

My IMAPP journey

IMAPP 2026 Welcome Day

Pio Francesco Varrella

01-09-2026



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA



technische universität
dortmund



Who am I?

- Bachelor: University of Bologna
- Master: IMAPP 2023-2025 cohort
- PhD: Joint Clermont & Bologna
- LHCb collaboration



Before the start

How will I deal
with bureaucracy abroad?

What is it like to live in a country
where you don't speak the language?

Will I be able to study
In English?

Who will I meet?



Problem/issue ?  Ask

Clermont-Ferrand: the beginning

A new country, new people, and lot of bureaucracy



First lectures and first exams

Lots of lectures at the blackboard 🥰



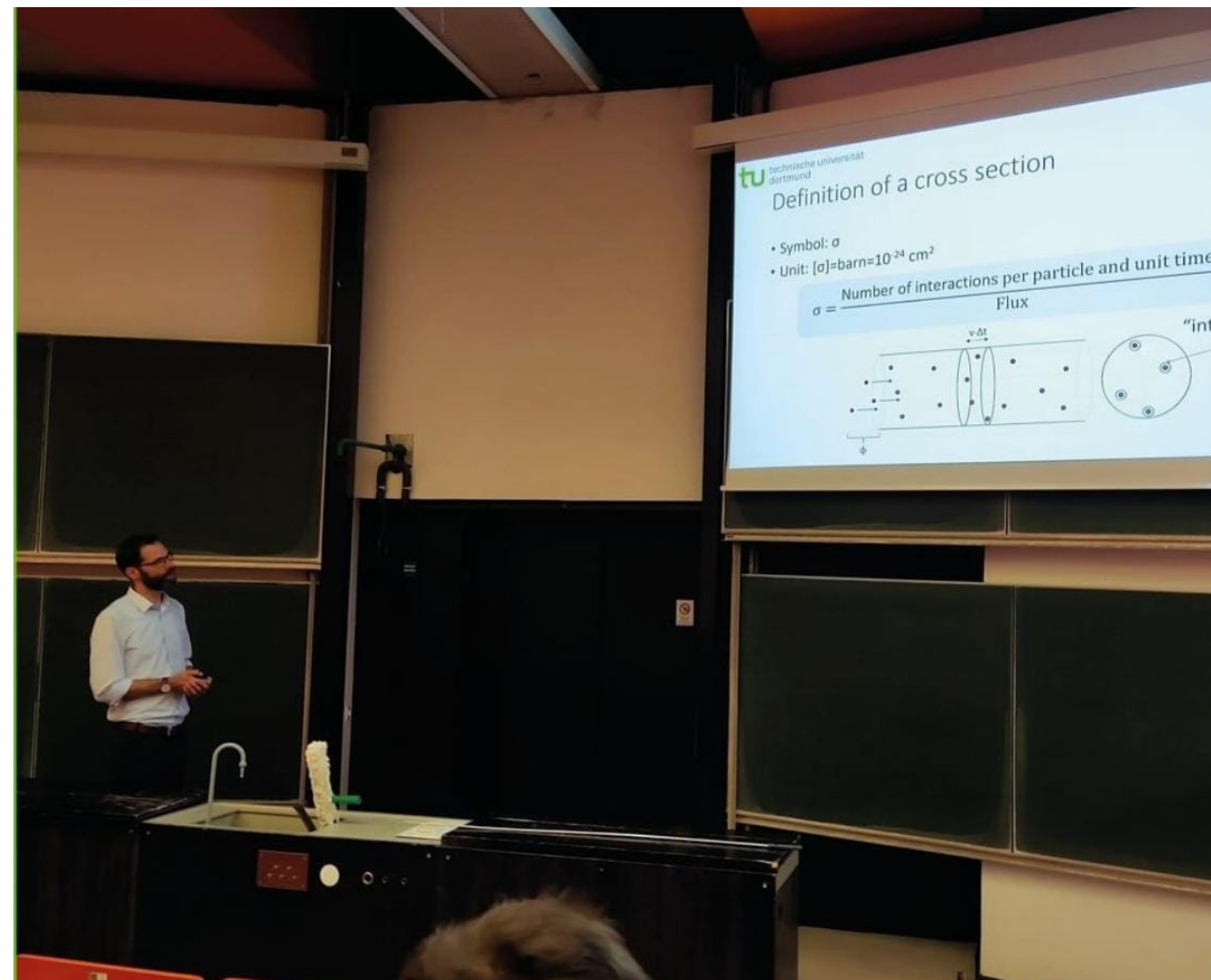
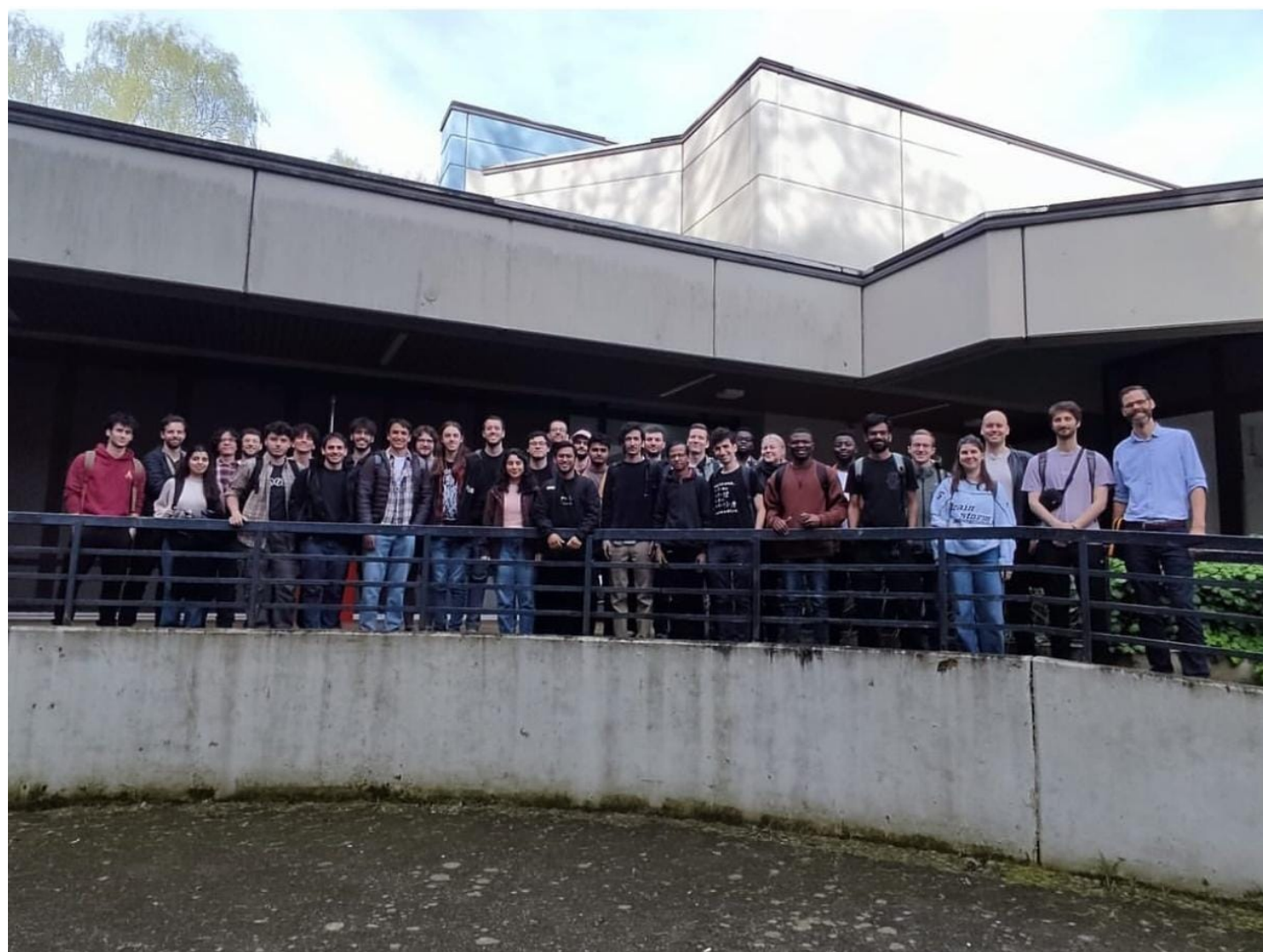
Trying to prepare for 4 exams in 2 days



Take-away message: reasoning and critical thinking > memorising

Dortmund: discovering the experimental side

The practical side of particle physics: detectors and instrumentation



Dortmund: beyond studying

And, of course, it wasn't all about studying





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Bologna

Getting ready for what comes next



Programming and computing but also Flavour Physics and Advanced Standard Model



First time at CERN but not last

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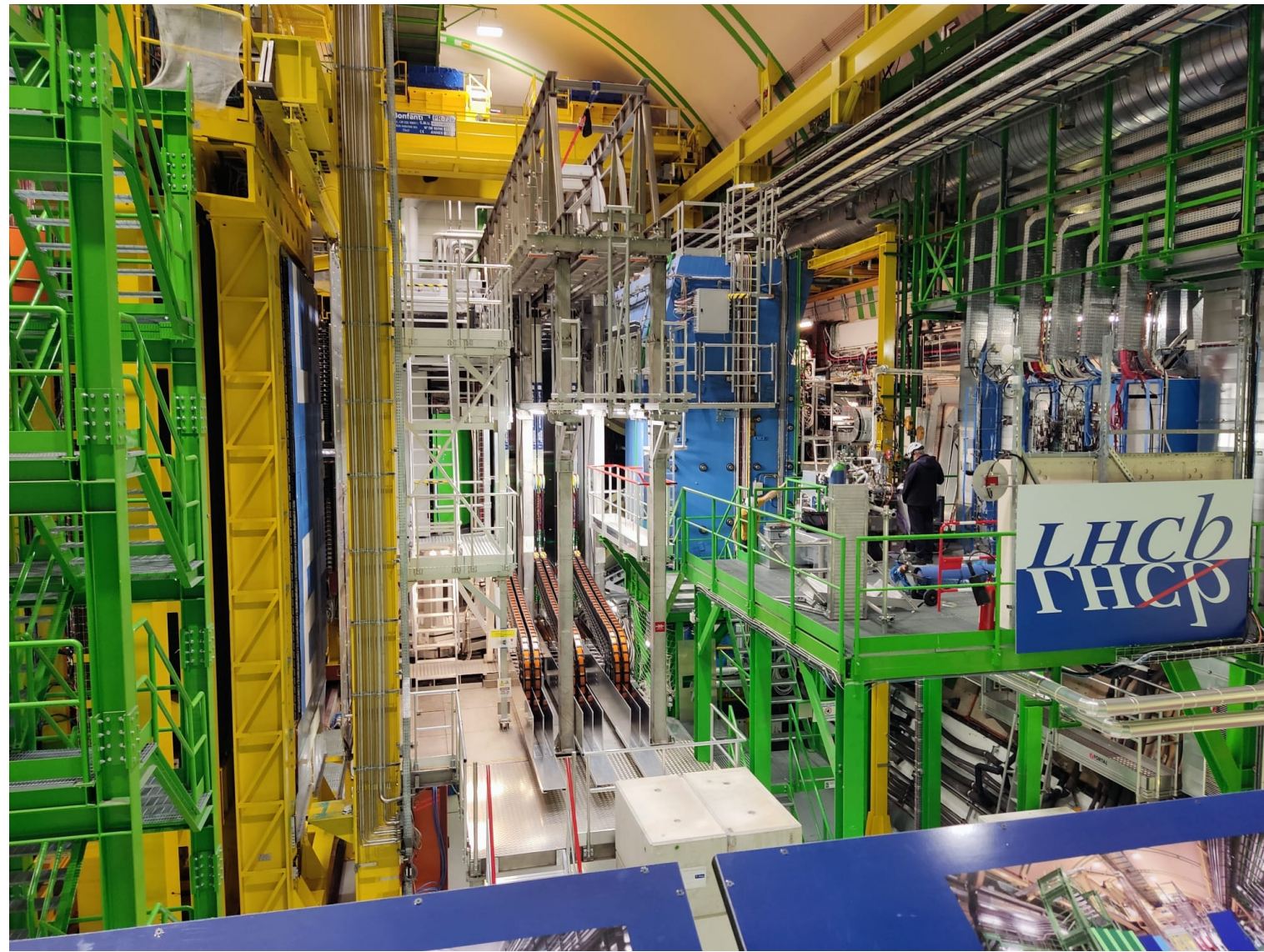
Bologna: postcard

Trip to CERN, with visits



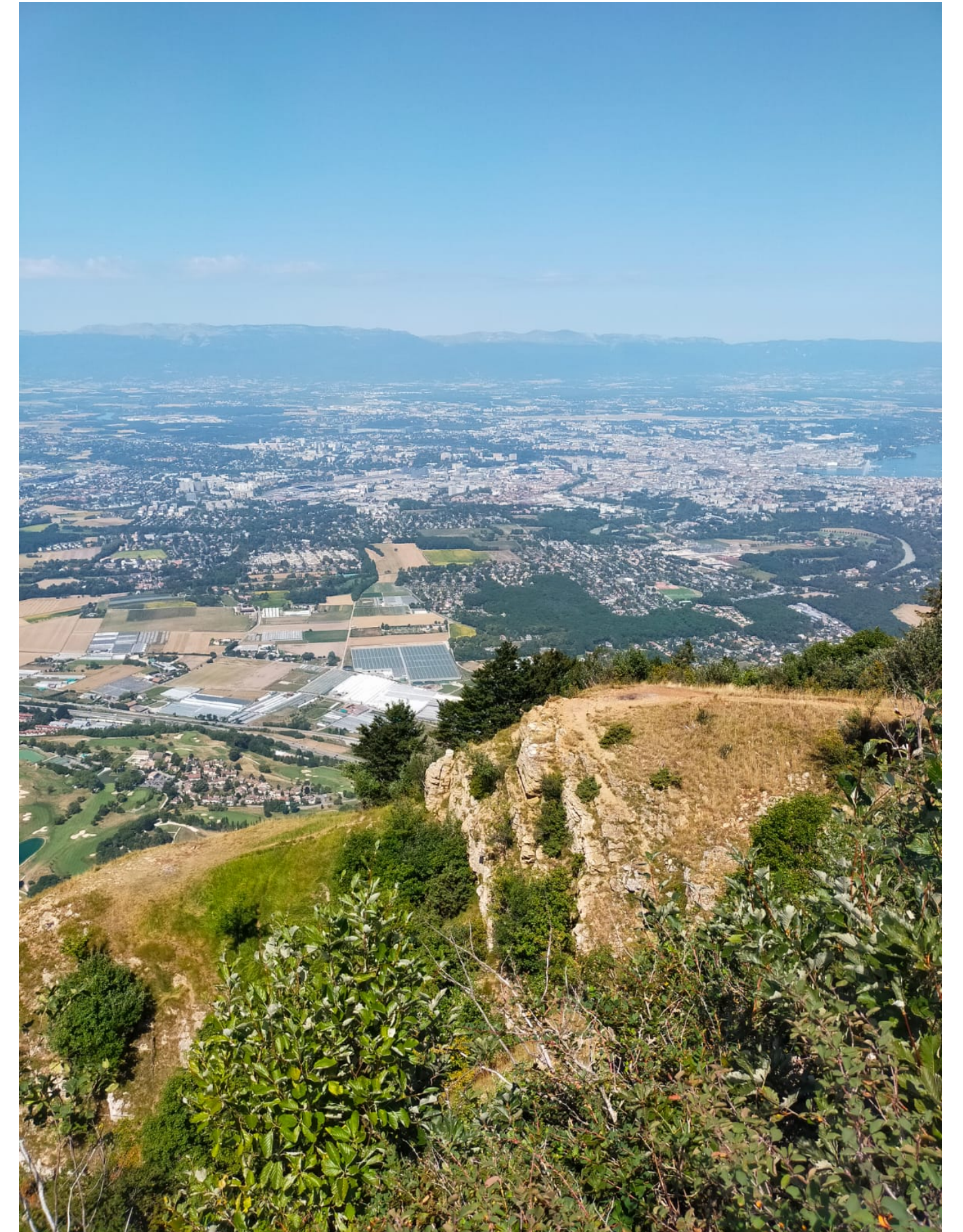
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Internship: CERN

Master's internship at CERN



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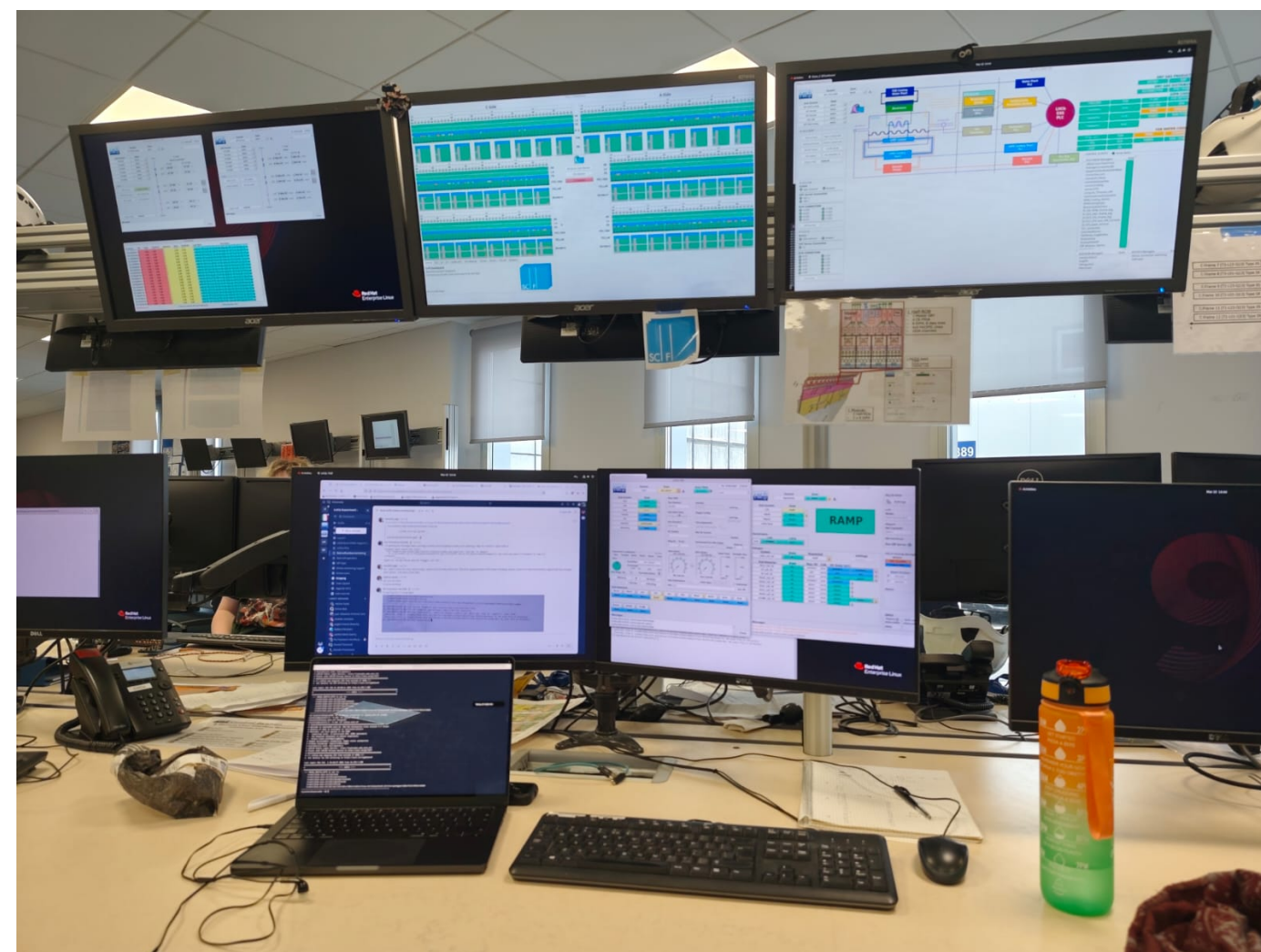
Graduation

Closing one chapter

A moment full of emotions and memories

...last time we were all together





After IMAPP

PhD in Particle Physics

- Joint Clermont-Bologna project
- Data analysis with LHCb experiment
- Contributing to LHCb operations
- Working with people met through IMAPP
- Discovering and enjoying more the Auvergne region



What IMAPP left me with

- New horizons and more independence
- Ability to cope with administrative stuff in a foreign country
- Scientific knowledge and skills for my academic path
- Network across institutions
- People and friendships

Giving something back

The Alumni program

The idea of creating an IMAPP students' association, bringing together current and former students to build a network and organise events

Still working on it



Soon maybe:

A scientific event in December, bringing together presentations from former students

End

Enjoy the journey and the people !

Thanks for the attention

Questions? Feel free to reach out!

Contacts: pio.francesco.varrella@cern.ch

End

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