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Another Chance

The IISMA Program was **my sixth attempt to study abroad**. I have always wanted to study abroad since I was in junior high school. Still, knowing that the resources were beyond my family's capability, I applied to many scholarship programs such as KL-YES, UWC, Monbukagakusho, and several more. Despite my relentless attempts, I was rejected and forced to withdraw my admission to a Japanese university due to COVID-19. Although I failed, **I still aspire to learn from different perspectives, environments, and cultures**, which has motivated me to study overseas even until now.

I believe that by studying abroad, not only am I able to study academically, but **I can also learn and understand the diversity and viewpoint differences around the world**. It can also teach me to collaborate instead of competing by considering each other's perspectives, giving me a new understanding as a global citizen, which is one of the main objectives of The Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA) program.

I never imagined that another perfect chance to study abroad would come to me in my second year of college. Since 2021, I practiced my English repeatedly by learning tenses to improve my EPT score. I also practiced writing some essays to prepare me for the application. My friends and mentors also supported proofreading my essay and helped me practice my interview. **Without their help, I wouldn't be able to be where I am now.**



A Growth Test

I was selected as **one of the two Student Representatives (SR)** for the IISMA 2022 at the University of Szeged by voting. It was my first time leading a lot of people formally, especially when I never knew anyone in the group before. Being an **SR is a challenging and thrilling task**, you are not only the leader of the cohort, but also a bridge between the host university, IISMA, and other external parties.

Not only busy gathering information and arranging the VISA Application, host university application, and departure ticketing, but we were also busy doing tasks from IISMA and having a series of pre-departure webinars and mentoring where I, **as an SR, was responsible for keeping track of all 45 fellow Szegedians** (a nickname for IISMA Szeged) about their progress.

By the number of tasks that I was responsible for, it was pretty overwhelming. But **here's where my leadership and management skill grew**, I decided to run the cohort with an organizational structure and divided the tasks by division. It was a challenge, but it turned out that it was an effective method. We successfully completed the tasks smoothly without a significant workload gap.

The pre-departure process might be the most stressful phase throughout my IISMA journey, but that's **where I learned the most**. I learned how to trust my colleagues and friends, patience, and delegation which I will need the most for my future endeavors.

Over The Cloud

My experience in 4 and a half months was nothing but a rollercoaster. Getting to know new people, new atmosphere, new language, new cultures, and new surroundings is both exciting and scary at the same time. I was not exaggerating when I said I was at the happiest point in my life. **How can I not? I have been waiting for this for the last six years.**

There were **too many good memories to count** such as representing IISMA Szeged 2023 at the Indonesian Embassy in Budapest, celebrating Christmas with Hungarian treats, field trips with fellow international students, and introducing Indonesian culture to the public. But my most memorable and proudest moment was when **I and several other awardees performed a medley of traditional Indonesian dances in front of the public in Szeged**. I always love dancing, especially Indonesian traditional dance even though the last I danced was in elementary school. I also got the chance to visit several surrounding European countries and explore many new and different cultures.

I am very grateful for everything I have experienced as an IISMA Awardee. **It nurtured me as a person and formed my mentality to keep challenging myself for whatever is about to come**. I also felt the change in myself for the better after I spent my time abroad. I came to value my country and culture more and learned about the differences between our country and countries in Europe in terms of social values, education, environment, and many more.

A New Path

At first, I thought that if my dream of studying abroad has been fulfilled, it will reduce my thirst for exploration. **But I was wrong**, it made me craving for more. Because I already realized how much change studying abroad had brought me, **I aspire to explore more parts of the world**. As an industrial engineering student, I need to adjust to the rapid technological and global trend changes, learning directly from a place where the technology is more advanced than ours and more accessible to a new market scope, I believe that it will be the best experience a future engineer can have.

I am fully aware that the lessons obtained from studying abroad are not what anyone can have. Because of that, **I have been actively helping a lot of applicants with their IISMA Applications this year**. I also made a brief journal about my IISMA journey and my Europe trip to share it with others. **I want to continuously motivate Indonesian youth to be brave to study abroad.**