Application Form (v2025)

ESO Fellowship

Motivation letter

Please complete the motivation letter, save it as a PDF file and submit it via the ESO recruitment portal. The font to be used to fill the form must be a clearly readable font (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman etc.) and the size 11pt. **Greyed out text provides guidelines on how to fill up this document and should be removed from the submitted version.**

By submitting this application, you agree that your material will be reviewed by ESO staff astronomers and senior ESO Fellows.

**Candidate name**:

**Place:**

**Date:**

To whom it might concern,

**Guidelines on how to write the motivation letter**

Your motivation letter is a key part of your application to the ESO Fellowship Programme. It should directly address two central questions, which help us understand how you view the role of an ESO Fellow, how you would contribute to our observatory, and how this opportunity fits into your broader career path.

We expect your letter to explicitly answer the following:

**How do you think working at ESO will benefit your career development?**

Reflect on your long-term goals as a scientist and how ESO can uniquely support them. ESO is not a conventional research institute — it is a world-leading observatory with major operational responsibilities, deep involvement in instrumentation, and a strong international and collaborative environment. We are looking for candidates who understand this distinction and can articulate how being part of ESO's structure — including its science operations, access to cutting-edge facilities, and multidisciplinary teams — would enrich their growth.

You might want to describe how you plan to take advantage of ESO’s infrastructure, how involvement in service duties would strengthen your technical or collaborative skills, or how this experience aligns with your aspirations, whether in academia, instrumentation, data science, or observatory leadership.

**What scientific, technical, or interpersonal skills will you bring to ESO?**

Here, tell us what you’re ready to contribute — not just in terms of your research, but as a Fellow who will take an active role in ESO’s daily operations. This includes telescope support, data handling, visitor interaction, and potentially working on instrumentation or software pipelines.

Outline your core competencies: your scientific expertise, programming and analysis skills, experience with telescopes or observatory workflows, and your ability to collaborate in a multicultural environment. Don’t overlook your human skills — such as mentoring, organizing, or outreach — which are essential in the collaborative ecosystem of ESO. We’re looking for individuals who are not only excellent scientists, but engaged colleagues who will thrive within and contribute to our unique community.

**The selection committee insists on the compliance of the number of words/pages allowed for this document. Documents longer than 2 pages will be cut at the limit. Letters with a font size smaller than 11 will not be considered.**