

**My exchange year in Freiburg 2018/2019**  
**Ayaka Yoshida from Mie University, Japan**  
**Baden Württemberg-Stipendium**

My name is Ayaka Yoshida and I am a student from Mie University, Japan. Since September 2018 to August 2019, I spent a year as an exchange student of the Baden-Württemberg-Stipendium Program at the Katholische Hochschule Freiburg—KH Freiburg. It was a year of colorful and memorable experiences. I am so grateful for such a wonderful opportunity given to me. The first time to visit Freiburg was on August 2017 in a short exchange program for a week. Since then I was attracted to this beautiful city, it did not take long to decide to come back again.

On the day I arrived in Germany, a student tutor Stephanie of the group “Studis International” of the KH Freiburg greeted me at the train station and she took me to my host family. She is from Colombia so she understood my situation that I barely had a local friend and could not understand or speak German. We often met up and she showed me several places in Freiburg. When she invited me to her place to eat together, I also met her other friends, so I could get to know more and more people. She also helped me when I applied to get visa and creating a new account of a German bank. I cannot thank her enough for how much she helped me.

In KH, every Wednesday, we met at Café International – a meeting place organized by the “Studis International” together with the International Office. There I met many international and national students. Some of them are from the country I barely know about, so it was so interesting to talk with them about the similarity and difference between our countries. Once a month we had a country evening representing the countries the international students are from. That was nice opportunities for me to learn about other places.

Of course, not only the social life side, but also the studying was a very important part of my life in Freiburg. In winter semester, I mostly took part in the classes offered in English. The course “Social and Educational Work with Refugees” was one of the most impressive classes for me. In my country Japan, refugees from other countries do not reach Japan or they are not accepted, therefore Japanese people do not recognize this issue as an urgent matter. I felt this course gave me a good opportunity to see the reality and learn this world’s controversial issue. We visited one residence for refugees in Freiburg, and made research project and presentation about it. By making presentation, I could also learn about the situation in Japan that was very interesting.

Throughout this semester, I studied the subjects that were not my major; so sometimes I

experienced hard times because of the lack of knowledge.

In summer semester, I participated in some nursing courses. A big difference between our universities is that all the students here in Freiburg have license of nurse, so they study to gain better professional skills and know ledge. I was also surprised that there were many students from foreign countries. That gave me the idea to come back to Germany in the future to work. Some of them kindly offered me to visit their working places, and thus I could learn a lot about the health care institutions. In Germany, people learn nursing more by practicing than by listening to the lectures. That is the biggest difference between Germany and Japan. It seems me that by learning so we can get concrete image better.

Throughout these semesters in Freiburg, I met many people who were very friendly and kind. They helped me so many times I cannot appreciate enough. What I experienced here in Freiburg will be a treasure of my life that can't be bought by money. This city is always energetic with people, always beautiful with surrounding nature.

I would like to show my gratitude again for accepting me as an exchange student in the KH. Moreover, the BW-Stipendium Program is such a generous program offering a great opportunity to study in Freiburg. If somebody is indecisive for the city to study, Freiburg is highly recommended and don't miss to apply for the BW-Stipendium!



