



Student: Carlos
Fernando Vergara
Cervantes

University of Sussex

Placement:

RedOptima

Role: Data Scientist

“It has mainly given me in-depth experience of a completely different, ie a non-academic, corporate environment.”

What is the subject of your PhD?

Astrophysics, specifically, tests of modified gravity models using galaxy clusters.

Describe a typical day on placement:

A typical day at RedOptima would begin with a daily stand-up meeting where each of the project members (myself and three other SEPnet students) would give a brief update on the tasks accomplished the day before and the tasks to complete on the day. One-on-one meetings would take place if required, to assess specific topics related to my individual assignments. Most of the time I would be either reading published articles related to the project, programming in Python or filling a daily log with all the tasks accomplished during the placement.

What skills and knowledge do you feel you have learned during the placement?

Time management, working under pressure, being more organised, presenting non-scientific information, learning more programming skills.

How do you think doing a placement has benefited you for the future?

It has mainly given me in-depth experience of a completely different, ie a non-academic, corporate environment.

What advice would you give to a PGR student who might be interested in seeking a placement?

I would encourage other students to apply to one of the placements advertised by SEPnet if they are thinking about getting a job outside academia.

Employer perspective:

Carlos was an excellent summer intern. He was dealing with some very challenging problems using a rather messy data-set but he managed to deliver some excellent code and consistently accurate results. Moreover, he managed to achieve this with a minimum of supervision. We hope he is keen to spend some time in London next summer!