

## SPARC DAAD GIANT PROGRAMME

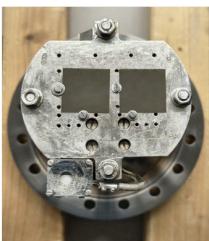
### Personal Report

By : Niranjana B R

My time in Würzburg was a very important experience for me. I worked in the lab group of Prof. Bert Hecht. I got to see and work with advanced lab equipment such as the dual-beam GaFIB system, the thermal evaporation setup, and the white-light scattering spectroscopy measurement apparatus. We fabricated nanoantennas of different lengths on Ag–Au alloy and measured how the scattering spectra shifted with wavelength, checking how the response changed with antenna dimensions. Later we fabricated dimer structures and measured them in the same way. It was the first time I experienced the full sequence from fabrication to measurement and interpretation, and I was genuinely curious to see how the final results would turn out.



Glass substrate before thermal evaporation



Glass substrate after thermal evaporation



Thermal metal evaporation set up



Dual Beam Ga FIB

The weekly group meetings were very enlightening. People asked direct questions and focused on understanding the results and improving the experiments, which I appreciated. The overall lab atmosphere was supportive, and I felt welcome.

Outside the lab, the cross-cultural workshop between Würzburg and Thiruvananthapuram turned out to be surprisingly useful. It helped me understand differences in communication and expectations, and it was a very interactive and enlightening session.

The Nürnberg field trip was another memorable part. The talks we attended were motivating and broadened my view of current research directions. It was also an eye-opener for me, as I realized the vast opportunities lying ahead. Visiting the Christmas market afterward made the trip feel more balanced and enjoyable. The special “Drei im Weggla” of Nürnberg was also really tasty. Back at the lab, the Christmas party included a treasure hunt about Würzburg, which was a fun way to learn more about the city and its history.

The change in season from autumn to snow made the experience even more memorable. The trees around Würzburg were beautiful, with leaves in shades of red, orange, and gold. I enjoyed noticing the different shapes and patterns of the leaves, and walking around the campus and city felt like being surrounded by a living painting. Watching the gradual transition from vibrant autumn colors to the first snow added a peaceful and pleasant atmosphere to the stay.



The group I was sent along with in Würzburg was very friendly and helpful, and I enjoyed being around them. They became really good friends, and having them around made everything easier from lab work to everyday life. I also made new friends in Germany, which made the experience even more enjoyable.



Looking back at the period, I gained both academically and personally. I built new technical skills, and I also grew in confidence, communication, and resilience. I am grateful for the opportunity and consider this phase a meaningful part of my life.