

European Southern Observatory – Reaching New Heights in Astronomy

Created in 1962, the European Southern Observatory (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 La Silla, Paranal and Chajnantor in northern Chile, giving astronomers access to some of the clearest skies in the southern hemisphere.

As well as being a leader in astronomical research, ESO is also at the forefront of developing the technology and instruments needed for future research programmes. ESO is currently building the 39-metre European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT), which will be the largest optical/near-infrared telescope in the world.

ESO is supported by 16 countries: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, along with the host state of Chile.

