



European Southern Observatory

Reaching New Heights in Astronomy

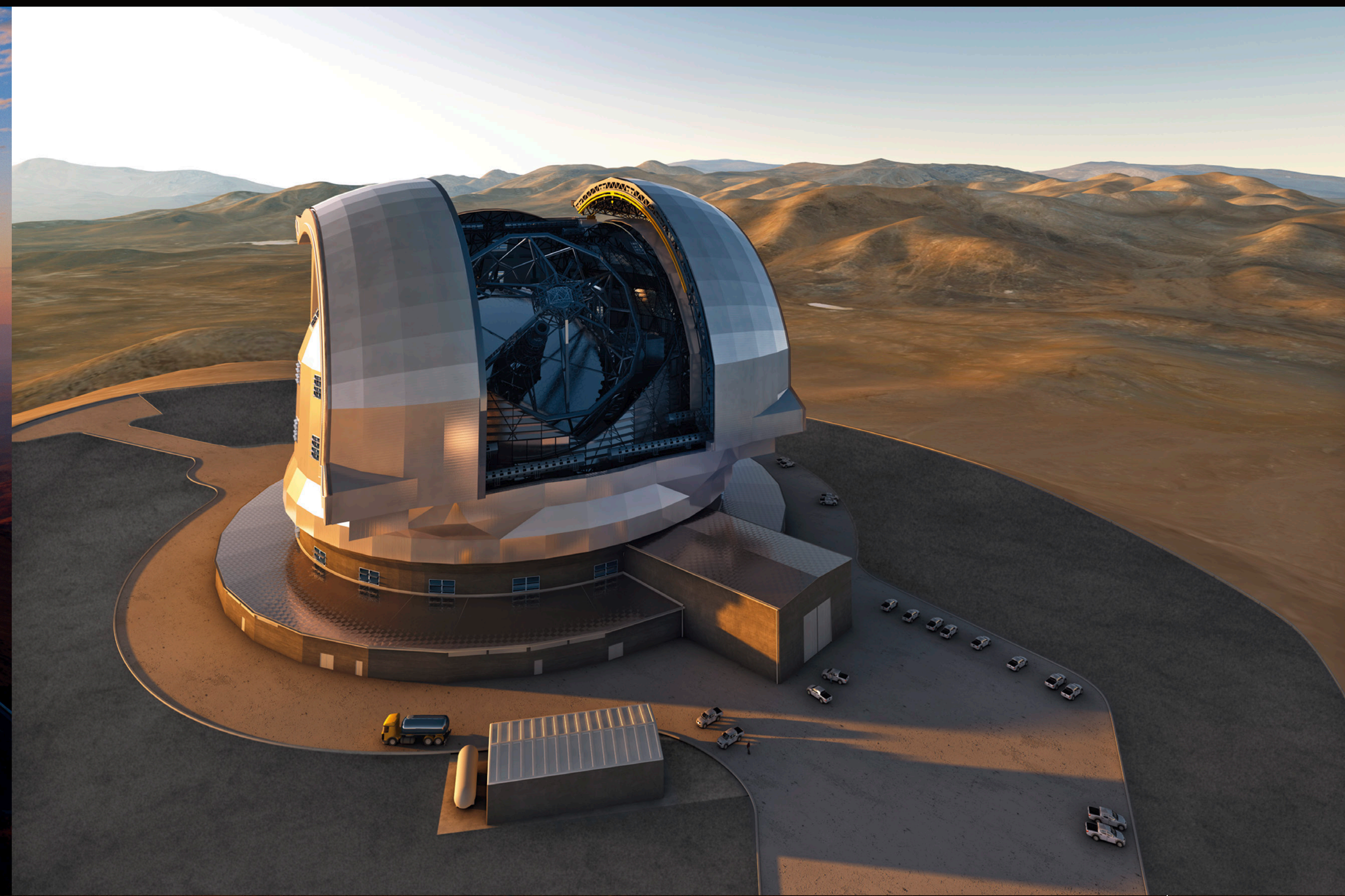
Created in 1962, ESO is the foremost intergovernmental organisation in the field of ground-based astronomy and is the most productive ground-based observatory in the world by far. ESO operates three unique world-class observing sites in the Atacama Desert region of Chile, giving astronomers access to some of the clearest skies in the Southern Hemisphere.

The original site is at La Silla, where several state-of-the-art medium-sized telescopes are in operation. At Paranal, the world's best optical/infrared astronomical facility, is the Very Large Telescope array (VLT), joined by the world's largest survey telescope, VISTA, at infrared wavelengths, and the VST survey telescope at visible wavelengths.

On the 5000-metre-high Chajnantor plateau, together with global partners, ESO is operating the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), a revolutionary astronomical telescope comprising an array of 66 giant 12-metre and 7-metre diameter antennas, which observes at millimetre and submillimetre wavelengths. On the same plateau, in another international partnership, ESO also operates the Atacama Pathfinder Experiment (APEX) telescope.



The La Silla Observatory.



Artist's impression of the European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT).

