

## ESO and Chile

ESO has a long tradition of close and very fruitful collaboration with Chile — and in particular with its government, universities, science centres and industry.

The ESO office in Santiago is an active centre for the education of new generations of researchers and promotes exchanges between European and Chilean scientists through collaborations, discussion groups, talks and seminars. The ESO premises in Santiago are also the site of the ALMA Santiago Central Office.

ESO contributes to the Chilean development of astronomy through an annual fund managed by the ESO–Government of Chile Joint Committee, financing essential activities such as teacher training courses and endowing positions in the astronomy departments of local universities. The Chilean astronomical community also has preferential access to a percentage of the observing time on ESO telescopes.

In addition ESO carries out several regional and local collaboration programmes, for instance in Taltal, Antofagasta, San Pedro de Atacama and Toconao. ESO promotes the protection of nature and the local heritage in areas close to the observatories and has built a site museum near the ALMA Operations Support Facility to increase awareness of the Likan Antai culture.

The ESO observatories at Paranal and La Silla offer free public tours on most weekends and each year thousands of people are astounded by a firsthand look at these amazing facilities. Permanent exhibitions are set up in Santiago, Taltal and Antofagasta, allowing hundreds of thousands of Chilean children to explore the wonders of the Universe every year.



Sandra Berna Martínez, Mayor of San Pedro de Atacama, receives the ALMA book on the local wildlife from Jacques Lassalle, representing ALMA.



Students visiting Paranal Observatory on a public tour.



The former President of the Republic of Chile, Ricardo Lagos, visiting the Paranal Observatory.

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