

As the final part of my Master's degree, I had the opportunity to do an 8-month internship at the Telethon Kids Institute in Perth, Australia. Here, I worked in the Sarcoma Translational Research team, led by A/Prof. Joost Lesterhuis. Together with my supervisor, I worked on the next generation of a revolutionary hydrogel that can be loaded with immunotherapy to prevent relapses in children receiving surgery to remove a sarcoma (cancer of connective tissues, such as muscle). I mainly focused on the new immunotherapy we aimed to load into this gel and looked for ways to improve the efficiency of this drug. Throughout the internship, I got to learn a variety of new techniques while also developing existing skills further. I mainly focused on flow cytometry and *in vitro* analyses, but also got some first exposure to pre-clinical models. All in all, a very valuable experience that I got to share with a big group of international colleagues.

Outside of the lab, I tried to explore the beautiful surroundings and enjoy the amazing weather in Perth. I joined the university volleyball club, where I got to play in the state league team. This meant I was playing against the best players in Western Australia (61 times as big as the Netherlands!). Here I had the opportunity to play with a great team and be part of a volleyball club and meet people outside of the lab. With some other friends, I attended many festivals in the summer. Perth has a great music scene which I tried to explore as much as I could on the weekends. The amazing weather often led to great parties and wonderful summer nights on the beach. With these friends, I also went sailing on the river in the city, seeing the most amazing sunsets. This is how I got to know many people and created some valuable friendships. Also, during Christmas and new year's (when I had a break from the lab), I visited a friend in Melbourne and drove 'the great ocean road' there. This was an amazing experience and I got to see yet another part of this beautiful country.

Overall, I had an amazing and unforgettable time in Australia. But unfortunately, the cost of living is much higher here and I would like to thank the Nora Baart Foundation for making this memorable experience possible.

