

INTERVIEWEES.

**CTAO**

WHO TO TALK TO

Welcome to the DESY Campus to the CTAO Science Data Management Centre (SDMC) inauguration! Thank you for joining us for this significant milestone for the Observatory, which gathers CTAO members and partners from around the world.

We understand your time is valuable, so we have compiled a list of key members who can provide you with firsthand information about the Observatory, the SDMC as well as its significance for DESY. All of them are present at this inauguration and available for future online conversations.

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CTAO

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Dr. Stuart McMuldroy,
CTAO Managing Director



Stuart became the Managing Director for the CTAO in April 2023.

Since then, he has been leading the Observatory in its new phase of growth: Throughout 2024, the Observatory's staff will double and key hardware and software products will be developed.

Stuart has a PhD in Astronomy and spent more than 22 years managing large-scale international projects at academic, commercial and government organisations. He was part of the New Horizons and GOES-R space missions as team leader for the design and construction of key optical subsystems. Prior to his appointment, McMuldroy was the Head of the Giant Magellan Telescope program office at the Center for Astrophysics (CfA)/Harvard & Smithsonian.

Languages: English



Prof. Federico Ferrini,
CTAO Managing Director



Federico became the Managing Director of the CTAO Central Organisation in March 2018. During his tenure, he oversaw the achievement of significant milestones for the Observatory, such as the hosting agreement for CTAO's southern hemisphere array site in Chile and the definition of the Observatory's Cost Book and Technical Description. He now supports Stuart as Co-Managing Director as the Observatory starts its new phase of growth. Before joining the CTAO, Federico dedicated more than 30 years to astrophysics research and teaching at the University of Pisa. This included directing the Astronomy and Astrophysics Group and being named the Director of the European Gravitational Observatory (EGO) in 2011. As director, he fostered the collaboration and technical advancement of the VIRGO interferometric antenna – one of the three largest gravitational detectors in the world. Some of his other professional positions have included Scientific Attaché at the Permanent Mission of Italy in Geneva and Chair of both the CERN Pension Fund Governing Board and the Investment Committee.

Languages: English, Italian



Dr. Stefan Schlenstedt,
CTAO Computing Coordinator & Interim Project Manager



Stefan joined the CTAO Central Organisation as its Computing Coordinator in March 2019, although he has been working on the CTAO since its inception. While at DESY Zeuthen, he was the group lead, helped drive the development of the Medium-Sized Telescope (one of the three types of telescopes the CTAO will deploy), which he led for many years, and was a member of the CTAO site search committee. Before the CTAO, he worked as the reconstruction software lead for AMANDA and the IceCube collaboration. Stefan now leads the Computing Department activities and works closely with the coordinators of the various major software and hardware elements, systems engineering and the contributing institutions throughout the CTAO to implement an efficient and easy-to-maintain computing system. Additionally, Stefan is serving as the CTAO's interim Project Manager until the position is filled. He is the main contact person at the CTAO SDMC.

Languages: German, English



Dr. Roberta Zanin,
CTAO Project Scientist



Roberta joined the CTAO Central Organisation as its Project Scientist in June 2019. Roberta works with the project team in tandem with the In-Kind Contribution Collaborations and the scientists of the CTAO Consortium to ensure that the design, implementation and science verification of CTAO achieves the science goals of the project. Roberta has devoted her entire scientific career to imaging Cherenkov astronomy. She has taken part in all the three major currently-running instruments of this kind: MAGIC, H.E.S.S. and VERITAS. Cultivating her research interests between Padua, Barcelona and MPIK in Heidelberg, she built substantial experience in data analysis and interpretation, software development, operations and commissioning of the telescopes.

Languages: English, Italian, Spanish



**Dr. Matthias Füssling,
SUSS Coordinator**



Matthias leads the efforts of the Science User Support System (SUSS) within the CTAO Computing Department. The SUSS manages the software systems for the high-level science operations workflows, from proposals to data delivery and user support, and is the main access point for the exchange of science-related products with the science users. Additionally, he is the main contact for CTAO's efforts on Open Science projects, including the Observatory's participation in the ESCAPE project.
Languages: German, English



**Prof Beate Heinemann,
DESY Director of Particle Physic**



Beate is an experimental particle physicist and a member of the DESY directorate, where she leads the particle physics division. After earning her PhD in Germany, she spent 16 years working in the UK and the USA at the world's most powerful particle colliders, including the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN. She played a key role in the historic discovery of the Higgs boson in 2012. She is deeply passionate about exploring the universe's fundamental mysteries, including the nature of dark matter, one of the key scientific goals of the Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory (CTAO).

Languages: German, English



**Prof Christian Stegmann,
DESY Director of Astroparticle Physic,
Head of the DESY Zeuthen site**



Christian is Director of Astroparticle Physics at DESY and since 2011 head of the DESY Zeuthen site. He received his PhD from the University of Freiburg, where he worked on the OPAL experiment at CERN. He has held several academic positions, including professor at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and the University of Potsdam. He has been involved in major projects such as the H.E.S.S. experiment, of which he was spokesperson from 2013 to 2015, and the Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory (CTAO), of which he has been a member of the Council since 2012. He is also Chairman of the Karl Heinz Beckurts Foundation and a member of various scientific boards. His leadership has been instrumental in advancing astroparticle physics in Germany.

Languages: German, English



Prof David Berge,
DESY Head of the Gamma-ray Astronomy Group



Since 2017, David is a lead scientist at DESY in the division of astroparticle physics. He heads the Gamma-ray Astronomy Group at the Zeuthen site and coordinates DESY's contributions to the planned global gamma-ray Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory (CTAO). His research focuses on cosmic particle accelerators and especially on multi-messenger astronomy, that is, the study of cosmic objects and events with photons, neutrinos, and gravitational waves. His group works with gamma-ray telescopes like H.E.S.S. and the future CTAO, uses multi-wavelength data from other telescopes, cooperates with DESY's IceCube neutrino group and follows up on gravitational wave alerts by LIGO, VIRGO, KAGRA. Languages: German, English



Dr Emma de Oña Wilhelmi,
DESY Deputy Head of the Gamma-ray Astronomy Group



Emma has been a staff scientist at DESY since 2017, specializing in high-energy gamma-ray astrophysics. Her research focuses on cosmic accelerators and extreme phenomena in the universe. She has been involved in key international collaborations, including MAGIC and H.E.S.S., where she currently leads the H.E.S.S. activities within the GAMMA group and serves as deputy group leader of the division. She also plays a crucial role in the Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory (CTAO), having held various leadership positions, such as Galactic Science Coordinator and Physics Coordinator, contributing to the design of the CTAO-Consortium Key Science Projects. Her research aims to deepen our understanding of particle acceleration and propagation within the Galaxy, exploring a broad range of astrophysical structures, from pulsars to massive stars in stellar clusters and supernova remnants. Languages: Spanish, English



**Dr Gianluca Giavitto,
Scientist and Engineer**



Gianluca is a scientist and engineer working at DESY since 2013. He is an expert in very high energy gamma-ray astronomy with Cherenkov Telescopes and his research has focused mostly on pulsars. He played an important role in the first detection of pulsed gamma-ray emission from the Crab and the Vela pulsars above 20 GeV using the MAGIC and the H.E.S.S.-II Cherenkov Telescopes. Gianluca has also been strongly involved in instrument development: he was part of the core team for the upgrade of the MAGIC cameras in 2010-2012 and he was the technical coordinator of the H.E.S.S.-I cameras upgrade from 2013 to 2016. Since 2017 he's working on the development of the cameras for the CTAO SST telescopes in the role of camera systems engineer and backplane design architect. Furthermore Gianluca has been involved in the development of the ULTRASAT camera at DESY since its beginning in 2019.

Languages: English, Italian, German



**Verena Ruhm,
Architect and Head of Campus Group**



Verena graduated from RWTH Aachen University in 2002 with a degree in architecture. After several years as an architect abroad, she joined DESY in 2017 to set up the BAU department at the Zeuthen site. With the realisation of a successful two-phase architectural competition and a shortened development plan procedure in cooperation with the municipality, the foundations for the campus development and the master plan of the DESY campus at the site were laid. From 2019, as 'Spokesperson for Building Services', she was the interface to the site management and was responsible for the technical management of the infrastructure. As head of the BAU department in Zeuthen, she coordinated all construction activities on the campus and worked on the further strategic development of the campus infrastructure and its implementation. Verena took over the leadership of the Campus Group in 2024. In addition to pure construction activities, this now also includes the management of all services and the operation of the campus infrastructure.

Languages: German, English, French