

OIN STUDENT REPORT

Note1: you may either fill this form or use this form to structure your own report (which you may send us in Word or as a PDF)

Note2: the report will be posted anonymously on the OIN website by the OIN Academic Director. If you are sending in a PDF please make sure that you refrain from putting your name in the document.

Note3. You may send some photos. Do remember that if you, or other students, are in the photos we need your permission (and that of the other students in the photos) before posting them on the website.

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- **Host Institution:** OneWorld Women Network, OneWorld South Asia
 - **Home Institution:** Nipissing University
 - **Type of Exchange:**
 - Regular exchange. _____
 - SSP _____
 - IIP _____
 - **Term and year in which you were on exchange in India:** June & July 2017
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- A. Please write between one and three paragraphs on your experience at your host institution (you may write about your courses/independent study there, hostel accommodation if you stayed on campus, campus experience, interactions with other students on campus and/or faculty, and so on).**

I had a very pleasant experience interning at OneWorld South Asia in Sajdarjung Development Area, New Delhi. Most of my energy was put into gender-related issues and the launch of OneWorld Women Network (OWN), a collaborative feminist network. I played a key role in the organization of OWN events, wrote articles relevant to gender and development and utilized my skills in photography. Additionally, I directed/filmed/edited a Hindi documentary short, Dilli Haat Ki Dhadkan, which explores the gender-specific barriers craftswomen face at Dilli Haat, one of Delhi's most popular craft bazaars.

The office atmosphere was productive but relaxed. I quickly created meaningful relationships with my coworkers. I spent most of my breaks playing with the dogs outside the office and would often grab nearby street food for lunch (delicious chole kulche for 20 INR). I made weekly post-work outings with my coworkers to Hauz Khas Village.

- B. Please write about your experience of the city in which your host institution is located (including transportation for getting around the city, places you would recommend for eating and sightseeing)**

Living in Delhi is a very stimulating experience. Prepare to have your senses saturated.

I was lucky enough to find a flat in South Delhi that was very close to a metro station. I took the metro every morning from Malviya Nagar to Green Park (2 short stops). The metro system in Delhi is quite good, with metro cards that are easy to recharge and trains reaching platforms every few minutes. It can get surprisingly congested at peak hours, so be ready to abandon all concepts of personal space. Upon reaching Green Park metro, I would approach an auto-rickshaw wallah directly outside the metro gate and put my limited knowledge of Hindi to good use in order to haggle a reasonable fair (typically I would not accept anything over 30 INR for the 1KM trip to the office). I found auto-wallahs in Delhi to be joyful and friendly. It certainly works to your advantage to communicate in Hindi, though communicating in English will almost always suffice. I would make the reverse journey on my way back home from the office in the afternoon.

There is a lot to do and many places to see in Delhi. I spent several weekends in Chandni Chowk, one of India's most bustling markets – make sure to try jalebis when you are here. On Sundays, Daryaganj Book Market takes place in this area. It is the ideal place for cheap literature. Red Fort and Jama Masjid are also nearby. In general, I had a lot of fun exploring Old Delhi and found this to be the ideal location to capture photographs. On the weekends, you can head to Hauz Khas Village to grab a drink at one of several bars. Sunday mornings are perfect for roaming around Lodhi Gardens. Other monuments worth seeing: Qutb Minar, Lotus Temple, Humayun's Tomb (opt for Safdarjang's Tomb if you want to avoid crowds). Be sure to catch langar at Gurudwara Bangla Sahib.

There are plenty of yummy food options in and around Delhi. Do go out and experiment with street food! I have found it best to have an Indian friend with me to help navigate the Delhi street food scene. There are a lot of really fantastic dining options in Connaught Place, Hauz Khas Village and CyberHub (Gurgaon). I spent a lot of time doing work (and drinking spectacular coffee) at Blue Tokai in Saket. I recommend hot chocolate fudge sundae from Nirula's or ice cream from Natural's on a hot summer day.

C. Please write about your experiences in the host country, if you did some travelling (including mode of transportation, finding accommodation, places you visited, people you met, cost of transportation and accommodation, and so on).

I had been in India for 6 months prior to my internship and managed to travel extensively during this time. After my internship, I planned 2 weeks of travel to West Bengal (Kolkata) and to northeast India (Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Manipur). I crossed the infamous living root bridges in Meghalaya and visited Cherrapunjee, the wettest place on earth, during monsoon season. I trekked to Dzukou Valley, a wonderfully peaceful area on the border of Nagaland and Manipur. In Manipur, I visited Loktak Lake (famous for its floating masses of vegetation, known locally as "phungi") and did some shopping at Ima Keithel, a historical marketplace run exclusively by women. Additionally, I managed to arrange interviews with transgender persons in Kolkata and Imphal for an independent research project that I am currently undertaking.

D. Other (feel free to write about anything else that you think may help OIN students in subsequent years).

India is a very magical place. The odds that you will encounter challenges here are quite high.
Be adaptable.