

Andersen named associate laboratory director for Neutron Sciences

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Ken Andersen has been named associate laboratory director for the Neutron Sciences Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Credit: ORNL, U.S. Dept. of Energy

Ken Andersen has been named associate laboratory director for the Neutron Sciences Directorate, or NScD, at the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Andersen brings extensive experience to the neutron scattering research and user programs at ORNL. He joined ORNL one year ago from the European Spallation Source in Sweden, where he led the Neutron Instruments Division and oversaw the selection and construction of instruments from conceptual development through design, procurement, installation and commissioning.

He succeeds Paul Langan, who will join the Institut Laue Langevin, or ILL, in France as its new director.

Andersen previously led the Neutron Optics Laboratory at ILL and has commissioned and operated neutron scattering instruments at both ILL and the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in the United Kingdom. He began his career as a postdoctoral researcher at the National Laboratory for High Energy Physics in Japan after earning his doctorate in physics and a bachelor's in physics and mathematics at Keele University, U.K.

"ORNL is a world leader in neutron sciences, and Ken brings a track record of international accomplishment to this critical position," ORNL Director Thomas Zacharia said. "The research conducted at SNS and HFIR is advancing the understanding of materials and informing developments in energy, industry, technology and medicine. We are pleased to have Ken at the helm."

ORNL hosts two of the world's most powerful sources of neutrons for research: the High Flux Isotope Reactor and the Spallation Neutron Source. ORNL is moving forward with plans for the Second Target Station, a third neutron source, to provide transformative new capabilities.

Andersen said he's delighted and honored to have the opportunity to lead the directorate. "My aim is to lead ORNL's neutron user facilities to the highest possible levels of performance and source availability, and help increase their scientific impact even further. I'm very excited about having a part in helping to drive the organization forward."

Discoveries fueled by neutron research at ORNL help scientists answer big science questions and spur wide-ranging innovations including more reliable aircraft and rocket engines; cars with better gas mileage; improved armor for the military; batteries that are safer, charge faster and last longer; stronger glass for mobile devices; and drugs that more effectively treat disease