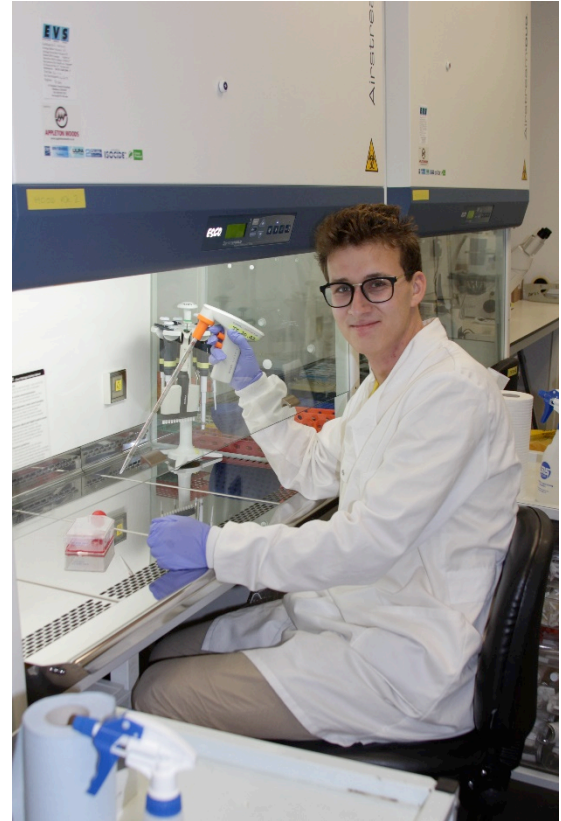


Report internship University of Oxford

Maarten Swart

I am currently in the final year of studying for an MSc in Bio-Pharmaceutical Sciences at Leiden University. I am interested in understanding the underlying causes of disease, in particular involving the immune system, and how we can develop novel approaches to treating patients. With the support of the Nora Baart Foundation, I had the opportunity to do my second research internship at the University of Oxford for a duration of 6 months. I worked in Prof. Claudia Monaco's group at the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology. This institute focusses on the causes and treatment of various chronic inflammatory diseases. My work at the University of Oxford concentrated on inflammation in atherosclerosis, which is often responsible for cardiovascular disease. More specifically, I investigated the role of the transcription factor interferon regulatory factor-5 (IRF-5) on atherosclerotic plaque "vulnerability" to rupture, which accounts for serious acute clinical events like myocardial infarction. During my internship I learned and used a lot of techniques, such as histology, confocal microscopy, cell culture, flow cytometry, ELISA and qPCR. I also really enjoyed the weekly lectures about immunology by researchers from all over the world.



Furthermore, I met a lot of people and visited the beautiful colleges and parks in Oxford. I especially liked the gardens in New College. I also visited to Bath, Cambridge, Stonehenge and London. Importantly, Dr. Linda Troeberg and Prof. Claudia Monaco offered me a PhD position at the Institute, which I gladly accepted. Therefore, I am looking forward to go back to Oxford in September!

Altogether, I really enjoyed my period in Oxford and I would kindly like to thank the Nora Baart Foundation for their support.

Kind regards,
Maarten Swart