

Dr. Tobias Schüllli,
Scientific Leadership,
Synchrotron Radiation, Materials & Technology
Current location: Grenoble, France

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Profile at a glance

Senior Executive & Scientific Leader

Material scientist and experimental physicist with 25 years of experience in the conception, construction, and management of large-scale synchrotron facilities. Recognized for scientific innovation, strategic leadership, and fostering high-performance, collaborative teams.

Leadership: 10+ years as Group Head and Senior Manager at ESRF, overseeing up to 80 staff and 10 beamlines; participative, empowering management style with a focus on mentorship and cross-disciplinary exchange.

Funding & Strategy: Secured 34 M€ in collaborative grants (7 M€ directly to ESRF) and contributed to the **150 M€ ESRF Phase II Upgrade**; led **4.4 M€ beamline construction project**.

Global Network: Lived/worked in 5 countries; fluent in **German, French, English (C2), Swedish (A2)**; built partnerships across **Europe, Americas, Asia, Australia**.

Science & Communication: 40+ invited/plenary lectures; teaching in **3 languages** at universities of Queensland/Brisbane, Linz/ Austria and summer schools in various countries; **popular science outreach** (schools, industry, public events).

Personal Drive: Former national-level endurance athlete; known for resilience, ambition, and dedication to both people and projects.

Work experience

The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), Grenoble, France (2009–Present)

Group Head, X-ray Imaging and Microscopy (2025–Present)

Lead **80-person multidisciplinary group**, overseeing nine research teams, 10 beamlines and **strategic scientific/operational initiatives** for ESRF's imaging and microscopy portfolio.

Group Head/ Deputy Group Head, X-ray Nanoprobes (2015–2025)

Directed **50-person group**; managed beamline operations, staff development, and **participative management** (recruitment, mentorship, conflict resolution).

Mentored future leaders: S. Leake (ESRF staff), V. Favre-Nicolin (Group Leader, ESRF), M.-I. Richard (CEA team leader & double ERC grantee).

Contributed to ESRF Phase II Upgrade (150 M€), advancing facility capabilities and user access.

Scientist in Charge, Beamline ID01

(2009–present) & Deputy Group Head Structure of Materials (2011-2015)

Proposed, designed, and constructed Beamline ID01 the "microscope for strain and structure" (4.4 M€), enabling nanoscale coherent X-ray diffraction imaging.

Senior Management & Strategic Roles

ESRF Representative, LEAPS European Research Area strategy group; Strategic planning, coordination of European lightsource responses to the European Research Councils' workprogramme **Liaison between Experiments and Accelerator Divisions on long term strategy of the facility**.

Led ESRF's Long-Term Strategy on quantum science & technology; Outreach to shareholders/stakeholders (politicians, industry, member countries).

High-level communicator: Engaged with international partners, research centers, and funding bodies to promote ESRF's mission and secure support.

Reviewer of projects and facilities on an international level (Europe, Singapore, Americas) including DOE facility reviews **Secured 34 M€ in collaborative grants** (7 M€ to ESRF) through grant applications and industrial partnerships.

References:

Dr. Jean Susini

ESRF Director of Research 2015-2021
Director General at Soleil/ Paris
jean.susini@synchrotron-soleil.fr

Dr. Harald Reichert

ESRF Director of Research 2009-2022
Now at DESY/ Germany
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Prof. Helmut Dosch

Senior Advisor at DESY
Chairman of the ESRF Council 2020-2023
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Prof. Robert Feidenhans'l

Niels Bohr Institute Copenhagen
Chairman of European XFEL 2017-2023
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Prof. Philipp Willmott

Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland
Leader SwissLightSource 2.0 science coord.
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Dr. Sakura Pascarelli

Scientific Director, Management Board
European XFEL
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Dr. Marine Cotte

Scientific Group leader ESRF
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Australian Institute for Bioengineering & Nanotechnology, University of Queensland, Australia Visiting Professor 2018- 2019

- Development of synchrotron use in materials synthesis
- Mentoring Post-Docs and PhD students.
- Teaching "X-rays & quantitative analysis of functional materials"

CEA Grenoble

Staff scientist

2006-2009

- Development and extension of X-ray operando MBE growth beamline (BM32/ESRF) for semiconductors, SiGe and GaN growth.
- Technology consultant for XENOCs SA

XENOCs SA

Application engineer

2005-2006

- X-ray optics sales and development; end customer and B2B marketing in North America and Europe

CEA Grenoble

Post-Doctoral fellow

2003-2005

- *In situ* MBE growth studies of SiGe nanostructures. Proposal of a Master topic and PhD thesis on operando growth.

Education

Habilitation

2012

(formal qualification needed to become a university professor)

"In Situ X-ray Investigation of Nanostructures During Growth and Processing", Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria

PhD

2000-2003

Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria on the "Investigation of semiconductor nanostructures by anomalous x-ray diffraction".
Group of Prof. Guenther Bauer

Physics Diploma ("Master thesis")

1999-2000

Max-Planck Institute Stuttgart. 15 months thesis work on MBE growth of metals on oxides, e-beam structuring and X-ray investigations of structural phase transitions.
Group of Prof. Helmut Dosch

University studies

1994-1999

Study of Physics & Mathematics at the University of Stuttgart

Visit of Chinese vice Prime Minister
Hu Chunhua

Visit of French Minister of
Research Frédérique Vidal

Visit of Renault-
Nissan Battery
Research dept.

