

Internship at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Cambridge, U.S.A

Jeroen Slaats

I am a master student Molecular Mechanisms of Disease at the Radboud University. With the support of the Nora Baart foundation, I performed my second research training period in the Ploegh lab at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Cambridge, U.S.A. My work focused on the generation and characterization of alpaca-derived antibody fragments as tool to unravel the molecular mechanisms underlying inflammasome activation. The work atmosphere in the lab was amazing, with all lab members being very helpful and easy-going. I really felt part of a team that was always happy to help one another. It was a very hard-working team though, with everyone working long hours on both weekdays and weekends. Besides my work in the lab, I have attended inspiring lectures of world-renowned researchers in various fields of biomedicine, which really motivated me to continue in research and chase my curiosity.

Despite the long-hours, there was plenty of time for trips and social activities. Evenings and weekends are easily filled in the greater Boston area. We regularly went out for dinner, visited local pubs, and attended comedy nights. We also went hitchhiking and visited beautiful towns around the greater Boston area. I would definitely recommend to take the bus to New York (only a 4-hour journey) and spend a few days in the city that never sleeps.

It was an amazing experience never to forget, and it made me realize that there is much more out there to explore. I would like to thank the Nora Baart Foundation for their support.

