

Summer 2 Blog - Ethical Leadership and Global Citizenship reflection

Looking back to when I first applied for this programme, I realise now that I had no idea about the range of what leadership could mean, and what I could achieve with the skills I have learned and honed through this programme. As someone who was interested in a career in research and science, leadership had never been something I had considered myself particularly driven towards but through this journey I have come to realise that leadership can take many forms and is required in every area of life.

I used to think that leadership was something that people either had a natural gift for or didn't, as I viewed in the very narrow sense of someone in power giving orders. The various LEAD sessions that I have attended as part of this programme have shown me that not only can leadership be so much more than the classical stereotype but that it can also be applied in so many different areas of study and of life. I learned how to express my thoughts in a clear and assertive manner through voice coaching sessions and how to find compromise and solutions to a variety of complex situations in conflict resolution sessions. The ethics of leadership was one of the most interesting and complex parts of the LEAD sessions and I learned a lot about not only how to be an ethical leader but also about my own morals and how I can be more ethical in my daily life. The discussions with the group were particularly insightful and allowed me to view the ethical problems from multiple different angles in ways I would not have approached on my own. While the sessions and the speakers themselves were very interesting and informative, for me what made the biggest impact was the discussions after the sessions with the people of my cohort. As this program is so diverse and interdisciplinary I found it really eye opening to discuss these world issues and problems with people from a range of backgrounds with completely different experiences and perspectives to my own.

This diversity found in my own cohort ties into the mix of people and places I got to encounter through the course of the programme. The leadership sessions with the other universities were a brilliant way to interact with scholars with similar interests but very different backgrounds to me. In particular the global leadership conference was an amazing opportunity where I could discuss both my topic of study and the ethical issues of our society today with people from across the globe.

My second summer on the programme granted me the opportunity to travel to Belgium and work with an EU research group. This was a daunting but incredibly rewarding experience that really allowed me to grow and explore new countries and cultures through both an academic and leadership perspective. I got the chance to work with people from India, Alergia, Malaysia, and Belgium to name a few. I expanded my communication skills and thus my opportunities through having to converse in my non-native language, French.

Overall this leadership and global experience has really shown me how expansive the world is and the opportunities that can come as a result of travelling and engaging with new people and cultures through ethical leadership.