

**2023 års Stipendium till Minne av Svenska Skolan i Beijing –
A short summary of my time in Shanghai and at Fudan University during
Autumn semester 2023**

To study abroad is a mixture of multiple emotions, impressions and can at times both feel exciting as well as frightening. One is excited for all the new things they will experience and learn during their time abroad. At the same time, the great unknown can also be scary; what difficulties will I encounter? How will I solve them? This concoction is what I brought with me as I entered the airplane and left Sweden and headed for Shanghai, where I would spend the coming two semesters at Fudan University. My reason for studying Chinese is because, besides an interest in the language and culture, I would like my Chinese abilities to be one of my main tools in my future work life in one way or another. My goal with my studies was thus clear: I wanted to further improve my proficiency in the Chinese language. In addition, by studying and living in Shanghai, a side goal I had was to try and learn some Shanghainese, as this could prove beneficial in future work prospects.

By studying the Chinese language abroad in China would not only offer an opportunity to continue my studies in the Chinese language, but also provide a highly authentic Chinese experience. By surrounding myself with the Chinese language and culture, my level of Chinese would undoubtedly improve immensely.

When I first arrived in Shanghai, China, I was overwhelmed by all the impressions. It was my first time in China and despite my many years of Chinese studies, I found it difficult to communicate and understand. The language I used was much more basic than the Chinese I had studied at Uppsala, but despite this, I managed to communicate successfully and my message got through.

My first days were spent exploring my new surroundings, getting used to using my abilities to communicate in Chinese. Not long after this, I had my registration at Fudan University and was officially a Fudaner, or 复旦人 as they called us. I quickly learned that all of my classes were taught almost exclusively in Chinese, which on one hand was a little frightening, but on the other a delight as I was sure to improve my Chinese abilities.

In the beginning there were many challenges I had to face: applying for a temporary resident permit, opening up a bank account at a Chinese bank, among other things. These were difficult, as I had anticipated, but one after another I overcame them. At the same time my Chinese proficiency was steadily improving, going from a basic usage of the language to more and more complex language structure.

Studying in general is a very rewarding experience, however, it can be tainted by different external factors such as the financial side of studying: how will I finance my studies?

Studying abroad is no exception, on the contrary, the financial aspect is intensified. I would therefore like to extend my humble gratitude to Svenska Skolan i Beijing's grant committee for awarding me with their grant for my studies during the autumn semester of 2023. Thanks to this generous donation, my focus could lie on studying Chinese, experiencing and living in China. Without this grant, my studies would surely not have been as fulfilling as they have been.