Akbar Ibraimov is a student in the Bachelor of Animation program. In the summer of 2018, he worked as an Animation Intern with Norlum in Viborg, Denmark.

What were some of the highlights of completing an internship outside of Canada?
Being overseas meant experiencing a different culture, regardless whether you spend your day in a studio or out meeting people. Aside of my work hours, I met many animators from neighbour workshops in the same building as Norlum. Most of them were local artists who shared their stories and experience being in an art industry. Denmark happens to have a lot of public artist events for everyone to share their artwork and make new connections which opens up a range of new interests that may make you a better artist, or at least give you a chance to taste something diverse.

I was also given the opportunity to visit the Annecy Animation Festival 2018 in Annecy, France. We traveled there with TAW (The Animation Workshop) students and had an incredible and unforgettable week. We attended all possible events, met some of our idols in the animation industry and as always made wonderful connections. Besides having a fun and exploring the amazing city of Annecy, I attended interviews, received remarkable feedback from great industry animators and learned how to sell myself as an artist. Overall it was a long lasting experience I will never forget.

What did an average work-day look like?
Right from the beginning the communication was easy and clear. My supervisors would occasionally visit my desk to check up on me and make sure everything was going fine. They gave me enough time to adjust and feel comfortable in a new environment before giving me advanced work. For the first two weeks of my internships, I worked on the Big Hero 6 TV series, primarily doing colouring on the animation. The remainder of my internship I worked as a layout and concept artist for a developing feature film.

Our team would have numerous meetings where we would discuss the details, and receive information about the project, its storyline, visual examples and a clear break down of the world and characters in it. My supervisors were absolutely reasonable and flexible with having us to choose area of story to develop. The best part is they would always explain how I could improve my drawing and why certain things work better than the other ones. The primary program I used
throughout these 3 months was Photoshop, and I was able to really improve my skills. With amazing people and artists around, and great communication I always looked forward to go to the studio and learn something new every day.

**What did you learn about yourself through this experience?**

I believe my internship helped me improve my artistic abilities, and overall become a better and more understanding person. Traveling to a foreign country for work was somewhat scary, and I had my own doubts, but it turned out better than I could ever imagined. Three months seemed long, however, they passed in a blink of an eye leaving me with unforgettable memories, new friends and a broader visual library.

**Do you have any advice for Sheridan students thinking of completing their work-term abroad?**

Advice for student thinking of, or going abroad for their co-op:

1. Make sure to book your flight ticket at least 2-3 months prior to your departure (you will save money, and stay safe without having to worry about it later).
2. Get as much information about where you going, who is meeting you there and where will you be staying. It is important because you do not want to be confused or stuck with all your baggage in a foreign country.
3. Research about the place you are going to. For example; restaurants, grocery shops, libraries, haircut salons, bars, gym and etc.
4. Make sure you track your finances. You have no idea how easy it is to spend all your budget when you are traveling! Personally, I like to use ‘Money Manager’ app on my phone, it is a constant reminder to yourself how much you spend.
5. It would be a great idea to learn a couple of phrases in the language of the country you are traveling to. It is a great way of starting a conversation and possibly impressing a new friend.
6. Upon arrival, make sure to talk to your managers about the project you are working on, and ask all the questions you have. Do not be afraid, they know you are a students and you are there because they chose you.
7. Be as active as possible! You have decided to travel to a new country with possibly a different culture and language. This is your chance to work on your social skills. Go out and have fun on your spare time.