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I decided to study in Copenhagen because of the reputation of the host school, the opportunity to integrate into another program, its different approach to design, as well as to experience the unique design of the city.

I got my accommodations through the host institution, which worked out well. Many students did not have the same experience, but in those instances it is much easier to find other living arrangements once one is already in the country. The housing arrangements are similar to the United States, except living in a room in someone else's apartment is a common option. One can pay less than one does in the United States, but for a smaller space. Living with roommates is a good option but is best sorted out once one is in Copenhagen or if one has connections. There are a lot of online scams regarding housing.

The orientation was more an opportunity to get to know other international students than an informational session about the school. The overall educational experience entailed a much looser structure comprised of workshops, followed by a design project. There was much less contact with instructors. Much of the instruction was well-intentioned and useful. However, much of it was also in Danish, which was problematic. The dynamics of the projects and approach differ greatly among departments and from semester to semester.

The campus is located a few kilometers from the city center, but the density and good transportation options don't make this much of an issue. I only used healthcare once, but it was quick, free and useful.

I met people solely through school. The other international students were the first I met, then natives from my department. The Danes are a little difficult to get to know, but this is probably no different than with foreigners visiting the United States (or any country).

The Scan|Design fellowship money was enough to cover travel to and from the country, tuition, rent and the basics. However, given the exchange rate and relatively higher cost of eating or drinking out, some concessions had to be made. In addition, travel to other parts of Scandinavia and Europe is enticing, but these excursions can add up.

The overall experience was inspiring, informative and a lot of fun. Academically, the program is probably better suited for professional M.Arch. or B.A. students in architecture as, despite the experimental and artistic approach of the host school, each department still has certain projects, programs and goals that address the current needs of permanently enrolled students in each department. These goals may or may not match with the goals of international students. There would also be benefits to staying for an entire year, since one semester is hardly enough to really evaluate or acclimate to another school. Along these lines, while the Scan|Design fellowship was useful and supportive, other opportunities to stay longer, including professional work experience would perhaps allow students to get more from the experience.