

Dispatch to the University of Newcastle

T.K.

This time, I participated in the dispatch program to the University of Newcastle (“UON”) during 2/27~3/9. UON is in a rich natural location similar to Yokohama National University, and access from the city is about 15 minutes by train. During my dispatch, I visited the laboratory of Professor Ajayan Vinu of GICAN (Global Innovative Centre for Advanced Nanomaterials). The laboratory develops nanostructures for a variety of applications in the energy, environment, and health sectors. The students here were PhDs and Postdocs, 90% of whom were from India and China.

At UON, I actively communicated with the students in the laboratory. There were no off-campus activities such as industrial tours in this program, so I spent most of my time in the laboratory.

In the morning, I read papers on GICAN research, and in the afternoon, I asked questions about the papers and observed the experiments in action. In addition, we participated in lab tours, campus tours, and lectures in the laboratory.

During lunch breaks, we went to the university's cafeteria and/or to a nearby shopping mall by their car to have lunch together. Some of the Indian students showed interest in Japan food and culture, and the talk about Japanese and anime was very exciting.

On weekends, I went sightseeing in Newcastle and Sydney. Sydney can be reached by train in about three hours from Newcastle. I visited the city's iconic sites such as the Opera House and Harbour Bridge. As for Newcastle, I visited museums, cathedrals and beaches. At the museum, I was able to learn about the history of the city of Newcastle. As for the living aspect, I stayed at the hotel this time, and there was no inconvenience. However, prices were considerably higher than Japan. For example, a nearby supermarket cost \$2.5 (225 yen) for 500 ml of water, and most of the café menus on campus cost more than \$15 (1350 yen). In addition, used towels could not be replaced unless they were placed in a designated place due to environmental considerations or water shortages. Although it was only 10 days during this dispatch, I think I was able to experience Australian life and culture. Also, from the perspectives of me, who wants to get involved in research and development overseas in the future, to have experience to study chemistry while using English in the laboratory was a good opportunity to develop self-image in the future.



Nobbys Beach & Lighthouse