

The application process was very convenient for me thanks to the guidelines instructions provided by the university of Oldenburg's advisor and the Erasmus office. Despite the STARS program having many different courses with different professors, there is a clear list of everything found on their website.

Preparation for the trip to the Four Soleir must be done properly, as it is not easy to get there. I applied to the Green travel scholarship which is granted if you travel by trains/bus or foot. I recommend taking the TGV trains as they're very fast and comfortable. The nearest city with an airport or a central train station is Perpignan, which is then 3 hours away by a bus (1euro). Another way is to Land in Barcelona and then take a 3 hour train from there to Latour De Carol, and from there take a bus or a taxi (15mins by car) to Font Romeu-Odeillo.

Finding a good accommodation might be a little tricky. Firstly the ski season has a great influence on prices and availability of housing to say the least. Moreover Font Romeu is 1500mtrs high on a mountain, getting around is very challenging without a car, especially because public transportation almost does not exist, so it is better to stay at a place close to the solar Furnace since it will be a daily route. The research center has a guesthouse which is rented to incoming professors and visitors, but it could be rented temporarily (days or a couple of weeks) to students until they find an accommodation

Studying at this research center gives you first hand experience with all solar thermal related technologies. The building was completed in the 60s and so the facility is old. Since it is a research center and not a university, located in a remote village in the mountains of the Pyrenees there are much fewer people, facilities, services, and places to go or dine in; however it has beautiful scenery, hike spots, ski resorts and other fun outdoor activities to do.

Overall my time in Font Romeu has been a very interesting experience. It has opened my eyes to a very underrated technology that is so essential for the world, especially at the current times. Also living in the mountains was a first time for me, seeing so much nature around, from wild horses to deers and other animals with such beautiful scenery and clear sky and atmosphere.