



ESO

European Organization
for Astronomical
Research in the
Southern Hemisphere



The European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere (ESO) is the foremost intergovernmental astronomy organisation in Europe and the world's most productive ground-based astronomical observatory. ESO carries out an ambitious programme focused on the design, construction and operation of powerful ground-based observing facilities enabling astronomers to make important scientific discoveries.

ESO operates three unique world-class observing sites in northern Chile: La Silla, Paranal and Chajnantor (home to ALMA and APEX), and the ESO Headquarters are located in Garching, near Munich, Germany.

At Paranal, ESO operates the Very Large Telescope, the world's most advanced visible-light astronomical observatory. ESO is a major partner in ALMA, the largest astronomical project in existence. And on Cerro Armazones, ESO is building the 39-metre European Extremely Large Telescope, which will become "the world's biggest eye on the sky" and whose operations will be fully integrated into the Paranal Observatory.

Director General

The current ESO Director General (DG) will complete his second 5-year term at the end of August 2017 and ESO Council has decided to establish a Search Committee to help in the selection of the next DG. Over the past ten years, ESO has undergone a period of outstanding scientific, technical and organisational success through its contributions to the completion of the ALMA Observatory, the selection and acquisition of the site and the approval and start of construction of the European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT) together with its first light instruments, the continuing operation and development of the La Silla and Paranal observatories including the APEX telescope, the completion of the 2nd generation VLT instruments, and the completion of the extension of the Headquarters building in Garching and the donation of the Supernova visitor centre. The rich scientific harvest from these activities has led to ESO's position as the world's most productive astronomical observatory. Council wishes to build on this record of success by appointing an outstanding DG via an open international search.

Under the current DG, the number of Member States has increased to 15 and a number of others are presently at different levels of engagement regarding potential membership. Council agreed to ramp up the Member State contributions over a decade to provide the funding for construction and operations of the E-ELT whilst supporting continuing exploitation and development of ESO's La Silla - Paranal, and ALMA facilities. As ESO has grown, it has been restructured to manage these activities.

The main tasks for the DG are to manage the ESO programme and to work with Council to develop and implement the strategy defined by the ESO Council, to keep ESO's leadership and excellence in astronomical science and to oversee the construction of the E-ELT whilst maintaining the world-leading productivity of the other facilities.

Council has approved the construction of the first phase of the E-ELT, and a major role for the DG will be to maintain the E-ELT on track for first light in 2024 and bring it towards full operations. Completion of the full E-ELT capabilities will require additional funds, and the DG will need to work with Council to secure them and develop a strategy for further developments. This will require balancing ESO's investments in the most important programmes and projects within rather strict budgetary constraints.



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Duties/responsibilities/experience

The Director General should meet the following requirements:

1. Representing ESO with the ambition of leadership in astronomical research

The DG should have internationally recognized scientific excellence in astronomical research and must be able to project a long-term strategic view of the science to a wide audience. The DG must be enthusiastic, energetic and committed with excellent communication and leadership skills.

2. ESO's internal management requirements

The DG should have the ability to lead, direct and manage a team of senior staff in order to execute and implement three large programmes in very different settings (La Silla – Paranal operations, upgrades and evolution, ALMA operations and development in cooperation with ESO's partners in North America and East Asia, and E-ELT construction, planning and development). She or he must maintain close links between the different ESO sites and ensure effective deployment and usage of resources. The DG must ensure a positive work environment with a structure that ensures a highly motivated, responsive and productive staff.

3. The need to define ESO's role in global astronomical research

The DG should be able to work with Council in the development and evolution of ESO's strategy, in developing ESO further as the organisation for astronomical collaboration in the global arena, and in defining the route to full implementation of the E-ELT. The DG is responsible for implementing the strategy agreed by ESO Council.

4. ESO's international relations requirements

The DG should understand the political dimension of ESO and be able to maintain and develop good relationships with international partners, both inside and outside Europe; the scientific (users) community, astronomical expert institutes, international scientific bodies and agencies, governments and the EU. The maintenance of excellent relations with the Republic of Chile and the Member States is a key requirement.

A proven record of strong leadership of a well-known and internationally oriented astronomical institute or international organisation is essential. Frequent travel between the ESO Headquarters in Garching, Germany, the Observatory sites and Santiago office in Chile and to institutes, agencies and other organizations around the world will be needed. Excellent communication skills and a very good knowledge of English are essential and knowledge of German and/or Spanish is an asset.

The position of Director General is a full time post, with an initial appointment for a 5-year term, with the possibility of renewal. Benefits and allowances are in accordance with ESO's staff rules and regulations.

Persons interested in this position should send a brief CV and letter of motivation to ESOPresident@physics.ox.ac.uk

Closing date for applications is 2 September 2016.