



Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

Being an intern at Nightingale

Who am I?

My name is Helena and I am currently enrolled in the master programme called Globalisation, Politics and Culture at NTNU in Trondheim, Norway. Taking an internship in the third semester is part of the programme.



Helena Marten, 24.01.2018

My internship

Little did I know how fortunate I was to have received an internship at the Nightingale programme in Trondheim. I liked the concept of Nightingale from the very beginning, and I quickly discovered all the mutual benefits as well as challenges and the complexity of the programme throughout the time of my internship. My internship started in late August, which was perfect timing because I got to experience all the work that had to be done before the first meeting between mentor and child even takes place. For example, organising meetings and presentations of all kinds and recruiting the students for the coming mentor year. I also got to meet the children and experience the Christmas workshop as my internship lasted until December.

My research project

I was also working on my own little study with the goal to find out why students want to become mentors for the Nightingale programme, and what kind of challenges they expect. I gathered my own data and conducted interviews. By knowing and understanding the students' motivation, recommendations could be established on how even more students may be targeted and motivated to become a mentor in the future.

The results can be briefly summarised by saying that all students main (not only, but main) motivation is intrinsic, which means that they want to participate mainly because they wish to help a child and want to establish a friendship, simply have a good time, improving their own skills and gaining more experience. The students explained that they wish to establish and achieve these motivations simply for the sake of doing so and not due to external factors or rewards. Furthermore, students reported that they expect to be facing language barriers as main challenge throughout their time as a mentor. These results can be considered as relevant and applicable for other Nightingale projects, as the main structure of the programmes is usually similar. However, more extensive research is needed in order to investigate whether this trend can be generalised or not. It is suggested for further studies to find out if the dominant intrinsic motivation is a general characteristic of students who want to volunteer to become a mentor.

Nightingale got me hooked

Although my internship officially ended in December, Nightingale got me hooked. I am now dedicating my master thesis to this mentoring programme which I have become so very fond of. What I personally like the most about it is that it truly is a win-win situation for everyone involved. In my opinion, Nightingale is needed on an even bigger scale. I am very grateful that I have been welcomed and included so openly and had the opportunity to be a little part of the Nightingale mentoring programme. This internship has truly been a very inspiring and educational journey for me.