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Ralph Engel studied physics and mathematics at University of Leipzig and obtained his PhD from Siegen University in the field of theoretical high energy physics. After working as a postdoctoral fellow at DESY Hamburg, Germany he got interested in astroparticle physics and moved to the Bartol Research Institute at the University of Delaware, USA. In 2002 he returned to Germany and is now head of a research group of the Pierre Auger Observatory at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

The scientific interests of Ralph Engel range from classical high energy physics questions such as hadronic multiparticle production at high energy to typical astroparticle physics problems including the theory and measurement of high energy cosmic rays and the search for new detection techniques for extensive air showers. He is specialized in simulating hadronic multiparticle production for various applications and is one of the authors of the Monte Carlo event generators PHOJET, DPMJET, SIBYLL, and SOPHIA.