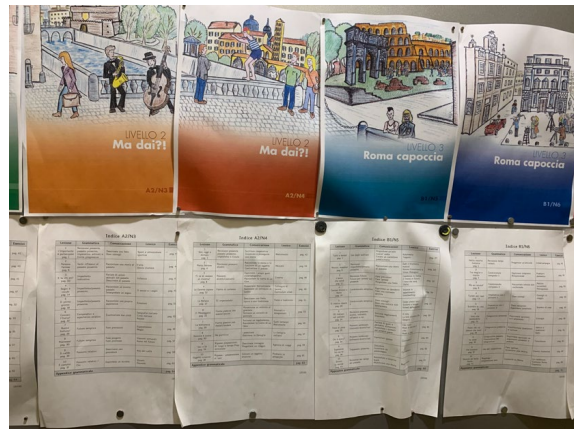


Expeditions Fund Report – August 2023

In August, I was fortunate to be able to complete a month long trip to Rome to undertake an Italian language course and experience Rome's incredible culture and historical attractions. I am writing to express my profound gratitude to the donors to the Expeditions Fund, without whom I would not have been able to experience this. It served as a chance to both develop myself and become familiar with this remarkable city for the first time.

The language course was a rewarding experience that helped me develop a better grasp of Italian. The lessons followed the internationally recognised CEFR structure, and I followed an intensive course that involved a range of teaching methods. This included both formal didactic grammar teaching which were followed by practice conversations with classmates, as well as more informal visits to nearby cafés and historical sites in Rome that allowed us to practice our Italian in a more general and relaxed manner. The programme's structure allowed me to make progress which will be very helpful for my elective next year, which I plan to complete in Italy.



The language school and courses participated in

As well as being useful in terms of my professional development, the course was highly meaningful on a personal level given that my partner is Italian. My partner and two friends joined me in Italy for a period and we had the opportunity to travel to Procida (a small island off the coast of Naples) to visit his parents one weekend. In particular, being immersed in the Italian language in the classes helped me to overcome some

of my reticence around speaking in the language; this was significant for me as speaking and listening was an area for me that lagged greatly behind my reading and writing abilities. Being able to hold basic conversations in Italian with my partner's family for the first time felt like a significant milestone, and I believe was greatly appreciated by both my partner and his parents.



Time spent with my partner's family, putting my new language skills to use!

Within Rome, I took full advantage of the opportunity to visit the city's historical sites, including the Colosseum, the Vatican, the Roman Forum and the Pantheon. These were all captivating, providing insights into the country's rich history that boosted my enthusiasm for Italy's language and culture. On the weekends, I also took longer day trips. This included a trip to Tivoli, thirty kilometres northeast of Rome, which contained some extraordinarily beautiful villas designated as UNESCO world heritage sites.



Photos from the Colosseum, Palazzo Barberini and Villa D'Este (Tivoli)

As I wrap up my time in Rome, I want to express my appreciation once again for the financial support that has made this trip possible. It is rare to have the privilege to spend such a long period of time in a beautiful city as a student, and to partake in an travel experience that is simultaneously intellectually stimulating and restful. This experience has left a positive impact on me both professionally and personally, and I am grateful for the opportunity. Thank you for making this journey possible.