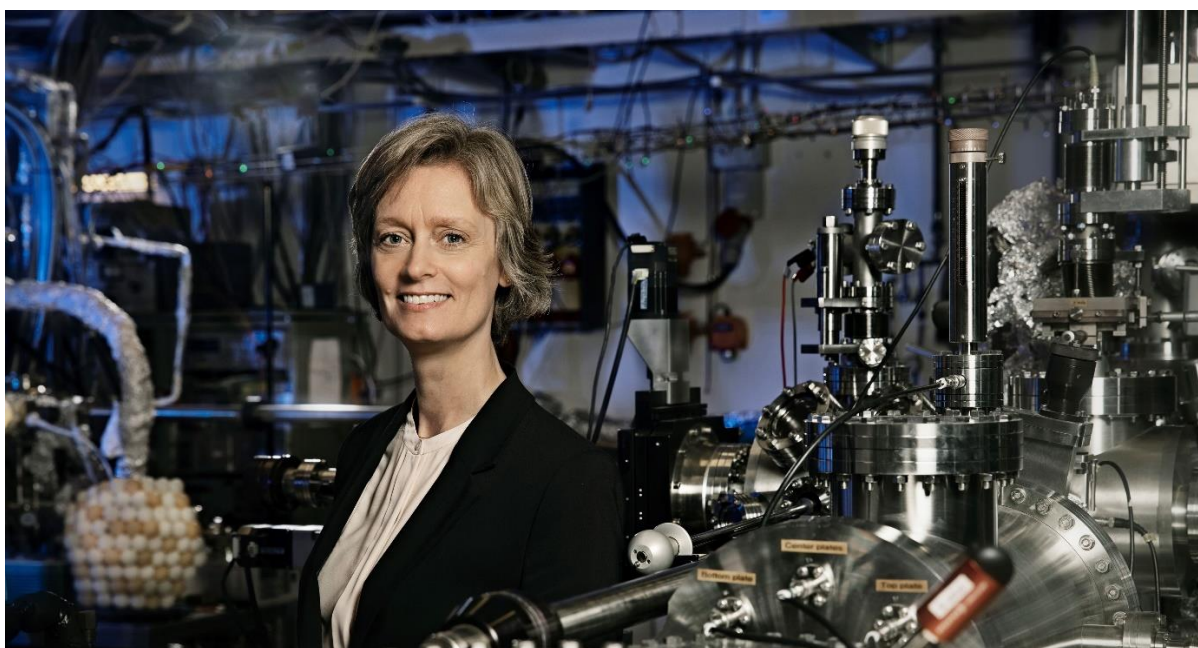


Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen appointed new Director General of the European Spallation Source (ESS)



Credits: Lisbeth Holten

Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen was formally appointed by the ESS Council on 24 April for a five-year mandate, which will start on 1 November 2026.

Besides an internationally recognised career in materials science research, Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen brings fifteen years of experience in leading and managing a large scientific organisation. Since 2011, she has been head of the Physics Department at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), overseeing 300-plus staff to implement and develop the department's research strategy, infrastructure development and educational quality.

“I am honoured to be chosen to lead the European Spallation Source, ESS, as it completes construction and prepares to operate as one of the world's leading neutron sources, supporting a large community of scientists to deliver scientific and societal impact”, expresses **Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen**. She adds, “I am excited to work with the passionate and dedicated staff at ESS to reach concrete and important goals in the coming years including the first scientific results from neutron scattering.”

Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen holds a PhD in physics from DTU and an MSc in Electrical Engineering. She served as professor (with special obligations in Nanoscience and Outreach) and associate professor at DTU. She serves on several boards, including the Fund for the Promotion of International Mobility for Research, initiated by the Villum Foundation, and earlier also on the board of the Independent Research Fund Denmark. She is a member of the External Advisory Panel at the Department of Materials, Imperial College London.

PRESS RELEASE

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In 2019, Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen was appointed as the scientific delegate for Denmark to the ESS Council. She is thus very familiar with the organisation, contributing to its goals at country level, and also through her strong involvement in the transfer of the Data Management and Scientific Computing centre (DMSC) to the campus of DTU in 2024.

Robert McGreevy, chair of the ESS Council, declares, “I am very pleased to welcome Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen as the next ESS Director General. We will certainly miss her as a valued member of the ESS Council, but we will equally value her as DG at this important juncture where ESS transitions from a project to an operating user facility”.

Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen will succeed **Helmut Schober**, who has been Director General since 2021. He comments: “Over the coming years, ESS will enter a crucial phase in the development of its scientific programme. I am confident that Jane Hvolbæk Nielsen’s deep understanding of the academic world, her proven experience in leading a large university department, her strong insight into the research funding and political environment, and her direct knowledge of ESS through her service on the ESS Council uniquely position her to meet the challenges of this phase and lead ESS successfully into its next stage.”

The mandate of ESS Director Generals is five years.

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The European Spallation Source (ESS) is a research facility under construction in Lund, Sweden, with its Data Management and Scientific Computing Centre in Copenhagen, Denmark. When completed, ESS will be a world-leading accelerator-based neutron source to study the structure and behaviour of materials at the atomic level. Around 2000 researchers from academia and industry worldwide are expected to use ESS to learn more about materials and biological systems, unlocking discoveries and driving innovative solutions to tackle global challenges, from energy to healthcare and sustainability.

Built by 13 countries, ESS is one of Europe’s flagship big-science projects, with technical components built at around 40 European research institutes and with the contribution of know-how from more than 100 laboratories and experts worldwide. ESS member states are: the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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