



OPEN HOUSE DAY

3 October 2026

10:00–17:00

Hi there,
explorer!

Welcome to the **European Southern Observatory (ESO)**. There is a lot to discover at the ESO Headquarters today. The map will help you find your way.

Need help? Just ask a member of our staff. You can recognise them by their badge and the blue ESO t-shirt. As ESO is an international organisation, our staff speak various languages.

Programme

1

Welcome to ESO. Ask for information and get material about ESO. Kids can pick up their passport here to collect stamps. Collect stamps at all activities and win a prize (prizes can be collected from area 16).

2

About ESO. ESO enables scientists worldwide to discover the secrets of the Universe for the benefit of all. We design, build and operate world-class telescopes on the ground. Discover how we do that.

3

Kids book reading in German. *Schau nach oben – Yakanas Reise*, by Sofía Otero, illustrations by Karina Cocq. For kids aged 3 years and older, duration 20 minutes.

4



Visit our observatories. Embark on a journey into and around some of ESO's most breathtaking sites and ground-breaking instruments. Learn more about ESO's telescopes and science, and how to visit us at our observatories in Chile. **ALMA stamp station.**

5

Optics and Adaptive Optics. Have you ever noticed that stars twinkle? This is due to turbulence in the atmosphere. In this experiment you will see how turbulence works, and you will learn how our telescopes can deal with it.

6



Extremely Large Telescope (ELT) activities. The ELT will be the world's largest optical and infrared telescope, the biggest eye on the sky. View the most recent video of the ELT construction in the Chilean Atacama Desert and explore the ELT in an interactive experience. If you have questions, look for one of our staff members wearing a **"Frag mich über Technik" ("Ask me about engineering")** badge. **ELT stamp station.**

7

Mechanical workshop. Visit the mechanical workshop and see live machining from raw material to precision parts that will be installed on ESO's telescopes. A limited edition of machined mini-ELTs will be given away in exchange for a contribution to the ESO Charity Group.

8



ELT components and astronomical instrumentation. ESO builds some of the largest telescopes in the world. Learn about astronomical instruments, how we test the ELT's prototype components, and how we optimise the performance of our telescopes. **ESO stamp station.**

9

Human Resources. Want to join the ESO team? Talk to our HR staff about working at ESO and how to apply!

10

Talks and livecast with Chile, videos. Here you have a chance to talk live to one of our telescope operators at ESO's observatories in Chile, listen to astronomers and engineers talk about fascinating science and technology, or enjoy brief videos about ESO and the work that we do.





Programme

11

Cafeteria. Grab a free drink or, for a small donation to our Charity Group, enjoy an international buffet with food from around the world, homemade by our staff.

12

Infrared photography. Have your infrared picture taken! Demonstration of fascinating experiments with an infrared camera.

13

Inclusive astronomy. Explore star and planet formation with your hands.

14

DIY electronics. Looking for future co-workers! Experience how creative, exciting and varied technology is. Come with us on a hands-on tour, with workshops and experiments — or simply ask us questions to your heart's content!

15



How to build a telescope. Build your own amateur telescope. In this area you will also find a mechanics experiment. **VLT stamp station.**

16



Kids activities. Build your own mini-telescope out of Lego (limited number available), get your face painted or get hands-on with our arts and crafts activities! **Once you have visited all five stamp stations, pick up your prize here.**

17



Science done with ESO telescopes. Learn about some of the most fascinating discoveries made with ESO's telescopes. From black holes and galaxies to exoplanets, stars and interstellar visitors – ESO's telescope have enabled scientists to find out the answers to some of the most intriguing questions. Our astronomers will happily answer any questions you might have. You will recognise them by their **“Frag mich über Astronomie” (“Ask me about astronomy”)** badge. **La Silla stamp station.**

18

Dark and quiet skies. Find out why protecting dark and radio-quiet skies is important for astronomy and society.

19

ESO Supernova Planetarium & Visitor Centre. Experience an interactive exhibition that will leave you in awe of the Universe we live in. Discover the planetarium shows, enjoy the many exhibits, or travel to the ESO telescopes in virtual reality. Entry is free, but donations are most welcome. For information about the planetarium shows, please check the screens at the ESO Supernova entrance and ask staff at the reception about tickets if you have not already booked online. **ESOshop** — Looking for souvenirs or gifts? Browse books, postcards, magnets, and much more.

20

Solar observations. If we have clear skies, astronomers will show you the Sun using a special filter on their telescopes.

Enjoying
the day?

Share your photos and videos on social media using #TagDerOffenenTür and don't forget to tag us, too: @ESO Astronomy on Facebook and Instagram



@ESO Astronomy



@ESO Astronomy

Data Privacy Notice

Please note: Photographs and video recordings will be made during this event. These may contain non-directly identifiable people (e.g. group shots, wide-angle shots, shots from behind the head). If you are clearly identifiable, we will obtain your written consent. For more information about the use of this material and your rights please scan the QR code.





Schedule

Start time	Activity	Language	Area	Suitable for
10:15	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
10:20	ESO videos	English with German subtitles	10	All ages
10:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	German	5	All ages
10:40	Talk: <i>Astronomy in fiction and fiction in astronomy</i>	English	10	All ages
11:00	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
11:15	Talk: <i>Infrarot in der Astronomie: Anhand von Experimenten veranschaulicht</i>	German	10	All ages
11:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	German	5	All ages
11:30	ESO Supernova Planetarium show*	German	19	Aged 8 and over
11:45	Kids book reading	German	5	Kids aged 3 and over
11:50	Talk: <i>2,000 years of twinkling</i>	English	10	All ages
12:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	English	5	All ages
12:25	Talk: <i>Riesen, Zwerge und schwarze Löcher – Wie oft passt die Erde in ein schwarzes Loch?</i>	German	10	Aged 6 and over
12:30	Kids book reading	German	5	Kids aged 3 and over
13:00	Talk: <i>Die Suche nach außerirdischem Leben</i>	German	10	All ages
13:15	Kids book reading	German	5	Kids aged 3 and over
13:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	German	5	All ages
13:30	ESO Supernova Planetarium show*	English	19	Aged 8 and over
13:35	Talk: <i>ALMA: Die Suche nach unserem kosmischen Ursprung</i>	German	10	Aged 3 and over
14:00	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
14:10	Live connection to ALMA, Chile	German	10	All ages
14:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	German	5	All ages
14:45	Talk: <i>Wie ein neues Teleskop entsteht – aus der Sicht eines Ingenieurs</i>	German	10	All ages
14:45	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
15:00	Infrared camera demonstration	German	12	All ages
15:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	English	5	All ages
15:30	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
15:30	ESO Supernova Planetarium show*	German	19	Aged 8 and over
15:30	Live connection to Paranal, Chile	German	10	All ages
16:05	Talk: <i>Protecting the night sky from light pollution: Why does it matter</i>	English	10	All ages
16:15	Kids book reading	German	3	Kids aged 3 and over
16:20	Adaptive Optics demonstration	German	5	All ages
16:30	ESO Supernova Planetarium show*	German	19	Aged 8 and over
16:45	ESO videos	English with German subtitles	10	All ages

* For Planetarium shows, please check the ESO Supernova entrance monitors.
The tickets will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis 45 minutes before the start of the show.





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Talks

10. Talks and livecast with Chile, videos

Technology

5. Optics and Adaptive Optics
7. Mechanical workshop
8. ELT components
12. Infrared photography
14. DIY electronics
15. How to build a telescope

ESO & Our Telescopes

1. Welcome to ESO
2. About ESO
4. Visit our observatories
6. ELT activities
9. Human Resources

11. Cafeteria

Kids

3. Kids book reading
16. Kids activities
Stamp passport prizes

Astronomy

13. Inclusive astronomy
17. Science with ESO telescopes
18. Dark and quiet skies
20. Solar observations (good weather only)



 Passport stamp station

 Gaming area

 Kids activities

 Stairs

 Accessible toilets

   Toilets

19. ESO Supernova Planetarium & Visitor Centre

Planetarium shows
Interactive astronomy exhibition
Virtual reality stations
Quiet room

