

my internship
WITH **TECHFEST**

by Martyna Malik



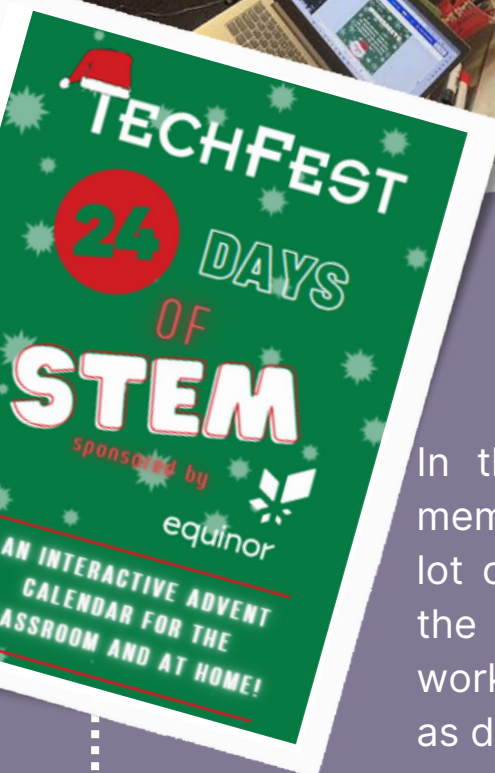
old

me!

old

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week one



On the first day after some paperwork, we were given a tour of the office and the university campus, which I found helpful in getting to know the place I would be working for four weeks. Later, we discussed skills for career success and what we hoped to achieve by the end of the internship. We were then introduced to the main task: a STEM themed advent calendar with activities each day for primary school pupils, which looked like a really fun, creative task.

On Tuesday we divided up the task in accordance to our strengths and interests we identified when first getting to know each other, for example Karina and I worked on the visual design of the booklet. Each contributing our strengths to the project allowed us to efficiently complete the whole calendar handbook in only a couple days. We were all really proud of this achievement, and it reinforced to me the importance of teamwork, as I could not have completed the task in such a short period of time on my own. It also showed me I didn't need a science background for this job: I could still work to a high standard by applying the skills I had.

In the first week of my internship, I met the staff members, got to know my fellow interns well, and had a lot of fun trying something new. I enjoyed working on the project and gaining some valuable experience working in an office environment. It does not seem half as daunting as it once did!

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week two



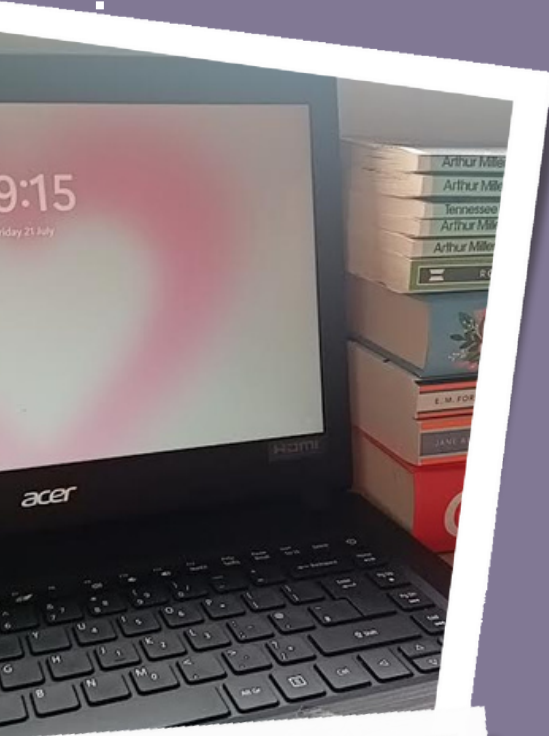
While we were in the office for some of week two (and celebrated my birthday on Monday, complete with lunchtime cake from one of the bakeries near the university, and party hats by Karina), we were also given a great opportunity to do some work away from the laptops and in the fresh air. Unfortunately, the fresh air came with pouring rain as Karina and I attended our first outreach event in Aden Country Park in Mintlaw on a particularly wet day. However, the bad weather did not spoil the otherwise enjoyable time. The experience of working with the public for the first time helped me improve my confidence in speaking to people I do not know, a useful skill for any kind of job. I was also able to see what TechFest is all about and how they promote STEM to young people.

On Thursday we were again out and about, this time at NESCoI, assisting with filming for the STEM Into Innovation video series. My job was making sure nothing from the script was missed out. The episode being filmed was a thought-provoking conversation on the future of instant communication, which, surprisingly, I found more interesting than I expected, as a history student who tends to think more about the past and present than the future. It was nice to learn about something I had not given much thought to previously.

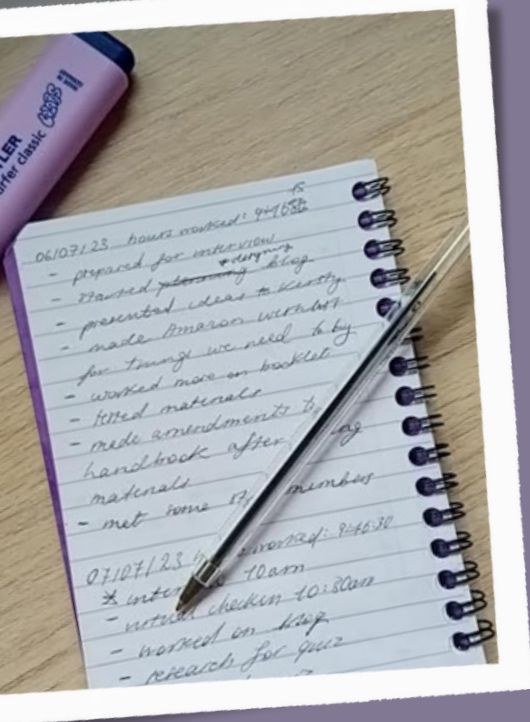


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week three



In week three, I was unable to go to the outreach event. Instead I had two virtual days. Working some days in the office and some days from home throughout my time at TechFest allowed me to explore which mode of working I prefer. I found that while I like the flexibility of being able to work from home, the office environment is better for me in terms of motivation and productivity. And of course I also preferred the office as I enjoyed spending time with the other interns! Working on the 24 Days of STEM project together allowed me to develop my teamwork, creativity, and communication skills.



Attending team meetings showed me how the TechFest team work together, each person contributing their skills to achieve the team's goals. Hearing the team members discuss, asking questions about the work and what needed to be done, further emphasised to me the importance of clear communication in the workplace: without it, a team cannot function smoothly.

This week I also got feedback on the interview I did the previous week. The idea of being interviewed was one of the reasons I was nervous about job seeking, so I appreciated the opportunity to do a practice interview during my internship. It showed me what a job interview could look like, what kind of questions might be asked, and how to prepare effectively. This lessened my worries about job interviews and got me thinking about how I would approach a real one.



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week four



In week four we prepared for our end-of-internship presentations which we presented on Tuesday. I used to dislike presenting but I am getting better at it, and the presentation went fairly smoothly. It is important to me that I improve this skill as one of my potential career aspirations is to be a history teacher, a job in which I would be doing a lot of presenting. I therefore appreciated the opportunity to develop this skill during my internship.

Wednesday was another outreach day and this time we were lucky with the weather. These outreach days with the public really helped me develop my confidence—one of my goals for the internship!—by speaking to the people we met in the parks, and also my customer service skills by delivering STEM-related workshops for the children.



On the last day, after another visit to NESCol for STEM Into Innovation filming, we ordered in celebratory pizza :D



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Overall, this internship has been a hugely valuable experience for me. It has given me more confidence about navigating the world of work and has taken me out of my comfort zone. I am glad I took the chance and signed up for the Career Ready programme as without this internship I would still feel very uneasy about jobs and my future.

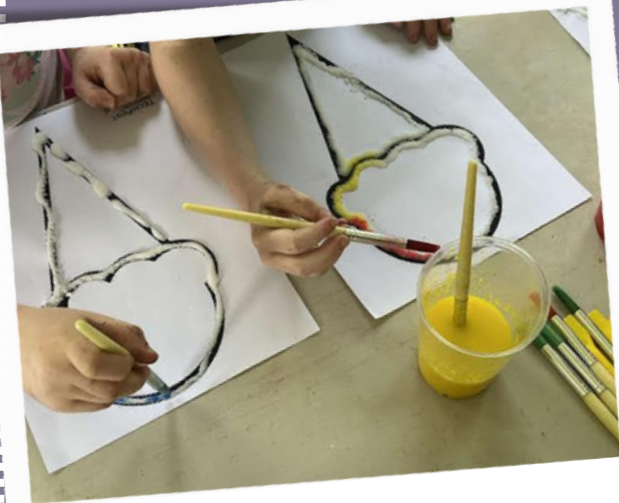


at the TechFest stall in Aden Country Park



I strengthened many skills during my time at TechFest, including:

- organisation
- communication
- design
- IT
- teamwork
- adaptability
- time management



Aden Park, salt painting

As I hopefully go down the route of higher education, the skills and experiences I gained throughout my internship will be invaluable. I would recommend the Career Ready programme and especially the internship to anyone considering it; the opportunity to experience a real working environment before you start looking for an actual job, get support, and make new friends along the way is something you do not want to miss out on!



filming at N&S Col