

International **DAAD Alumni Expert Seminar** on
“Innovative Approaches to Global Public Challenges”
followed by a visit at the
re:publica 17
April 30 – May 10, 2017 in Potsdam and Berlin, Germany



ALUMNI DIARY



Day 1 (29.04.2017)

It is day one of our DAAD Special Alumni Project. This is arrival day, 29th April 2017. The weather in Berlin is perfect for me, just 11C (I come from Tanzania, therefore, to have this temperature I have to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro - the highest in Africa). Interestingly, I registered at the MOTEL ONE as the first participant to arrive among the MPM Alumni. Thanks to special prearrangements that were made by the Potsdam University MPM Management, everything seemed to be smooth.

What surprised me today was the instinctual fear nagging me: Fear of unknown. It was a psychological attitude that tended to limit me from doing a number of things I wanted to do.

My highlight today was a kind of homeostatic balance that I developed when I met fellow alumni at the social event organized by MPM Management at Cafe Hardenberg (Berlin) in the evening. In this event, the only person known to me before was the MPM Coordinator, Stephanie whom I had known during my MPM cohort of 2009-2010.

An impression to remember today was that feeling of oneness and belongingness among MPM alumni despite our differences in cohorts, races, backgrounds and whatever diversity we had. I actually felt so much at ease with everybody around and I could feel each one of us having that same feeling. The photo attached herein is a testimony to this first day of arrival. It was taken at the social event as we continued sharing a spree of drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic!

Herculan Ndagabwene, Tanzania, MPM 2009-10



Day 2 (30.04.2017)

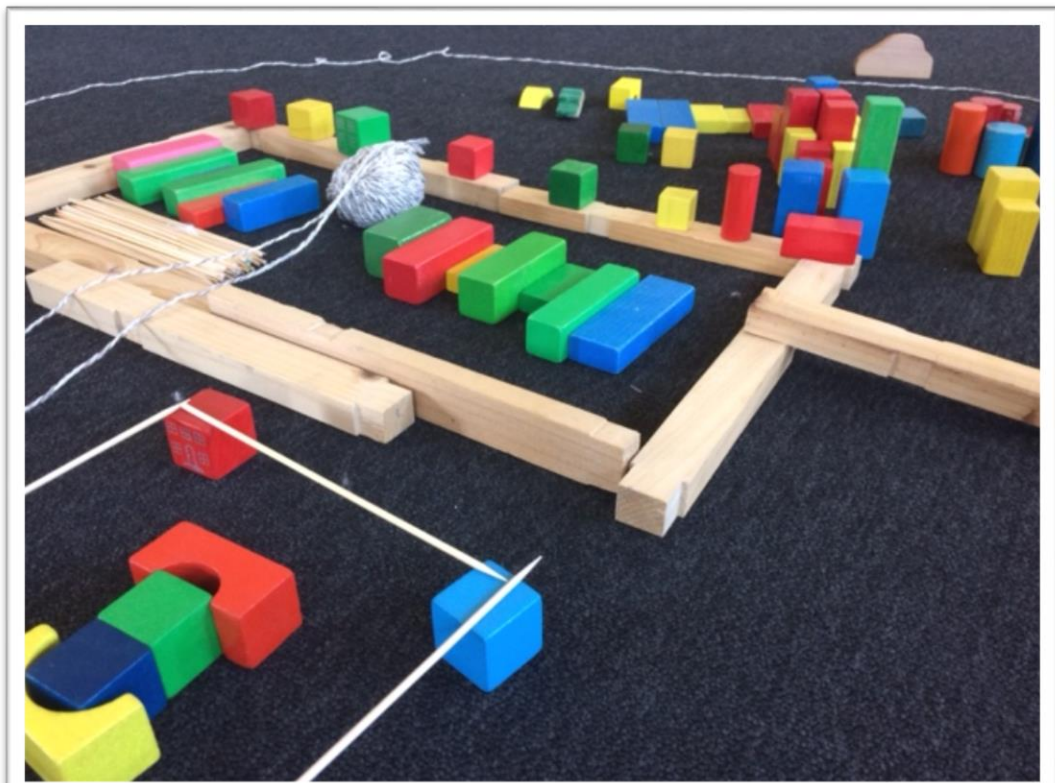
Today is the second day of the MPM Alumni Seminar 2017 and is actually the first day when most of the participants met each other. The summer sun matched the sunny smiles of the participants as they greeted each other for the first time and exchange stories.

What surprised me today was the fact that despite our differences in nationality and year of graduation, we had very similar experiences during our time in Germany taking up MPM studies.

My highlight today was the interesting way that the participants “got to know each other” through an exercise wherein all participants would take turns in building a structure using materials provided by the organizers.

An impression to remember was the fact that the group of participants are composed of experts in their own fields and from different sectors of actors in public policy.

André Berry Mortel, Philippines, MPM 2013-14



Day 3 (01.05.2017)

What surprised us today was the change in the approach of introducing design thinking in policy making and discovering that we too are designers!

My highlight of the day was Stéphane Vincent's presentation, getting to know practical examples and a several bunch of tools that would be very useful for our jobs and that we have not considered before, but that we are eager to learn about them and use them.

An impression to remember is that failures are the starting point for innovations.

Andrea Villa de la Parra, Mexico and Diana Argüello, Ecuador, MPM 2014-15



Day 4 (02.05.2017)

Today was the fourth day of our MPM Alumni Seminar, we keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we are curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths. Although, today was tiring and the weather was rainy, but seminar was informative and a great learning opportunity.

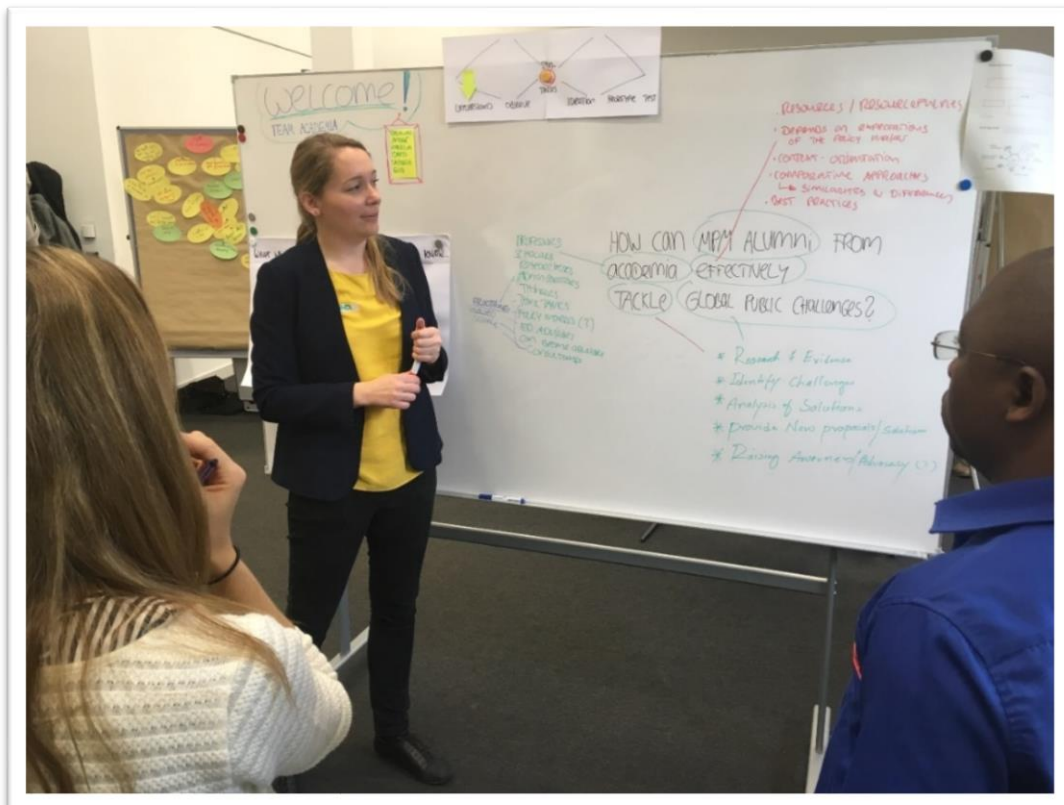
We usually race for designing problem-focused mindset, what inspired me today was to hear about designing solution-focused and action-oriented mindset towards addressing pressing challenges around us and creating a preferred future.

My highlight today was the extensive discussion on how public sector, non-profit and academia can work together to effectively address global public challenges. I also found that our diverse group of alumni have diverse perspectives and I believe diversity can inspire creativity and drive innovation.

An impression to remember was a role play by a number of MPM-Alumni who demonstrated the creation of solution-focused mindset to address a particular problem.

Today's Quotes: Multi-Disciplinary Perspective, Variable Space, Design is a Bridge, Think Wild, Designing Thinking helps understand customers'/users'/citizens' unmet or unarticulated needs.

Delawar Barekzai, Afghanistan, MPM 2012-13





Today was the 5th day of our Alumni Seminar, it was productive day following by exciting excursion to Endevo UG and GIZ Lab of Tomorrow, Berlin.

What surprised me today was to learn about the Inclusive Business models as a market-based approach that include the poor and business for mutual benefits that contribute to poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

In addition to this, Lab of Tomorrow session provides a solution-driven and practical framework for discovering challenges and designing innovative policy.

My highlight today was the focusing on the process of innovation and how to accomplish each step which might help to transpire why the existing solution is not working?

An impression to remember was the “Lab of tomorrow” a session was presented by Jorn and “Inclusive business” presented by Isabel and Megan that they gave us key information about the projects and examples of different countries.

Devi Maya Ghimire, Canada, MPM 2002-03



Hello Everyone,

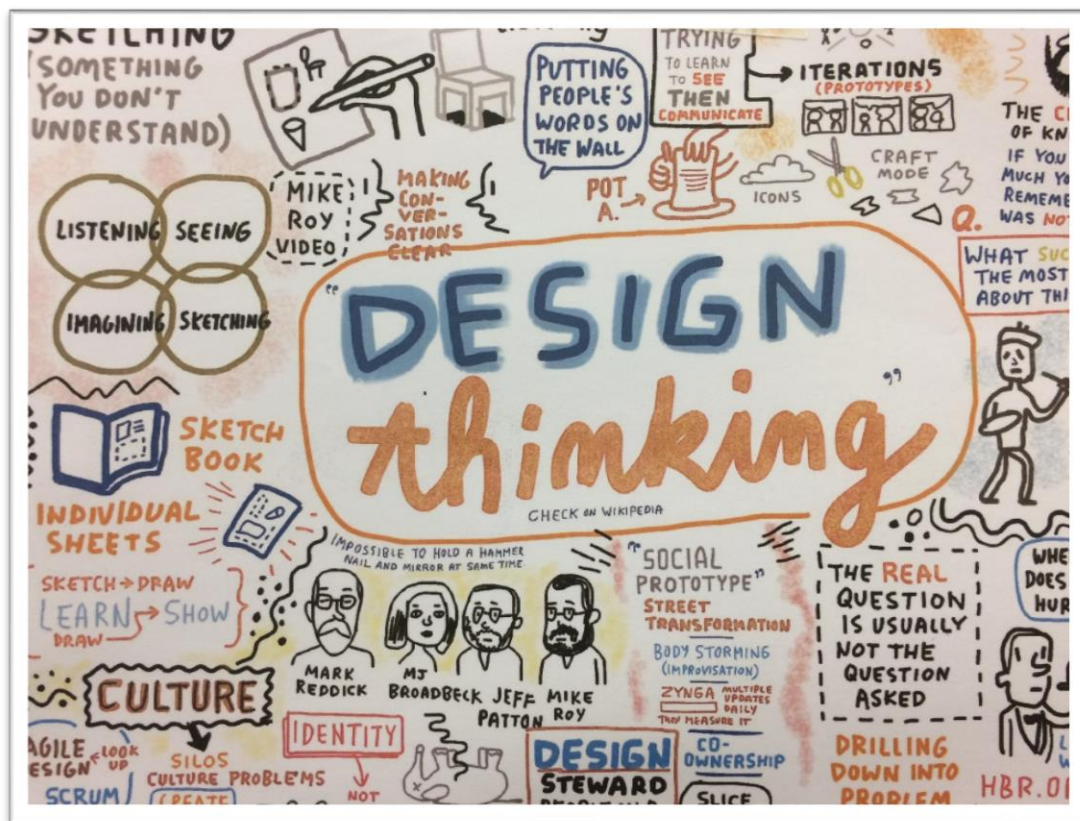
This is day six of the MPM Alumni Seminar 2017 in Potsdam. After journeying through the challenges of a Persona of Asibi, Reo and Dr. Maryam, developed by the 3 teams, we had to develop a product that can help in addressing the challenges facing them.

Our surprise for the day was the human-centred approach adopted by the various teams in developing a product for the 3 personas. The energy, the commitment and the skills pulled together by the teams and the coaches were inspiring. Throughout the day, the innovative means of the groups to generate ideas and develop a prototype was great highlight.

The impression we had for the day was the testing and presentation of the prototypes developed by our colleagues in the teams. The prototypes were in the Public Sector, Non-profit Sector and the Academia. We had prototypes called "MPM I-Share" (intended to be a platform for MPM Alumni to share ideas and support each other) for networking; "COLLAP" (for academic information that seeks to address public sector challenges); and "Info-Justice" (an NGO focused on public finance information sharing with various stakeholders).

We are looking forward to day 7!

Stuart Nsana, Zambia and Felix Amakye, Ghana, MPM 2008-09





Today was the last day of our Design Thinking Seminar; the day we have been waiting for with much anticipation to see where all these post-its may lead.

To my surprise, the process that seemed chaotic at first concluded with three prototypes of somehow tested ideas. It was rather refreshing to see people, who did not know each other less than five days ago, are now strong team members enthusiastically presenting an ideas...Ideas that we would love to see them real.

The highlight of the day was meeting the current MPM class and some professors...just to see how MPMs relate to each other instantly regardless of the age, background, and nationality. It is always enriching, and of course fun!

An impression I will always remember was the moment when we met our own classmates, it is like seeing family members who have been away for a long time.

Marwa H. Mostafa, Egypt, MPM 2013-14

Day 8 (06.05.2017)

This is Day 8 of our Alumni Seminar. After having a fruitful training programme in the Potsdam on Design Thinking, it was a pleasure to have a deep longer sleep, waking up late and having breakfast in a relaxing atmosphere. We travelled to Berlin, the capital and the largest city of Germany to join our other group from University of Applied Sciences, Neu Ulm to participate in the Re:publica 17 Conference. How wonderful it is to be a part of very diverse group consisting of 29 participants from 17 different countries worldwide. Being a welcoming day, we had a nice dinner and a boat ride through Berlin, thank you for DAAD. We got to know each other and learn more about our peers from Neu Ulm. We enjoyed having lovely talks among ourselves.

Kamal Armanious, Egypt, MPM 2011-12





Hello from Sunny Berlin!

Today was a truly unique day – our first full day in Berlin, our first meeting with fellow DAAD alumni from the University of Neu-Ulm, our first day at re:publica 17, and yes, our first real taste of summer 2017! It might not be summer yet, but the day was truly 'summerish'!

My highlight for the day was our presentation at the DAAD Welcome Event which was delivered by the wonderful Stefanie and Jenna, joined on the stage by two MPM alumni – the very eloquent Marwa and the extremely enthusiastic Felix. They wowed the audience with an expert pitch of design thinking, with highlights from our work of the past one week. We also learned from colleagues from the University of Neu-Ulm who have also spent the last one week at their university exploring the power of e-learning.

What surprised me most was to learn that 75% of antibiotics are prescribed incorrectly and that 50% of the people worldwide take their drugs wrongly!

An impression to remember was the interactive DAAD session at re:publica 17 in which the 'Fishbowl' method was used to involve all participants in the panel discussion. #rp17, #MPMAlumni

Obed Kambasu, Uganda, MPM 2015-16

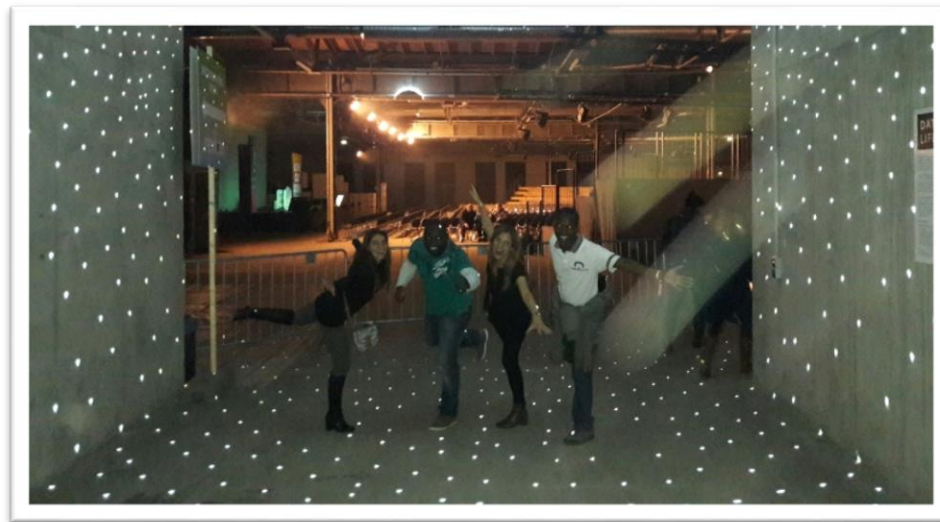




Monday 8 May 2017, saw the 15 MPM alumni attend the first day of the re:publica conference (#rp17) held at the funky Station Berlin building. Now in its anniversary tenth year, and held over three days, the annual re:publica conference has grown from a gathering of around 700 people to now expecting more than 8,000 people. The theme of the 2017 re:publica conference is “Love Out Loud” and explores concepts, challenges and issues related to the digital and technological worlds. In attendance there are activists, scientists, entrepreneurs, hackers, NGOs, journalists, social media representatives, marketing experts, policy makers and many others.

A personal, and somewhat emotional, highlight for me from day 1 of the #rp17 was watching a short film called Inside Auschwitz where three survivors of the holocaust were interviewed about their horrific experiences in Auschwitz. What was different was that it was made using virtual reality (VR) technology enabling the viewer to view the settings of the concentration camp in three dimensions rather than just on a flat, two-dimensional screen.

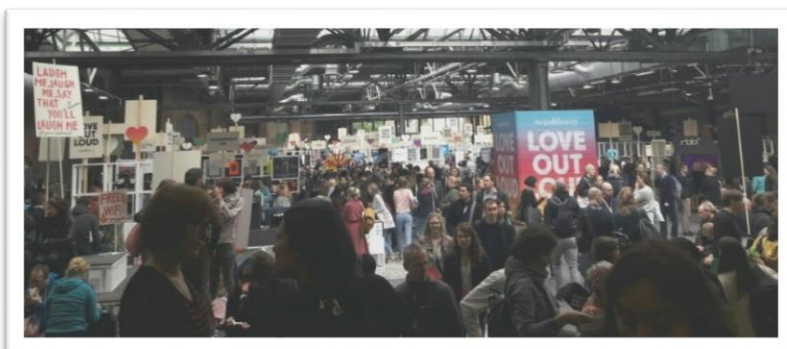
Kenneth Fullerton, South Africa, MPM 2015-16



Tuesday 9 May was our second day at the re:publica conference. The night before, some of us put our dancing skills into practice at the re:publica party! After breakfast, our day started. My first session was "Fate, hate and propaganda - what can technology do?", in which an overview was given on how Google is approaching this challenge through partnership and innovative solutions. From session to session, I had the chance to go around the booths in the exhibition area, where I found an innovation agency called the Founders Studio that helps companies to develop work environments that foster innovation, using the design thinking approach and co-creation.

My highlight of today was the session "Connecting health", about digital health solutions for better pregnancy and birth giving care in African countries. One of the team members explained her experience (and limitations) in implementing the design thinking approach, bringing together all stakeholders in order to define the problem and prototype the solution. This session gave me the chance to link the insights from our Design Thinking Seminar in Potsdam with a current initiative aiming to tackle a social global challenge through innovation and partnership collaboration.

Victoria Santi, Argentina, MPM 2011-12



Day 12 (10.05.2017)

It was the last day-May 10, 2017- of our DAAD's Alumni Special Project and re:publica 17 conference.

The highlight of the day, in my opinion, was the "Tech rally-VR NOW CON" session which discussed the potential of VR in our life. And then with regard to the DAAD and Potsdam University, we had our evaluation and farewell dinner party.

To my surprise, the re:publica 17 talks and sessions have brought to us, researchers and practitioners from different cultures, with diverse insights and knowledge, and understanding of the role of technology in the innovation of approaches to global public challenges.

An impression that I will always remember was the presentation of Coll-App group, which made use of role playing to illustrate the application of "design thinking process" in creating an open platform for academic users, especially for publishing articles. The six days of intense work in DAAD were really challenging, yet, rewarding as it not only broadened our knowledge but also created opportunities for us to make new friends".

Nga Pham, Vietnam, MPM 2000-01.





Clingy to the last.

That was us on 11 May 2017 - parting day. Surprisingly, the sun finally made a strong and prolonged appearance on that last day, making it a warm, sunshiny one. But perhaps this shouldn't have come as a surprise after all since experience taught us that Berlin weather has a rather ironic sense of humor.

Most of the group were going back to base, some with work waiting to greet them a few hours upon arrival. Some had early morning flights and had to say their eloquent and moving farewells through our group messaging. There were invitations to visit each other's countries and a promise to try our luck for the Alumni Seminar on ecotourism and sustainable development in Nepal come October this year. Meanwhile, there were also some in the group — the favored children of the universe (!!!) — who got longer vacation leaves and thus were extending their stay in Berlin or Europe for a few more days.

Either way, it was time to part ways for our different destinations. But in a bid to extend what had been a lively two weeks to the last possible second, there naturally occurred several batches of send-off to the train station. Last-minute hugs and photo sessions ensued as we waited for the train doors to close. These antics earned us several stares from amused(?) Fahrgäste just getting by their Friday morning, some even photobombing our Nth group picture.

I write this as someone who is sitting in her office in Manila, back to regular programming. But as sure as pictures of our grinning faces have carved a considerable chunk of my mobile phone memory, the two weeks with this lovely and dynamic group of people, learning about design thinking process as well as from the sessions and "prototyping" in re:publica 17 have also carved the same considerable chunk in my personal memory. The lessons from that time I hope to carry for the long haul and selectively apply in day-to-day life.

Everette E. Villaraza, Philippines, MPM 2015-16



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see you soon. 😊