



Nuffield Research Placements case study: *Giulia* – NRP Student

Why did you choose to work with Nuffield Research Placements?

I was first introduced to the Nuffield Research Placement Programme at University of Bristol during a mathematics enrichment day. After doing my research, I noticed that it had a great reputation and it seemed like it provided students with an invaluable opportunity.

I chose to work with Nuffield Research Placements because I found it incredibly cool to have the opportunity to partake in a serious/real research project alongside a company/organisation or a University. As I aspire to work in research, I found this an invaluable opportunity to experience and form a realistic idea on what doing research in a professional setting would be like.



What were your tasks at Balfour Beatty?

As I conducted a study on the uses of a relatively new technology (Artificial Intelligence), my main role was to collect information. I was given a lot of freedom to conduct my project as preferred, hence, during my placement, my supervisor helped me organise a series of in-person and online semi structured interviews (to collect both qualitative and quantitative data). As my in-person placement was quite short and compact (it was 4 days long), my timetable was relatively saturated with 30 minutes interviews. During empty time slots, I started analysing and elaborating the data that I collected during the interviews. Additionally, I also produced a survey that helped me collect much more information about the topic of my research.

What was your overall feedback on the placement?

I honestly loved my placement. As I want to study Chemistry at University, I was initially sceptical about partaking in a placement targeted towards Civil Engineering. However, during my experience, I was given the chance to develop an interest in this different scientific branch. One thing that really made me spark this interest was my visit to Balfour Beatty's construction site in Portbury, where I was able to explore some of the things the Hinkley Marine Works Team worked on and told me about.

I soon found myself looking forward to attending every day and was quite sad at the end of the placement. Not only I was met with friendly and lovely people who helped me and supported me a lot in my project, but I was also met with a stimulating environment that provided me with loads of interesting topics to learn about.

How did this placement benefit help/inspire your future aspirations? etc.

Participating in this project reminded me how interesting all branches of science are and made me remember to always be curious and open-minded about things that I do not know. It taught me how important it is to take any opportunity that life offers and that, despite it being a positive or negative experience, it is always going to teach something valuable.

It has also confirmed my ambition of aiming to become a scientific researcher in the future.

Additionally, as my placement was set in a company, I received invaluable advice on important employability skills. It also made me improve skills like time-management and flexibility.

All that I learned during this experience has definitely helped me become more confident in myself and my skills. It reminded me how important it is to push yourself out of the comfort-zone and has given me a big boost in becoming more determined to get where/what I want.