

Trip to Greenland

Nordplus report

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I travelled to Nuuk, Greenland, with the help of the grant for express mobility!

I went through a lot of different ideas regarding what I was going to write about. A sentence that popped into my head very early in the process was 'Healing the wound', but that's also an extremely vague topic. I generally have issues landing the big, abstract ideas, and taking them in one specific direction. So when I continued brainstorming I had about a million different ideas. I thought a lot about the youth of the country, and the options and possibilities in their futures.

I also considered writing about infrastructure, since that's an issue in many parts of the country. And I got really interested in how it works with running water. I was thinking about travelling to the very north of the country, to a place where they don't have running water all year round, and talk about the challenges and methods they use. However, that got a bit too expensive, since you can only get to those places by plane or helicopter. So in the end I stayed in the capital, Nuuk, which in itself is both fascinating and beautiful.

I was gone for almost two weeks, which was quite a long time, and it really gave me the opportunity to get to know the country deeper. I went with a hiking group to the top of a mountain (they do it in protest against cancer and to promote good health), I went to a music festival and got to hear some Greenlandic rock, I got to play card games with the people at the Salvation Army day center, and had so many good conversations with many different people.

One of the first places I went in Nuuk was the Salvation Army day center, and talked to a lady there, and then hung out with the people. I had some good conversations there, but it also made me think about how you show a country. Because I feel like it could have been kind of easy to choose a few sad stories, take some black and white portraits and that could have been it. But I felt like that would have been a misrepresentation. It was not a sad place to be, people were really happy. And I thought a lot about how the stories we write add to the already existing narrative about a place. I thought about what would be the best way to show the good and hopeful things about the country, while also showing the issues.

My main interview person was in the end a woman who runs her own company. She has a story of coming from a broken home, with an alcoholic parent, and choosing to leave Greenland. But then she also came back, and now she lives there again, and I thought that was really important.

And then she started talking about that the ways in which Greenland is a wounded country, and we got into the topic of what that wound looks like, and how it's healed, and how it's been healed in her life. And so I was back on the original idea of 'Healing the wound'. And so I used a lot of background information, and things I'd learned from other people, but her story became the core of the article.

This trip has in total really opened my eyes to a place I don't know if I would have visited otherwise. And I really want to go back, because it's beautiful, and because I feel like there are so many more stories to tell – I'd especially like to go back one day and write about water supply in the north!