

Profile

Astronomer and operations leader at the European Southern Observatory, with more than two decades of experience in VLT/VLTI user support, observatory operations, optical/infrared interferometry, and synergies between optical/infrared and radio/mm interferometry. His work combines scientific research, science-operations leadership, staff management, user support, and service to the international astronomical community.

Current Role and Leadership

- 2024– Deputy Head, ESO User Support Department; support of department-wide coordination, operational planning, resource prioritisation, and supervision during absence of the department head.
- 2023– Head, User Support Astronomers Group; line management of User Support Astronomers and project scientists contributing to current and future ESO science operations.
- 2025–2026 Chair, ESO Astronomy Faculty Working Group “Artificial Intelligence in Science”, including a faculty-wide survey and final report.
- 2005– Leadership role in the VLTI area within the User Support Department.

Professional Experience

- 2003– User Support Astronomer, ESO Garching; scientific and technical user support for VLT/VLTI instruments; contribution to observatory operations, user-support workflows, and science-operations processes.
- 2001–2003 VLTI Astronomer, ESO Chile; commissioning and early operations support for the Very Large Telescope Interferometer.
- 2000–2001 Research Associate, U.S. Naval Observatory; research in optical interferometry within the Navy Prototype Optical Interferometer group, supported by a Feodor Lynen Fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Selected Service and Community Roles

- 2026 Invited presentation, SPIE Astronomical Telescopes + Instrumentation 2026: “ESO user support and observation preparation for the VLT Interferometer”.
- 2026 Programme committee member, SPIE Optical and Infrared Interferometry and Imaging X.
- 2026 ESO representative at the EIROforum workshop on “Artificial Intelligence in Science”, Brussels.
- 2010– Chair and member of scientific organising committees for ESO workshops and international conferences.
- 2005– Member, ESO selection committees and review boards.
- 2004– Supervision and co-supervision of PhD and MSc students; member of PhD, HDR, licentiate, and Master thesis committees at international universities.
- 2003– Invited lectures and talks at international schools and conferences.
- 2003– Referee for A&A, MNRAS, ApJ, and ApJL; evaluator for international funding agencies and research councils.

Scientific Profile

More than 100 peer-reviewed publications, including more than 30 first- or second-author papers; h-index above 35.

Research areas include optical/infrared interferometry, synergies between optical/infrared and radio/mm interferometry, evolved stars, stellar mass loss, and active galactic nuclei.

Full publication list: [ADS author search](#).

Education, Awards, and Outreach

Education PhD, Dr. rer. nat., Physics/Astronomy, University of Bonn; Diploma in Physics/Astronomy, University of Heidelberg; Supplementary Studies in Adult Education, Munich School of Philosophy.

Outreach Public talks, ESO outreach articles, Pictures of the Week, science releases, and popular-science articles.