The European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere (ESO) is the foremost intergovernmental astronomy organisation in Europe and the world’s most productive astronomical observatory. ESO operates three unique world-class observing sites in the Atacama Desert region of Chile: La Silla, Paranal and Chajnantor. The ESO headquarters are located in Garching, near Munich, Germany. ESO is the focal point for Europe’s participation in the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA) consortium, which is currently constructing a large submillimetre array in the Chilean Andes. The concept and design of a 42-m European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT) is also currently underway at ESO.

Within the Operation Directorate of ESO, the La Silla Paranal Observatory in Chile is opening the position of

**Senior Engineer,  
Head of Paranal Engineering Department**

The Paranal Engineering Department supports the operation of the VLT/VLTI (Very Large Telescope / VLT Interferometer) and its instrumentation including all the facilities required at the Observatory and it provides general engineering support like troubleshooting and corrective maintenance to the other departments.

The Engineering Department is comprised of 5 groups (mechanics, electronics, software, optics, and instrumentation) with a total workforce of 65 engineers and technicians.

The telescopes and instruments are large, complex systems that involve many advanced technologies, and require a high level of engineering support.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

The Head of Engineering is responsible for managing all technical aspects related to the maintenance and operation of the Paranal Observatory: The four VLT Unit Telescopes with their instruments, the Interferometry Complex of the VLT, the 4 Auxiliary Telescopes, the VISTA telescope (Visible and Infrared Survey Telescope) and the VST (VLT Survey Telescope).

The successful candidate will:

- Assure the availability of the installations for science operations during 365 nights per year;
- Support Assembly, Integration, and Verification (AIV) activities of new instruments and telescopes and ensure that they are performed on time;
- Provide engineering support for the commissioning and acceptance tests of new instruments;
- Be responsible for the operation of the power station and the auxiliary systems (air compressors, chillers, HVAC equipment, workshop and other installations).
- Elaborate operational procedures and carry out long term planning,
- Manage the personnel in his department (in particular recruitment, training and performance evaluation) and supervise the engineering groups.
- Prepare the annual budget and schedule the staff.
- Ensure matrix support of the maintenance and system engineering departments
Reports to:
The Head of Engineering Department is reporting to the Director of the La Silla Paranal Observatory.

Experience:
At least ten years of relevant engineering experience in large multi-disciplinary scientific and/or high-tech projects.
Technical experience in opto-mechanical systems is a plus.

Key Competences:

- Ability to identify key strategic issues, opportunities and risks.
- Capability to communicate links between the organization's strategy and the goals of the work units.
- Strong managerial and leadership skills with demonstrated experience in performing and/or overseeing the analysis of complex human resource issues, financial, logistic or administrative policies, and program issues.
- Ability to effectively lead, supervise, mentor, develop and evaluate staff and design training/skills enhancement initiatives to ensure effective staff development.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office package.

Qualifications:
University Degree in electrical, mechanical, opto-mechanical or aeronautical engineering. Advanced University Degree (Master or PhD) is desirable.

Language Skills:
The position requires an Excellent command of English both oral and in writing. Working knowledge of Spanish or willingness to learn it is desirable.

Remuneration and Contract:
We offer an attractive remuneration package including a competitive salary (tax free), comprehensive pension scheme and medical, educational and other social benefits, as well as financial help in relocating your family.

The initial contract is for a period of three years with the possibility of a fixed-term or indefinite extension based on technical and managerial achievements.

The title or grade may be subject to change according to qualification and the number of years of experience.
Duty Station:

The ESO Paranal observatory at Cerro Paranal (120 km south of Antofagasta) at an altitude of 2600 m. The working system is typically 5/2 with accommodation provided on site. After a first period of 5/2 the final shift scheme will be agreed upon according to the operational requirements. The place of residence will be Antofagasta or Santiago.

Career Path: V

Application:

If you are interested in working in areas of frontline technology and in a stimulating international environment, please visit [http://www.eso.org](http://www.eso.org) for further details.

Applicants are invited to apply online at [https://jobs.eso.org/](https://jobs.eso.org/). Applications must be completed in English and should include a motivation letter and CV.

Closing date for applications is 28 February 2011

Although recruitment preference will be given to nationals of ESO Member States (members are: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom) no nationality is in principle excluded.

The post is equally open to suitably qualified female and male applicants.