



## Working and living in Okazaki

Dr. Matthias Meissner    IMS fellow

I have now lived in Okazaki for a little over one year and it has become a second home to me. After having been to Japan once before – working for three months in the lab of Prof. Munakata in Osaka as part of the PAJAKO program of the DAAD – I was more than grateful to Prof. Kera for giving me the chance to come back and work as an IMS fellow. In the beginning, I was almost overwhelmed with the multitude of devices and laboratories at our disposal, either within our group or via cooperations with other laboratories in the IMS. Coming from the field of analyzing the structural properties of molecular thin films, I used this chance to learn a lot about photoemission spectroscopy. Especially the availability of a synchrotron on site is an exciting opportunity for me to expand my knowledge in diverse ways. My research here is focused on methodological improvements to studying films of organic molecules, by combining structural characterization techniques with photoemission spectroscopy.

Through previous collaborations between my former research group in Jena, Germany, and Japanese colleagues, I got to know Prof. Kera in 2013, and step by step almost the entire group, even before I joined them last year. The climate and the cooperation with my colleagues is tremendous. Especially Dr. Takahiro Ueba and Takuma Yamaguchi have helped me not only in the lab when necessary, but also with the many little things which arise with the life in Japan, and I would like to express my gratitude to them as well as the entire team for their support and company.

Aside from work, I have tried to experience Japan

both within Okazaki and beyond. The availability of activities at the institute such as tennis and table tennis, musical happenings, and frequent parties provide nice chances to socialize. Due to the large number of international researchers, I have made friends with people from all over the world. Moreover, the location of the IMS close to the Higashi-Okazaki station as the center of social life and ideal starting point for travelling is very convenient. I've already used this for numerous trips, the highlights including the Mt. Fuji summit, the Kumano fireworks festival, Korankei, and swimming in the Sorahasu river at Yuyaonsen multiple times (which is beautiful).

I am very grateful for the opportunity to experience all these things which, I am sure, will enhance my career and provide me with unforgettable memories.

