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Happy new year!

On behalf of all the directors, I would like to wish you all a very happy, healthy and successful New Year for 2026! For me, the holiday season and the beginning of a new year is a welcome opportunity to reflect on past successes, get fresh ideas, and plan new observing programmes. We invite you to do the same! Please familiarise yourself with the changes at our observatory, as we are constantly introducing new instruments. One obvious change is that we are reducing the number of calls for



proposals from three to two per year. This should not stop you from contacting us if you have an urgent and justified need for observing time. We will always be flexible, and so will the telescope, which can easily switch between foci and observing modes. If you have any specific requirements, we welcome your input and suggestions. Finally, I would like to thank the entire observatory staff for their brilliant and dedicated work, which makes the observatory truly unique. As directors, we would also like to thank the Max Planck Society for their unwavering support. And we thank you, the observers, for using the telescope to conduct exciting scientific research. Have a wonderful 2026 and we look forward to receiving your observing proposals!

**Best wishes,
Michael Kramer**

Change of Proposal Deadlines for the 100-m Telescope

The institute decided to move from three to two deadlines per year for the 100-m telescope. This change is done to facilitate the review process and better synchronize deadlines with those of other telescopes (especially GMVA and HSA). Starting in 2026, deadlines will always be on March 1st and September 1st (or the next working day following these).

It should be noted that Target-of-Opportunity proposals can be submitted at any time and are generally reviewed very quickly, allowing for a rapid response to current events.



Call for proposals

Deadline March 2nd, 2026, UT 15.00

Observing proposals are invited for the Effelsberg 100-meter Radio Telescope of the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy (MPIfR).

The Effelsberg telescope is one of the World's largest fully steerable instruments. This extreme-precision antenna is used exclusively for research in radio astronomy, both as a stand-alone instrument as well as for Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) experiments.

Access to the telescope is open to all qualified astronomers. Use of the instrument by scientists from outside the MPIfR is strongly encouraged. The institute can provide support and advice on project preparation, observation, and data analysis. The directors of the institute make observing time available to applicants based on the recommendations of the Program Committee for Effelsberg (PKE), which judges the scientific merit and technical feasibility of the observing requests.

Information about the telescope, its receivers and backends and the Program Committee can be found at

<http://www.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de/effelsberg/astronomers>

(potential observers are especially encouraged to visit the wiki pages!).

Observing modes

Possible observing modes include spectral line, continuum, and pulsar observations as well as VLBI. Available backends are several FFT spectrometers (with up to 65536 channels per subband/polarization), a digital continuum backend, a number of polarimeters, several pulsar systems (coherent and incoherent dedispersion), and two VLBI terminals (dBBC and RDBE type with MK6 recorders). Furthermore, the new flexible, fully-digital backend system EDD ("Effelsberg Direct Digitization") is currently being implemented and will be available for an increasing number of observations in the near future.

In case of questions about the proposing or the scheduling, please contact the Effelsberg staff under sched100m@mpifr.de.

Receiving systems cover the frequency range from 0.3 to 96 GHz. The actual availability of the receivers depends on technical circumstances and proposal pressure. For a description of the receivers see the wiki pages.



How to submit

Applicants should use the NorthStar proposal tool for preparation and submission of their observing requests. North Star is reachable at <https://northstar.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de>.

For VLBI proposals special rules apply. For proposals which request Effelsberg as part of the European VLBI Network (EVN) see: <https://www.evlbi.org/proposal-submission>.

Information on proposals for the Global mm-VLBI network can be found at <http://www3.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de/div/vlbi/globalmm/index.html>.

Other proposals which ask for Effelsberg plus (an)other antenna(s) should be submitted twice, one to the MPIfR and a second to the institute(s) operating the other telescope(s). Information on observing requests to the HSA (High Sensitivity Array) are given at: <https://science.nrao.edu/facilities/vlba/HSA>

Important Remarks

Please note, that the Effelsberg Programme Committee (PKE) is composed of several scientist with different backgrounds. It is hence advisable to write the proposals in a way that they could be understood by readers who are not working in the particular field.

Furthermore, it should be noted that all proposals are treated confidentially. Therefore, it is not necessary to withhold or obscure information, which on the contrary might lead to a downgrading of the proposal.

In addition to the regular deadlines, it is always possible to submit a ToO/DDT proposal to react on recent events.

The following deadline will be on Sep 1st, 2026.

ACME Transnational Access Programme

The ACME (“Astrophysics Centre for Multimessenger studies in Europe”) project (see <https://www.radionet-org.eu/radionet/acme-project-started/>) enables transnational access (TA) on the basis of scientific merit to a wide range of complementary astroparticle, high energy and astronomical Research Infrastructures to perform new science of multi-messenger astrophysics.



Transnational access to the 100-m telescope is provided to selected user-groups of one or more researchers, with the majority of the users working in EU and/or Associated Countries and not affiliated with German institutes. The access includes the logistical, technological and scientific support and the specific training. Additionally financial support for travel and accommodation could be offered for selected user(s).

More extensive support can be offered as Effelsberg is one of the “Joint Centres of Expertise” for the radio regime within the ACME project. In that context, the staff of the Effelsberg observatory offers advanced support for the user community in all phases of an observing project, e.g.

- Extended counsel during the proposal writing
- Bespoke assistance with preparation of the observations, as well as with the data inspection and post-processing
- Commissioning of special observing modes
- Specific training sessions

Furthermore, help with the access to the Effelsberg data archive can be provided on request.

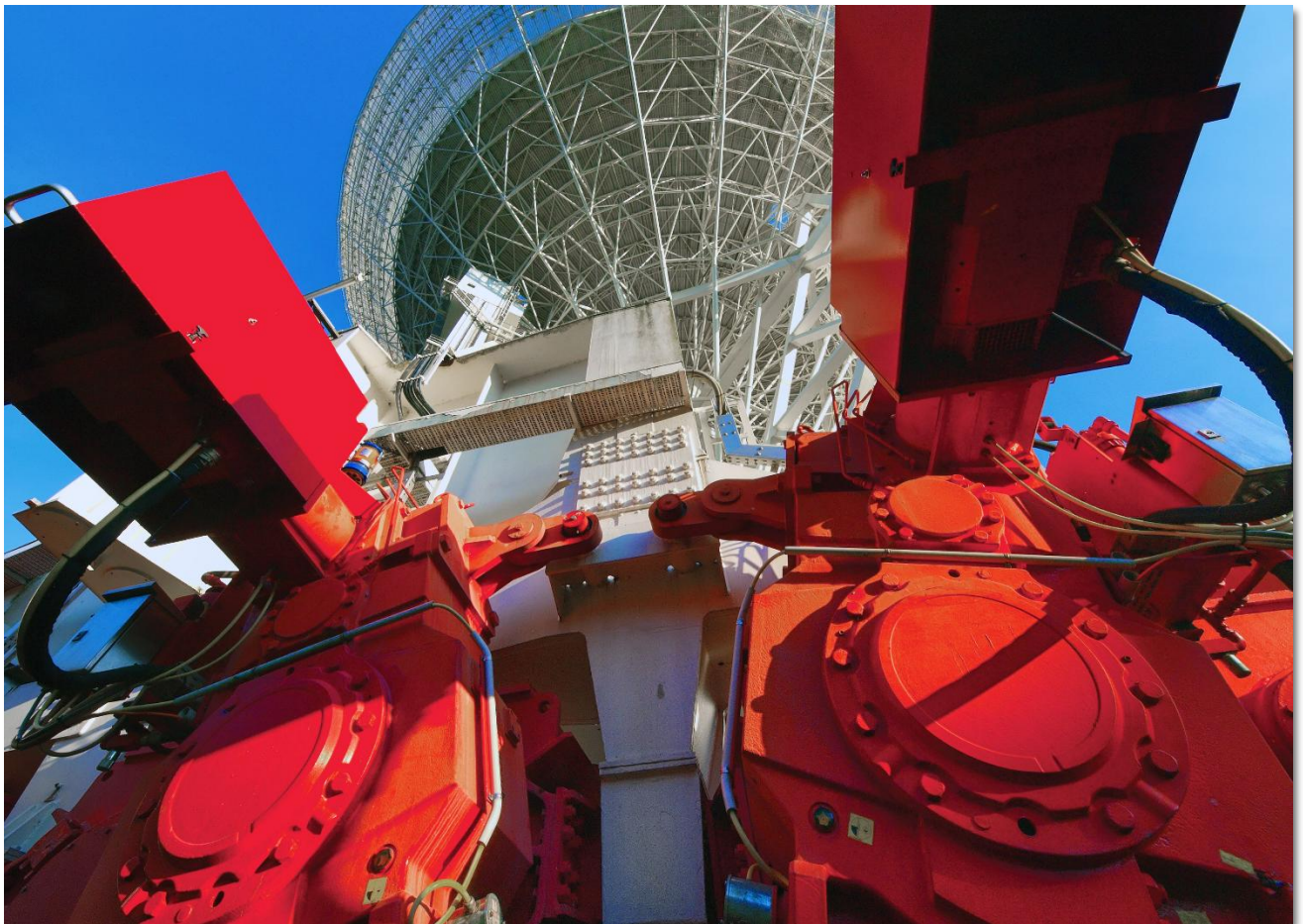
Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under this program may benefit from the above mentioned support. Publications based on TA programme should be acknowledged accordingly:

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 101131928 (ACME).

For more details, please see: <https://www.acme-astro.eu> or contact the Effelsberg staff under sched100m@mpifr.de.

by Alex Kraus





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[News from the observatory](#)

European Observatories and Administrations in Dialogue on Satellite Interference

On Friday 23 January, representatives from radio astronomy observatories and administrations of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden, together with members of the Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies (CRAF) and the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), met at the Paris Observatory to exchange views on the challenges posed by unintended electromagnetic radiation (UEMR) from Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite constellations. UEMR is understood as radio waves that likely leak from electronics onboard satellites and are at low levels compared to communication signals, yet are sufficiently strong to affect astronomical observations. Participants discussed the significance of radio astronomy and the ways in which UEMR from satellites can affect the highly sensitive astronomical observations as conducted with today's radio telescopes. Experts from CRAF and the SKAO reported on dedicated measurements



of UEMR, which allow the estimation of its potential impact on radio astronomical observations, and summarised the regulatory context. Administrators contributed their perspectives on various regulatory paths, and underlined the importance of collaboration between the scientific community, industry, and administrations. Ongoing discussions between the industry sector and radio astronomy were also highlighted, with efforts to design future satellites and constellations with due consideration for UEMR.

The meeting was regarded as an opportunity to strengthen connections between the stakeholders and to develop a shared understanding of the impact of the increasing interference from satellite constellations on radio astronomy. Participants acknowledged the importance of radio astronomical research and agreed to remain in active contact to work on solutions.

By Emma van der Wateren, ASTRON, The Netherlands.

From the observatory, Gyula Jozsa, Benjamin Winkel, and Alex Kraus attended this meeting.



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Prof. Dr. J. Anton Zensus concludes his tenure a defining figure in international radio astronomy

On February 1, 2026, Prof. Dr. J. Anton Zensus concluded his tenure as Director of the Radio Astronomy / Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) Department at the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy (MPIfR). He will remain associated with the institute as Director Emeritus and Scientific Member of the Max Planck Society.



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For more than three decades, Prof. Zensus has played a key role in shaping international radio astronomy and establishing global scientific collaborations. His work combined scientific excellence with the development of international research infrastructures and helped establish radio astronomy as a globally connected instrument of modern astrophysics.

A particular milestone was his central role in the development and international coordination of the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), which in 2019 enabled the first direct imaging of a black hole. In addition, he was involved in the development and use of global VLBI networks and in the scientific preparation of major international projects such as the Square Kilometre Array (SKA).

In addition to his research, Prof. Zensus is committed to promoting young scientists and strengthening transatlantic and international cooperation in fundamental research. For his scientific achievements, he has been awarded the Karl Schwarzschild Medal (2024) and the Tycho Brahe Medal (2023), among others, and has received an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (M2FINDERS).

Even after concluding his tenure, Prof. Zensus will continue to contribute his experience and perspective to the work of the MPIfR and the international research community in selected scientific and institutional roles.



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