

“The Importance of being Bloody-minded”

"Nothing is more satisfying than overturning the odds. Expectations that you cannot succeed can be a huge motivation, and so it turned out in the campaign to force a decision to build the European Spallation Source, ESS. ESS is a 1.8 B€ European materials science laboratory now being built in Lund in southern Sweden, but in the context of this meeting that is of secondary importance. In reality ESS is just a surrogate for any large improbable project, and without a strong dose of bloody-mindedness, humour and excessive self-belief no project will succeed. I will try and convey that in my talk."

Short Resumé:

"Colin Carlile was born in north-west England and became an experimental physicist. He obtained a PhD in Neutron Instrumentation from Birmingham University and then spent a post-doctoral year at the EU Joint Research Centre at Ispra in northern Italy. Following that for 20 years he was part of the team that built the ISIS neutron source near Oxford. In 1999 he moved to the Institut Laue Langevin (ILL) in Grenoble as Associate Director, and two years later he became its Director. The ILL is the most powerful research reactor in the world and the flagship of neutron research. In 2006 he moved to Lund in southern Sweden where he was one of the two-man team that succeeded (eventually!) in forcing a decision on the location of the European Spallation Source (ESS). He became the Director-General of the ESS, building up a new European science infrastructure with 17 member countries costing 1.8 B€. Two years ago he formally retired and formed his own company, pursuing a number of different activities. Today he is a Visiting Professor at Uppsala university and a Masters' student in Astrophysics at Lund university. He was delighted to be awarded the Royal Swedish Order of the North Star in 2013."