

# NEWS

@  Center of Graz University of Technology

December 2016

Are you excited about this new issue of the Welcome Center newsletter? We for sure are!

First of all, the Welcome Center newsletter has a new design and will in the future be coming to you with specials such as profiles of our international community, the information corner and fun facts about Austria. We will keep our oldies but goodies such as

short reports on our past events and of course the announcements of future opportunities to socialize and get informed.

We are also happy to announce that the newsletter is now open for contributions from all of you, so if you have something interesting or fun to share with the community, please let us know.

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## The TU Graz Ball



<http://www.balldertechnik.at>

## STAFF

### GOODBYE & CHANGE OF DIRECTOR

On December 31, 2016 **Andrea Schreiner** will leave the Welcome Center to pursue other paths in her life. Andrea has been with the Welcome Center since the fall of 2015 and we all appreciate the effort and enthusiasm she has brought to assisting our internationals at TU Graz. All her colleagues at the Office of International Relations and Mobility Programms as well as the Welcome Center wish her all the best for the future.

*Good Luck!*

Please direct all questions to our general email address [welcomecenter@tugraz.at](mailto:welcomecenter@tugraz.at) until our new colleague will start in the new year.

On December 16, 2016 we are saying a temporary goodbye to our dear colleague **Julia Schwaha** who has been the director of the Welcome Center since 2015. Julia Schwaha will be on maternity leave in the near future and we wish her all the best for the new addition to her family and in her new role.



With the upcoming maternity leave of Julia Schwaha, **Heidi Mörtl** will take over the coordinating role of the Welcome Center.



**BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY!  
FEEL WELCOME!**

## ACTIVITIES

Since the last edition of our newsletter the Welcome Center Team has been involved in a number of projects which we would like to inform you about.

### TU WEBSITE

We are currently assisting the TU Graz team working on the website in creating a section that will help new internationals with the task of getting settled in Graz. The sections on the website contain information about living in Graz, accommodation, insurance, working and many other topics that are of interest for newcomers; we will inform you as soon as the new pages are online.

### FEEL SAFE

Together with colleagues from Uni Graz and KUG we met representatives of the company Feels Like Home from Vienna to discuss a new insurance option for international students and staff that is accepted by the local Styrian Government. [www.feelsafe.at](http://www.feelsafe.at)

### INTERNATIONAL WELCOME DAYS

We are working on a general concept of orientations for our international degree seeking students. The first one will be from February 27 to March 2, 2017.

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## PROFILE

### Aleksandar Bobić - Getting started at TU Graz



Aleksandar Bobic is a first year student in the english speaking Master's Program Computer Science. He received his Bachelor Degree from the University of Ljubljana in his home country of Slovenia.

*"The orientation by the welcome center was extremely useful for me, because they provided helpful information regarding the university life, university courses and life in Graz in general. In addition, they gave me useful tips regarding all the paperwork I needed to complete as a newcomer in Graz. They also organize monthly get-togethers for foreign students where I met some amazing people studying at the TU.*

*To sum up, the staff of the welcome center is extremely friendly and helpful regarding all of your information needs as a newcomer in Graz and at the TU. I would definitely recommend that you contact them if you're new in Graz. :)"*

The Welcome Center offers orientations at the beginning of every semester. Please pass the information on to prospective international Master's students.

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## INFORMATION CORNER

### BVA INSURANCE

The Welcome Center frequently receives questions regarding the benefits of the BVA insurance that employees of TU Graz are in many cases insured with. In this month's information corner we would like to share the link to the BVA brochure in English: [http://www.bva.at/flipbook/inform\\_en/flipviewerexpress.html](http://www.bva.at/flipbook/inform_en/flipviewerexpress.html)



## DID YOU KNOW?

This month we would like to present a central European tradition to you, the *Christkind*.

The *Christkind* is a traditional giver of gifts at Christmas time, mainly in European countries including Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, Hungary, Slovakia and Switzerland. The word *Christkind* translates to the child of Christ. Christmas in Austria is celebrated on the eve of December 24<sup>th</sup>.

Therefore, in Austria we do not have Santa Clause, but we do celebrate bishop Sant Nicholas (*Hi. Nikolaus*) on December 6, where *good* children usually receive a bag (*Nikolaussackerl*) containing a small gift, gingerbread, tangerines and nuts.



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## NETWORKING EVENTS



### GET TOGETHER IN SEPTEMBER

On September 27, 2016 international students and staff of TU Graz gathered at restaurant AREA 5 to ring in the new semester. In addition to our friends who regularly join our Get-Togethers, this time we were able to especially welcome newcomers in our Master's programs taught in English, who are also among our target group.

We were very happy with the turnout and are looking forward to more networking events with everyone!

### GET TOGETHER IN OCTOBER: Q & A SESSION

For our gathering on October 25, 2016, we selected a joint networking and information session. Participants were asked to send us questions up front which the Welcome Center answered within the course of the event. Topics covered included: studying & working, insurance, taxes, pension, freetime, health care and emergency situations!

Please let us know if you are interested in obtaining the presentation by sending us an email to [welcomcenter@tugraz.at](mailto:welcomcenter@tugraz.at).



The Welcome Center staff frequently takes pictures at the events to be shared in this newsletter and on our Facebook site. If you are uncomfortable with us sharing your picture(s), please let us know!



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## GET TOGETHER IN NOVEMBER: INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK DINNER

November 22, 2016 brought around an International Potluck Dinner! Students and staff from the following countries provided us with samples of traditional dishes. Can you identify the flags?

An article about the event was published in [News+Stories of TU Graz](#).



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Please join us for our upcoming events!*

### GET TOGETHER IN DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The Welcome Center invites you to celebrate the merry season.

**Come and join us for the Lucia Fest** (Festival of Lights) in Franziskanerviertel on **December 13, 2016** from **5.00-8.00 pm**. We will enjoy the festival and some hot beverages together to ring in the holiday season.

Please sign up by December 9, 2016 by sending an email to [welcomecenter@tugraz.at](mailto:welcomecenter@tugraz.at).

We are looking forward to seeing you at the last Welcome Center event of the year 2016!

### BALL DER TECHNIK 2017

On **January 27** of next year we are inviting all of our internationals to join us for Ball der Technik 2017, the university's festive ball in the carnival season.

Tickets can be obtained online at: [balldertechnik.at](http://balldertechnik.at)

As a special thank you to our wonderful international community **we will be giving away 10 fully paid VIP Tickets to this wonderful event.** Please send us an email to [welcomecenter@tugraz.at](mailto:welcomecenter@tugraz.at) if you would like to enter the raffle for a ticket. The deadline is **December 31, 2016.**

We will be drawing the 10 VIP guests at the beginning of January and will inform you via email.