

Report on Short-stay Study Abroad program

School and Dept: School of Multidisciplinary Sciences
Department of Informatics
Name: Yunlong FENG (3rd year of 5-year Ph.D course)
Destination country: USA
Receiving univ./institute: Hewlett Packard Laboratories
Period of study: 4 weeks [2012/07/29 ~ 2012/08/26]

Description of the receiving university:

HP Labs is the exploratory and advanced research group for Hewlett-Packard, which is well known as an American multinational information technology corporation headquartered in Palo Alto, California, United States. The HP Labs conducts scientific research to address many important challenges and opportunities facing customers' requirement and society in the next decade. HP Labs' research is conducted in seven locations around the world and is focused on eight broad themes:

- Cloud and Security,
- Information Analytics,
- Intelligent Infrastructure,
- Mobile and Immersive Experience,
- Networking and Communications,
- Printing and Content Delivery,
- Services, and Sustainability.

This time, I'm studying in Group Mobile and Immersive Experience, located at Palo Alto, CA, United States.

Overview of Program:

Preparation:

Since I have already collaborated with principal researcher Wai-tian Tan, who works at HP Labs, the main purpose of this short-time stay is to strengthen cooperation and improve our previous research on Human Interactive system for video streaming.

Before departure, there're some contract things to be finished by SOKENDAI and HP Labs, it's better to start the procedure earlier. And I already have one US Visa to entry and stay.

Duration:

HP Labs is a very efficient group, gathering so many excellent researchers and students around the whole world. Every day, there're new interns or visitors, and there're lots of presentations, which be informed by email, you can choose any you interested at.

I always start working in morning, have a chat or break with other researchers during lunch time, join some presentations one day, and go to gym before leaving to my apartment.

Experiences, such as travel, sports, etc:

The weather in Palo Alto, or California, during summer is very comfortable, compared with Tokyo... I first lived in the hotel near HP Labs. There are many people traveling here, like for Google, Facebook and other famous IT company, also Stanford University. Later I moved to a subleasing dorm in Stanford University.

The lifestyle is quite different from Tokyo, it's quite difficult to live there without a car. It's not in a walk distance, of course you can go shopping or go to work by bus, but it's inconvenient surely.

There're lots of choices for travelling. You can take Cal-train to San Francisco, or Los Angeles. Also you can visit Los Vegas during weekend.

About Expenses:

Living in Palo Alto, is quite expensive, especially nearing Stanford University and Silicon Valley. If you live in hotel and eat outside, the expense would be overspending. I quite recommend finding a subleasing dorm in Stanford University, or other blocks if you have a car license. It will be easier to find a dorm during summer, for many students will go outside for job or vacation. And the dorm in Stanford University is fully equipped. You can cook by yourself.

Also it's quite different to pay everything with tip. You can pay by credit card, adding one acceptable number without getting embarrassed.

Announcement:

Given it's in US, all presentations and research are in English, but also there're many people speaking Chinese and Cantonese. For I'm Chinese, it's much easier for me to enjoy it. Also I met more Japanese in Silicon Valley and San Francisco.

Prepare a credit card. People always pay everything by card, except taking bus. So keeping some coins/quarters in your wallet would be helpful.

Temperature falls after sunset, even in summer. Bring some jeans and coats.

Confirmation:

Experiencing different research culture, working with excellent researchers will highly affect your research and philosophy. I learnt a lot both on my work and on communications. Thanks to SOKENDAI's supporting, I can have the opportunity to enjoy this.