Pursuing Research As a Cummins Undergrad

Michelle Davies Thalakottur
30th June 2020

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• I will discuss privilege wherever relevant and aim to be as transparent as I can.

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• Hope that you will carry this forward.

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- BE Project is also a Research Project sponsored by IIT Bombay
  Topic: Formalization of a Programming Language
  Domain: PL, Compilers

Part I
What is Research?

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- Spectrum of research: Incremental ↔ Fundamental

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- Personally, it is fun, intellectually stimulating and enriching. You might end up making a career out of it.

Common misconceptions

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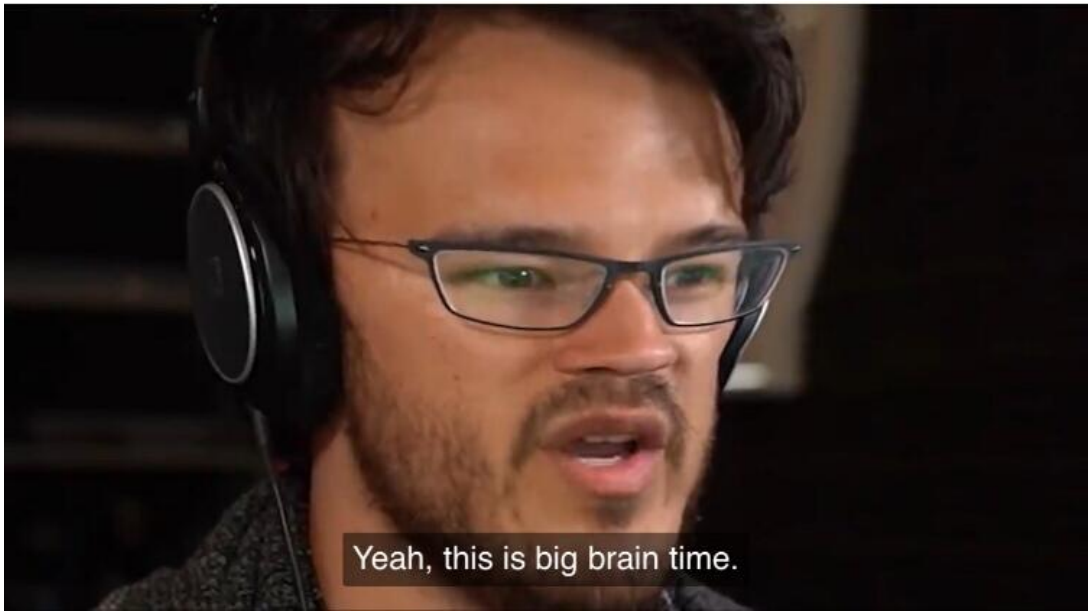

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  You are what you tell yourself. Don't hold yourself back.

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Enter: Research internships! A good way for you to try out research.

Part II
How do you ‘do’ a Research Internship

A. Before applying

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  Either can be a field that interests you. If your interest is due to how impressive a field sounds, realise that that isn’t sustainable.

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    Learn how to learn by yourself.

B. Applying

Common advice

- Cold email professors! They’re dying to get students involved in research.
- Keep up a good CGPA and professors will ask you to work for them.
- Getting a research internship is a meritocracy.

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• Higher success rate and they might be more invested in your doing well than a random stranger (hopefully).

**Ask your seniors to recommend professors to work with and refer you (if they can).*

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> P.S. You might need LORs from them in the future and if you speak to them, they can write more about you than a DWIC LOR.

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Research programs

• IIT's have research programs that you can apply to. Look online for more program web-pages. Most applications begin in January.

• IISc's SRFP program and INAE's summer program. Some applications end in November.

• Foreign internships:

The exorbitant fees may not be worth it.
Charpak, CERN, TIFR, etc. *I had sent an email about this. Please refer to it for more links and information.*

Good luck!

C. After Applying & During the internship

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Part III
My experience, briefly

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• My parents support and encourage my decisions. That can be rare, quite unfortunately.

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- Choosing to go for opportunities where you aren’t paid is also weird.

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- I love learning. It fills me with a lot of joy to learn and think about these research problems, which is why I love it so much and think it’s this much fun.
- If you’re like me, you might just find it to be as fulfilling as I do.

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  If it seems really easy, you might not be getting the whole story.

AMA: Ask me Anything!

You can read about the specifics
of my internship at IIT Patna here

Connect with me
LinkedIn
Shoot me an email at
michelle.thalakottur@cumminscollege.in