

**“We've come to Russia to practice” - two students from China share the experience they received as part of the master's internship program at the Department of Landscape Design and Sustainable Ecosystems of RUDN University.**

Speaking about how they have decided to take part in an internship program at RUDN University, a student at Fujian University of Agriculture and Forestry Yongcheng Zou replied that they simply “wanted to get more knowledge and experience” as part of their specialty - landscape architecture. The fact is that RUDN University and Fujian University of Agriculture and Forestry in China are participating in the TAURUS project. This program organizes internships for candidates for master's degrees at partner universities in order to train competitive specialists in urban and rural interaction, as well as sustainable urban development. Xinhui Fei, the second intern, notes the internship activities as the main reason of her choice. “RUDN University has attracted us with its rich program of practical exercises, as well as the availability of courses that we wanted to study,” she says.

As for the educational process, the interns had a lot to do in one month. The internship was focused on the development of advanced approaches to urban landscape design. During the month, Yongcheng Zou and Xinhui Fei were able to study the introduction to urban ecology, as well as the basics of data analysis. But the most important was a practical part - the design, development and implementation of landscape projects in urban environments, including limited space and intense pollution. Basically, the daily work of interns was carried out on the basis of the Eco-Design studio, where they got acquainted with local plants, studied methods of growing and planting them, took care of young seedlings. They also managed to visit the largest parks in Moscow (VDNH, Gorky Park, Zaryadye, Botanical Garden of Moscow State University) and to study the features of their landscape design. “In a word, every day was as saturated as possible with theory and practice,” Yongcheng Zou admits.

The internship itself lasted exactly a month. But the trainees still managed to get acquainted with the university and to get involved in the educational process. Speaking about the difficulties they encountered for the first time, Xinhui Fei emphasizes the basic adaptation: to the language environment, university life, the educational process, and so on. She states that most of the difficulties arose with the language - “not all students and teachers speak English, but our training was constantly managed by the Department, and we could always seek help and advice.”

Taking part in programs like TAURUS interns inevitably compare educational system in native and host universities. In this way Yongchen Zou and Xinhui Fei can also point out some differences between Fujian University of Agriculture and Forestry and RUDN University. *«The most important difference that brought us here is a great attention to practice and scientific activity. We constantly worked with plants, went to field research. In other words, we immediately plunged into work»*, – they say. Even their first day there began with participation in a Round table, where they made a presentation. And all of this happened in just one month. They embrace that with the fact that at their university in China a curriculum is focused on obtaining theoretical knowledge and only within the framework of that specialty. In RUDN interns could pull up their knowledge about plants and green spaces in general, meanwhile at their native university most of the time students focused on design and engineering.

Participation in programs such as TAURUS give possibility to interns to compare the education systems at local and host universities. Thus, Yongcheng Zou and Xinhui Fei also pointed out some differences between Fujian University of Agriculture and Forestry and RUDN University. “The most important difference that brought us here is a great attention to practice and scientific activity. We constantly worked with plants, went to field research. In other words, we immediately plunged

into work”. The first day in RUDN University began with participation in a round table, where they made a presentation and then there were a lot of practice work. At RUDN University interns could gain the knowledge of plants and green spaces in general, while at their home university, most of the time students focused on design and development. So in this case the educational systems of two universities complements each other.

When asked how this internship changed their plans for the future, the interns replied that it had a big impact on them. “When you gain experience of studying in another country, and when this experience is successful and exciting, you begin to understand that the whole world and the thousands of opportunities are open for you” - they say. Therefore, now they realize that they have more ambitions and motivation to gain new knowledge and experience, make new acquaintances. “Our current plan is to get a master's degree, and after that we want to find work abroad. And it is entirely possible that we can return to Russia”, Xinhui Fei shared her plans.