

Belgian ESO Industry Day

18th June 2015

co-organized by ESO (European Southern Observatory)
and BELSPO (Belgian Science Policy Office)

Address Speech:

Margarida Freire, Director of Federal/Interfederal/International Coordination, BELSPO

Dear ESO representatives,

Dear representatives from Belgian industries and industry organisations,

Dear representatives from Belgian institutes and universities,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this ESO Industry Day, co-organized with ESO on our premises.

It is already 4 years ago that an ESO industry day was organised on the BELSPO premises. Quite a long time indeed, but we were all waiting for the formal start of the E-ELT construction... the expected green light was finally given by the ESO Council at its December 2014 meeting. Accordingly, the E-ELT construction has now started, full speed, in January 2015. The aim of the present day is thus to "help Belgium catch the train" of the wide range industrial procurements that this new project has to offer.

The present industry day is divided between plenary sessions, mostly in the morning, and private appointments between industry and ESO in the afternoon.

Regarding the plenary session, for those not familiar ESO or with the E-ELT story, today is the opportunity to get introduced thanks to presentations on the different ESO departments and activities.

Indeed, ESO is not only a door for scientists to wonderful observatories with instruments at the front end of research and a network of fruitful collaborations. For industry, ESO is a door to R&D and contract opportunities, whether those occur via ESO procuring for the whole range of specifics necessary for its already existing Observatories & Headquarters, via ESO partnerships in its technology development programme, via ESO procuring for the building of a brand new observatory (such as the E-ELT) or via Instrument Consortia in charge of building new instruments for the existing or future ESO observatories. During the plenary sessions, ESO representative will illustrate "WHAT" ESO and its network has to offer you.

In the plenary sessions, there will of course be a particular focus on the E-ELT project. ESO representatives will describe the scientific objectives, the R&D challenges and the wide area of industrial opportunities (and not only R&D) of the new E-ELT project. The E-ELT construction Phase 1 has already started and so ESO will address the "WHEN" question via the updated calendar of procurements for the E-ELT. ESO will also explain how this phasing fits into the overall E-ELT construction picture and timeline.

And finally, after the "WHAT (opportunity)?" and the "WHEN?" questions, you will also get the "HOW?" with a plenary session dedicated to the procurement process at ESO.

Regarding the private-appointment meetings in the afternoon, let me stress that the first objective of the present event is of course to allow Belgian industries to introduce themselves to ESO and to further discuss in detail some specificities of their company activities/competencies or to acquire a better understanding of ESO's procurement procedure... in order to bid.

It is an industry day: this is YOUR day, so please take advantage of the private sessions in the afternoon, to meet with the ESO technical experts or with the procurement officer. There are still some free slots. To register, just go and ask Sophie Pireaux or Nadine Hemel.

We would also like to seize the opportunity to invite regional/federal coordinators on the topic of Belgian industrial return (in the broad range and not only on R&D) to meet and interact among themselves and with ESO about the best practices to efficiently feed the ESO procurement information to the broad Belgian Industrial network. How can we articulate our different contact points and "broadcasting" means to serve the Belgian industrial community better?

To conclude, today is for BELSPO the opportunity to update its knowledge of the Belgian industrial motivation with respect to ESO or to the ESO\E-ELT project in particular, and to adjust its strategy in order to achieve a good Belgian industrial return on the E-ELT project. With that respect, please do not hesitate to drop a note (together with your contact e-mail) in the suggestion box or to register to the "advance information on ESO procurement list" in the register box. Both boxes are on the table at the end of the room.

So again to all of you, welcome here;
Thank you for ESO representative to have come to BELSPO.
I wish you all a fruitful day.

And let us start the day by recalling the Belgian participation via BELSP to the ESO international organisation;