. What (project) are you currently working on?
5. What activity/dish/sight would you recommend to your tandem partner during their stay in your city?

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR VIRTUAL MEETING

After your virtual meeting, get back to Professional Development to let us know how you and your tandem partner are planning to proceed and, in particular, on what topics you are planning to work during your job shadowing.

After you have done so, submit your application for funding to SINT (at least one month prior to the start date of your mobility).*

You can already prepare the following documents independently:

- Request for authorisation for travel for training purposes
- Rough cost estimate for your stay (i.e. travel and accommodation costs) based on the currently applicable rates for per diem and overnight accommodation allowances for international travel found in the 'Auslandstage- und Auslandsübernachtungsgelder ...' document by the Bavarian State Ministry of Finance and Regional Identity
- A1 questionnaire

*Detailed information about eligibility criteria for funding and a list of the documents you will need to submit can be found on SINT's information sheet.

Be aware that there are some other documents that you will need to submit in addition to the ones listed above. You will receive these directly from SINT. Our colleagues at SINT will be happy to help with any questions you may have about the application process.

What could your job shadowing experience on site look like?

Once your request for authorisation for travel for training purposes and application for funding have been approved, you can go on your job shadowing visit during the agreed period.

To ensure that you will take away as much as possible from your stay, it may be helpful that you first get familiarised with the overall structure of your tandem partner's workplace, find out exactly what tasks their job entails and get to know their workflows before you start working on your agreed topics together.

At the beginning of their job shadowing experience, most of our participants asked the following questions:

- How is your team structured? What organisational unit do you belong to? Is there an organigram? What management and decision-making structures are in place?
- How is your own area of responsibility embedded in this structure? What advantages or disadvantages does this have?
- Do you have permanent tasks or are you working on a project? How is the project financed?

- What position(s) do you hold in your organisational unit/team?
- What do you like best about your current position?
- What challenges does your position involve?
- What does a typical working day look like for you? (workflows, time management etc.)
- Who do you cooperate with and to what extent? (within your organisational unit, within the university, with external partners)

Preparing for hosting a shadower

Here is how you can prepare if you will also be hosting a shadower:

- Let the other members of your team know that you will be hosting a shadower.
- Identify processes/workflows that fit with your agreed topics and that you want to share with your shadower.
- Speak to your manager about where it would make sense to involve your team.
- Let your shadower have all the information they will need prior to your first meeting at your workplace (e.g. when and where to meet you).

When you host your tandem partner at your home university, you will show them what you do, what a typical day at your workplace looks like and how you and your colleagues work together as a team.

How can you follow up on your job shadowing effectively?

It is important to us to be able to offer you a high-quality programme. After your job shadowing, we would therefore like to evaluate your experience and the way it was organised by the university together with you.

Please also use the follow-up meeting with your manager to discuss how the job shadowing benefited you, both on a professional and on a personal level, and how it could benefit your team. Evaluating your experience together with your manager, you demonstrate your appreciation for this opportunity to advance your professional development:

Your job shadowing checklist

The following checklist provides a quick overview of the individual steps in the job shadowing process that have been described above:

- Speak to your **manager** and explain why you want to participate in a mobility experience. Request authorisation for participating in the programme.
- Contact **Professional Development** and **SINT**: We will speak to you about what your job shadowing experience could look like and, where necessary, will help you find a tandem partner. Our colleagues at SINT will let you know what funding opportunities are available to you.
- Have a first virtual meeting to get to know your **tandem partner**. If you think that you will be able to work well together on a personal level, agree on the topics that you want to work on during the job shadowing.

Once you have agreed on the job shadowing with your tandem partner, submit your application for **funding** to SINT (at least one month prior to the start date of your mobility).
Detailed information about eligibility criteria for funding and a list of the documents you will need to submit can be found on the information sheet that can be downloaded from SINT's web pages.

Work on the agreed topics during your **job shadowing** experience.

Evaluate your job shadowing experience together with Professional Development and SINT.

Evaluate your job shadowing and what you have taken away from it together with your **manager**.

Important contact points

Your contact for the job shadowing programme:

Unit A.2 Professional Development
personalentwicklung@uni-wuerzburg.de
+49 931 31-89435

Your contact for applications for funding under the Erasmus+ programme:

Unit 1.2 International Office Erasmus Mobility
erasmus.staff-mobility@uni-wuerzburg.de

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