

Report on the

## 2007 ESO Fellowship Symposium

held at ESO, Vitacura, Chile, 12–14 November 2007

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The third ESO Fellowship Symposium took place in Santiago from 12–14 November 2007. These symposia, held every two years, bring together ESO Fellows from Chile and Germany for several days of scientific discussion and camaraderie. This year's symposium was framed by an earthquake and visits to the ESO observatories.

Separated by an ocean, ESO Fellows usually have few opportunities to interact with their colleagues on the other site. The goal of the ESO Fellowship symposia is to bring the ESO Fellows from Chile and Germany together to discuss science, build personal connections, stimulate new research collaborations, and discuss strengths and weaknesses of the Fellowship programme. The symposia are held every second year alternating between Santiago and Garching.

Thirty Fellows from Santiago and Garching participated in this year's event, which was also attended by many ESO Chile staff astronomers and students (see

lower picture of the Astronomical News section page, page 35). Each Fellow gave a 30-minute presentation about his or her current research and plans for the near future. The presentations covered nearly all topics of modern astrophysics, such as extrasolar planets, gravitational lensing, starspots, and galaxies at low and high redshifts, as well as observations spanning the electromagnetic spectrum from gamma ray to radio. Interested readers can view and download the Fellows' science presentations at <http://www.eso.org/sci/meetings/fellowsymp2007/>.

After the three-day symposium in Santiago, Fellows were given an opportunity to visit the APEX and ALMA sites on the Chajnantor plain or the VLT on Cerro Paranal. This was an exciting experience for all, combining spectacular views of the beautiful northern Chilean landscape with a behind-the-scenes look at the astronomical facilities. The upper picture on page 35 shows fifteen of the ESO Fellows, accompanied by the Head of the Office for Science in Chile, who had travelled to Chajnantor. They are seen in front of the Atacama Pathfinder Experiment (APEX) telescope at an altitude of 5 100 metres. As one Fellow said be-

tween whiffs of canned oxygen at the 5 000-metre future site of ALMA: "This is amazing, like no place I've ever been." An earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale struck northern Chile the day before the Fellows arrived there, and occasional minor aftershocks continued to be felt during their stay in the small village of San Pedro de Atacama.

The next ESO Fellowship Symposium will take place in Garching in 2009.



Photo: A. Triatt, ESO

No gathering in Chile would be complete without a traditional Chilean *asado* or barbecue.

Report on the

## ESO Chile Science Days

held at ESO, Vitacura, Chile, 20 November and 5 December 2007

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Science Days in Santiago are an annual gathering of ESO's geographically dispersed team in Chile to learn more about each other's research, to celebrate scientific achievements of the past year and to encourage new collaborations.

More than 50 ESO staff astronomers, fellows and students based in Chile participated in this year's Science Days, which were held in ESO's Santiago offices. Each

participant gave a five- to ten-minute presentation about his or her current research activities and plans for the near future. Because of the turno schedule for ESO scientific staff with duty stations on Paranal, La Silla and Sequitor, the talks were spread over two days, 20 November and 5 December 2007, to allow as many people as possible to participate.

The research presented by ESO staff during Science Days in Santiago covered a broad range of topics and included collaborators from every ESO member state. As active researchers, ESO staff con-

tribute not only to the advancement of astronomy through their scientific explorations, but also their expert knowledge of ESO telescopes, instrumentation and data processing, gained from first-hand experience. The latter is an important component of ESO's mission to provide the highest quality data in service to the ESO user community.

More information about the research interests and biographies of ESO science staff in Chile can be found on the ESO website at <http://www.eso.org/sci/activities/santiago/personnel/index.html>.