

After obtaining my Bachelor's Degree in Microbiology at the University of Ljubljana I was really excited to see what the future has in store for me. Even before the end of my graduate studies I knew that I wanted to continue my further education outside of my home country. Though, it was not a shortage of opportunities in Slovenia that led me to pursue a PhD abroad, on the contrary, it was a calling for novel experiences, discovering a foreign country, communicating in a foreign language, and encountering people from all over the world, that played the decisive role.

In all regards, the ClostNet Project seemed ideal for me. Invested in studying a diverse and enigmatic bacterial genus, *Clostridium*, it is a project interlacing 11 different laboratories from 7 different countries all over Europe, and in such, providing ample opportunities to participate on various workshops, conferences, and secondments to partner laboratories. Furthermore, the Novartis' Vaccines and Diagnostics laboratory is more than able to provide me with a well-equipped workspace, excellent scientific training, and a possibility to experience working in the private sector. Last but not least, it is an honor and a privilege working beside amazing people.

In my first year as a ClostNet fellow I have already spent a month and a half on a secondment to the *Clostridium* Research Group, the University of Nottingham. There, with the guidance of all the members of the laboratory, I was quickly able to master new techniques and, moreover, received an opportunity to compare the differences between the university and a private company. It was an overall positive experience and I look forward to returning for the second part of my visit.

Embarking on a career in science is not necessarily easy for young researchers, thankfully the Marie Curie funding offers a splendid opportunity and support for us to encounter and experience science.

Tanja Dapa, Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, Italy