

EINSTEIN
TELESCOPE

ETO Mandate and Activities 2025-2027

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ETO mandate 2025-2027

Scope, responsibilities and authority

Why an updated mandate was needed

- ETO operates as the central coordination structure for ET
- ET project is progressing towards early implementation
- Enhanced clarity regarding scope, responsibilities, accountability was needed towards timely delivery of high-quality, key ET project-wide outputs
- Optimal contribution from and collaboration with ET Collaboration (ETC), candidate ET Host Consortia (ET HC) and external partners (e.g. CERN and ESA) are both a crucial condition of the mandate and a goal for ETO

**Mandate for ETO Directors for the
“Design, Preparation and Early Implementation Phase”**

06.10.2025

Revised by ET Coordinators Nov. 20, 2025

1. Purpose of this document

This document is an update of the initial mandate titled: “Mandate for the ET Directors for the Design and Preparatory Phase 1 (PP1) and Description of the project organisation under their responsibility in Phase 1” (ref. nr. ET-0090A-23).

This mandate must be concluded, as phase 1, within 2027. It defines the Directors’ mandate based on ETO’s current mission for the ET project, namely:

- To coordinate the execution and delivery of specific work elements required for decision-making by the BGR and other governance bodies, with particular emphasis to those elements which may be relevant for the decision on geometry and site(s) and can be delivered within the phase 1 timeframe.
- To set up the project organisation necessary to successfully design, plan, structure and manage the ET project.

Since the Einstein Telescope (ET) project is expected to move to the next phase by the end of 2027 (which will include the Phase 2 of the Preparatory Phase and the start of early implementation work) this mandate aims at supporting a project organisation that will be able to successfully provide the required deliverables during the remaining period of PP1. At the same time, the structures and vision behind the management and organisation should be set-up to support transition into the next phase as best as possible.

This mandate is submitted to the Board of Governmental Representatives (BGR) for formal endorsement, in line with its authority under Article 1.1 of the BGR Terms of Reference (ToR). This endorsement reflects the BGR’s role in reviewing the project coordination structure during the Preparatory Phase and in ensuring political alignment regarding ETO’s evolving function.

ETO mandate – authority and scope

- Issued by the ET ESFRI Project Coordinators and signed in January 2026
- Formally endorsed by the Board of Governmental Representatives (BGR)
- ETO's mandate does not extend to political, financial, or high-level strategic decision-making, which remain with national ministries and relevant national agencies
- Scientific coordination remains the responsibility and remit of the ET Collaboration (ETC), in close interaction with ETO
- Host Consortia (HC) remain responsible for:
 - Site feasibility studies
 - Infrastructure documentation for host bids

ETO's areas of responsibility

ETO is responsible for leading or coordinating project-wide activities required to bring ET from preparation to implementation in the following domains:

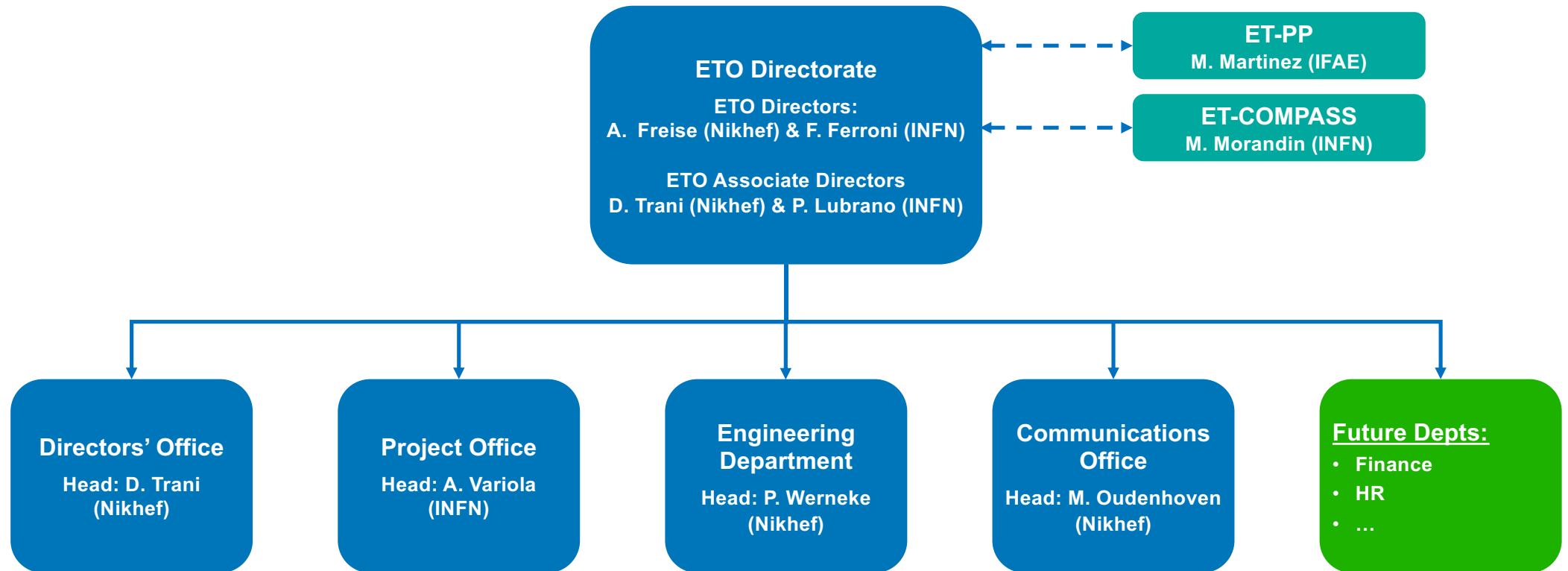
- ET project management and planning
- Site Independent Geometry Comparison Report (GCR)
- Detector Technical Design Report (DTDR) – *joint effort with the ETC*
- Civil Infrastructure Technical Design Report (CTDR) – *in close collaboration with ET HC and CERN*
- Technical Infrastructure Technical Design Report (TTDR) – *managing work carried out by ET HC and CERN*
- Costing and Financial Strategy
- Stakeholder Interface Management
- Legal Affairs
- (Further) Development and Management of ETO
- Communication, External Relations and Public Affairs

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- **Costing** and Financial Strategy
- Legal Affairs
- Stakeholder Interface Management
- (Further) Development and Management of ETO
- Communication, External Relations and Public Affairs (incl. responses to EU funding calls and implementation of funded bids)

How ETO is structured to deliver the mandate*



*Status in April 2026: ETO currently counts 44 staff members, representing approximately 24 FTEs, including the ET-PP Coordinator.

How ETO is structured to deliver the mandate

The **ETO Directorate** is responsible strategic and organisational leadership; overall mandate execution; management of high-level stakeholder engagement and strategic partnerships (including CERN and ESA)

The operational activities of ETO fall currently under four departments:

- **Directors' Office** – supports daily operations of the Directorate and cross-cutting activities
- **Project Office** – responsible for project planning, scheduling, costing, configuration control and risk management
- **Engineering Department** – responsible for coordination with technical partners and Host Consortia on technical and civil infrastructure and systems studies
- **Communications Office** – responsible for strategic communication, stakeholder engagement and coordination of communication activities across entities.

ETO-Led Deliverables and Key Activities (1/2)

Core Technical Deliverables:

- **Geometry Comparison Report (triangle vs 2L)** – coordinated by ETO, covering scientific, cost, risk, governance, socio-economic and environmental aspects
- **Detector Reference Design** – based on integrated systems, forming the basis for the detector TDR
- **Foundational Reference Documents** – guiding Host Consortia to develop Technical and Civil Infrastructure TDRs
- **Cost Estimate Guidelines & Preliminary Cost Estimate** – ensuring coherence and comparability across all cost elements
- **Risk Analysis, Register & Report** – assessing project-wide risks and mitigation strategies

ETO-Led Deliverables and Key Activities (2/2)

Strategic and cross-cutting organisational activities:

- **Stakeholder Interface Coordination** – managing interfaces with the ET Collaboration and Host Consortia to optimally project needs and timelines
- **ETO Organisational Development** – building and evolving ETO and its departments as the central organisation for project management and delivery of ET
- **ESFRI Reporting & Communication** – including strategic positioning of ET at European and global level
- **Developing and overseeing EU Funding bids and projects** – including ET-PP and ET-COMPASS projects
- **ET Communication, Website & Social Media** – managing central transnational communication and branding
- **Ad-hoc Strategic Deliverables** – developed in consultation with and executed only based on ET Coordinator's approval

From mandate to implementation

- The ETO mandate defines *what* must be delivered. It defines responsibilities, authority, and expectations
- The mandate does not prescribe *how* delivery happens. Delivery requires tools, capacity, and resources
- It is the role of ETO to centrally steer and align relevant instruments to:
 - ensure they serve the mandate coherently and effectively
 - avoid fragmentation across projects and initiatives
- To date, ETO's operational capacity has relied mainly on:
 - In-kind personnel contributions
 - Cash contributions to the ETO Fund

ET-COMPASS will be an additional implementation instrument serving the ETO mandate for ET

ET-COMPASS: scope and key links with ETO activities

Objectives of ET-COMPASS

The goal of ET-COMPASS is to design and, where possible, test the structures, processes, policies, and tools to support ETO in addressing the development/strengthening of:

- An ET-wide management framework
- Organisational structures and resources for ETO (towards an efficient entity)
- A framework for in-kind personnel contribution
- Rules and procedures for the preparation of the ET project cost assessment
- Evolution and enlargement of ETO Funders Group (EFG) (or its successor), including possible models to redefine and broaden criteria for membership
- ETO-led approach for strategic positioning of ET at European and global level, including dedicated public affairs and communication activities.

These activities are all chosen to support one of the ETO Mandate areas

ET-COMPASS: supporting the ETO mandate execution

ET-COMPASS contributes to the execution of the ETO mandate in two complementary ways:

- **Targeted EC-funded project work**
 - Provides dedicated resources to deliver ETO mandate-driven tasks
 - Fully aligned with ETO priorities and overseen by ETO
- **Structural strengthening of ETO through partner integration**
 - Partners selected based on their short-term ability and willingness to additionally contribute directly to ETO, also beyond this EU bid
 - In-kind matching (1:1) agreed to ensure continuity beyond ET-COMPASS
 - Existing major contributors (e.g. INFN, Nikhef) exempt from additional matching

List of involved partners/beneficiaries in ET-COMPASS

Country	Institutions	Abbreviation
Austria	Montanuniversität Leoben	MUL
Belgium	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	KU Leuven
Croatia	Sveučilište u Rijeci	UNIRI
Germany	Deutsches Zentrum für Astrophysik	DZA
Italy	Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare	INFN
The Netherlands	Nationaal instituut voor subatomaire fysica	Nikhef
Poland	Particle Astrophysics Science and Technology Centre	AstroCeNT
Spain	Institut de Física d'Altes Energies	IFAE
The United Kingdom	University of Glasgow	Uni Glasgow

INFN is the Project Coordinator. INFN and ETO worked closely in the development of the bid and continue to do so in the implementation of the project

Engaging with ETO: opportunities for contribution and cooperation

Mandate execution is strictly dependent on sufficient resources

- The ETO mandate defines responsibilities, but its full execution is strictly dependent on available financial and human resources
- ET-COMPASS is only one of the instruments supporting the ETO mandate execution
- As the ET project evolves:
 - the scope of ETO activities will broaden
 - the range of delivery instruments (including externally funded projects) will grow
 - However, at present ETO remains structurally understaffed relative to its mandate and the scale and strategic importance of ET as an ESFRI project

Additional capacity and contributions essential for ETO to fully deliver for ET

Opportunities for cooperation with ETO

- Future cooperation will be primarily organised through direct contributions to ETO, in particular via:
 - in-kind personnel contributions
 - targeted expertise embedded in ETO activities
- All contributions are:
 - Centrally coordinated by ETO
 - Aligned with mandate priorities
 - Integrated into ETO planning and reporting

**We are keen on exploring how to strengthen our capacity together.
Reach out to us directly to make this happen!**

Opportunities for cooperation with ETO

Some of the experts from the ET-PP project have already joined ETO as in-kind staff.

Directors' Office



Name: Chiara Arina

Affiliation: UC Louvain; also active in ET-PP WP3

Role: IKPC Coordinator

Start Date: 2/04/2026

Effort (FTE): 40%

Communications Office



Name: Yulia Hoika

Affiliation: Astrocent; also active in ET-PP WP10

Role: Communication coordinator

Start Date: 5/01/2025

Effort (FTE): 50%

