

NETWORKED EUROPE-WIDE WITH CLIMATE-KIC

Knowledge and innovation association promotes green technologies

The Climate-KIC Network, of which the BTU is a member, is dedicated to the promotion of green technologies. This involves support for start-ups, research promotion and the establishment of a well-functioning network. The Climate-KIC programme also involves summer schools, in which young researchers can meet and receive specific training. Dumisani Chirambo studied Environmental and Resource Management at the BTU, as part of a PhD programme, and is researching ways of developing renewable energy in his homeland of Malawi. Last summer, he attended the Journey Summer School in Zürich.

BTU NEWS: How did you get in touch with the Climate-KIC program and its different offerings?

→ **DUMISANI CHIRAMBO:** My PhD coordinator Dr. Birte Seffert informed us PhD candidates about Journey Summer School in November last year. It seemed like a good chance to see climate change from a business perspective rather than the academic perspective that I am used to. So I got in touch with Ing. Sergi Costa, who was more familiar with the Climate-KIC programmes. He gave me some tips on the issues to make more prominent and the parts that were not very clear. After submitting my application to Climate KIC, I then had a Skype interview with Fabienne Lang, the Education Manager for Climate-KIC in Zürich. So after that let's just say the rest is history.

BTU NEWS: Why did you choose to apply for Journey Summer School?

→ **DUMISANI CHIRAMBO:** Firstly, it was the idea of learning how to create businesses that are related to improving climate change mitigation and adaptation- that is Climate Entrepreneurship. I am basically an academic. However, Climate Entrepreneurship is also very important as businesses and social enterprises have the potential to address many of the challenges related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Secondly, the opportunity to meet various young brilliant minds from various European Universities who have an interest in Climate Entrepreneurship. Establishing good friendships and professional networks is very important in life.

BTU NEWS: What is the Summer School about, how is it structured?

→ **DUMISANI CHIRAMBO:** Climate-KIC runs about five to eight summer schools every year. They start at different times and participants are



^ Young researchers from universities from the whole of Europe attended the Climate-KIC Journey Summer School

based at different venues. The summer school I was selected to aimed at providing practical and theoretical knowledge on what businesses or innovations there are in Climate Entrepreneurship. The first two weeks in Copenhagen were mostly about visiting various companies and businesses which were addressing different environmental issues such as food waste. Week three and four in Zurich it was more about us students identifying a viable business that could address an environmental challenge. The last week in Wroclaw was about developing those business ideas into something more concrete. So the various teams developed business plans that were reviewed by actual experts in the field.

BTU NEWS: How was your experience in Zürich, what was your main benefit from the program?

→ **DUMISANI CHIRAMBO:** The Journey Summer School has been a very memorable experience. On the professional side, I learnt a lot of skills that I did not have before. And as a former participant of the Journey Summer School, I am now an Alumni of Climate-KIC. This means that I can now access a lot of Climate-KIC resources as well as other people in the network if I require help or support in anything. I made a lot of friends too. Some of the people I met live here in Germany and others from far afield. So if one wants to travel and meet new people whilst learning about Climate Entrepreneurship, this could be a good place to start at.

Thank you for the interview!

