



## **South African Radio Astronomy Observatory**

### **Postgraduate Scholarship Applications (Honours, Master's and Doctoral Level)**

#### **Application Guide for the 2024 Academic Year**

**Applications must be submitted electronically at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>**

#### **Enquiries regarding SARAO Postgraduate Scholarships**

For Master's and Doctoral applications: Annah Mashemola at

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For Honours applications: Mkhululi Jodwana at [mjodwana@sarao.ac.za](mailto:mjodwana@sarao.ac.za)

#### **Closing date for SARAO Postgraduate Scholarship Applications for the 2024 Academic Year**

Individual universities will set their own closing dates for applications. Find out the closing date from the university where you intend registering for your degree, and ensure you submit your application on, or before that date.

## 1. Eligibility for SARAO Postgraduate Scholarships for the 2024 Academic Year

	Honours	Masters	Doctoral
<b>Nationality</b>	South African citizens and permanent residents	South African citizens and permanent residents, AND citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia	South African citizens and permanent residents, AND citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia
<b>Degree/Research Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Science – Honours: in Physics and Electronics or Astronomy or Astrophysics or Computer Science</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Science - Honours at NASSP (National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme)</li> </ul>	Students who wish to pursue postgraduate research relevant to the scientific and technical goals of the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes – see section 2 for details	Students who wish to pursue postgraduate research relevant to the scientific and technical goals of the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes – see section 2 for details
<b>Minimum Academic Requirement</b>	A minimum average of 65% at undergraduate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum average of 65% at honours level</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum average of 65% at undergraduate level, for a four-year degree</li> </ul>	A minimum of 65% at Master’s level
<b>Research Project</b>	NA	<b>See section 2 of this document.</b> SARAO will only consider Master’s/Doctoral scholarship applications from students who have selected an approved 2024 SARAO postgraduate research project.	<b>See section 2 of this document.</b> SARAO will only consider Master’s/Doctoral scholarship applications from students who have selected an approved 2024 SARAO postgraduate research project.
<b>Age requirement at time of application</b>	28 years old or younger	30 years old or younger	32 years old or younger

## 2. Research Projects for SARAO Master's and Doctoral Level for the 2024 Academic Year

- a. SARAO will **only** consider Master's/Doctoral scholarship applications from students who have selected an approved 2024 SARAO postgraduate research project, and obtained a signed agreement from the relevant supervisor stating that he/she will supervise the student.
- b. All projects approved by SARAO for postgraduate research for 2024, as well as the contact details of the relevant supervisors, are available at: <https://www.sarao.ac.za/students/funding/>
- c. Prior to submitting an application for a SARAO Master's/Doctoral scholarship, you must review the list of approved postgraduate research projects for 2024, and identify a project they wish to pursue for their Master's/Doctoral degree.
- d. Once you have identified a project, you must then contact the supervisor of the project to discuss the project, and determine if you have the required qualifications, skills and abilities to undertake the project.
- e. If the supervisor of the approved project agrees to supervise you for your Master's/Doctoral degree, the supervisor must provide you with a signed letter, on a university letterhead, stating that he/she has agreed to supervise you for the relevant project. **You MUST upload a copy of this letter with their application, as an attachment. SARAO will NOT consider an application if there is no supervision-agreement letter. – See Section 3.**
- f. You must use the details of the research project, as provided on the SARAO website, to complete the “Research Project Information Section” of the application form.
- g. If you are awarded a SARAO Master's/Doctoral scholarship you will have to register at the university where the supervisor of the research project is based, and undertake your degree at that university.

**Note: Supervisors are under no obligation to agree to supervise a student**

## 3. Supporting Documents to be Attached to your Application Form

You MUST attach ALL FOUR listed documents in the **Attachments Section** of the application form.

**IF ANY OF THESE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT ATTACHED, SARAO WILL NOT CONSIDER YOUR APPLICATION!!!!**

### **Document 1: Identity Document or Passport**

- For South African citizens and permanent residents: A copy of your South African ID
- For non-South Africans: A copy of your passport

### **Document 2: University Results**

All your university academic results, from the start of your degree until now, and where relevant for all other degrees completed to date. **Please attached all results as a single PDF Document**

### **Document 3: An updated Curriculum Vitae**

### **Document 4: Letter of Motivation**

Attach your motivation, which must include the information asked for below. Please refer to the relevant academic level when drafting your motivation.

### **Honours Level – Letter of Motivation**

Attach a letter of at least 500 words motivating why you should be awarded a SARAO Honours Scholarship. In this letter you should include the following:

- Your understanding of radio astronomy generally, and more specifically of the MeerKAT and SKA radio telescopes.
- Why you chose to study the degree you have selected.
- Details of academic and other achievements.
- Details of extra-curricular activities you take part in.
- Your personal strengths, passions and career aspirations.

### **Master's Level – Letter of Motivation**

Attach a letter of about 1000 words motivating why you should be awarded a SARAO Master's Scholarship. In this letter you should include the following:

- Your academic progress from undergraduate to postgraduate level.
- Your understanding of radio astronomy generally, and more specifically of the MeerKAT and SKA radio telescopes.
- Why you chose to study the degree you have selected, and how this degree will help you progress towards your ideal career.
- How the research proposed for your Master's degree links to the science or engineering of the MeerKAT radio telescope and/or the SKA radio telescope.
- Details of academic, and other achievements.
- Your personal strengths, passions and career aspirations.

### **Doctoral Level – Letter of Motivation**

Attach a letter of about 1000 words motivating why you should be awarded a SARAO Doctoral Scholarship. In this letter you should include the following:

- Your academic progress from undergraduate to postgraduate level.
- Your understanding of radio astronomy generally, and more specifically of the MeerKAT and SKA radio telescopes.
- A brief overview of your Master's research work.
- How your Master's research work links to the research proposed for your Doctoral degree, and how your Doctoral research will contribute to the science or engineering of the MeerKAT radio telescope and/or the SKA radio telescope.
- Details of your academic, and other achievements.
- Your personal strengths, passions and career aspirations.

#### 4. Structure and Funding Levels for SARAO Postgraduate Scholarship Applications for the 2024 Academic Year

	Honours	Master's	Doctoral
<b>I. Scholarship</b>	R160,735	R189,158	R196,196
<b>II. International Student Fee</b>	NA	Paid in full	Paid in full
<b>III. Travel Grant</b>	NA	R34,000	R41,000
<b>IV. Equipment Grant</b>	NA	R32,000	R46,000
<b>V. Laptop Grant</b>	R10,000	NA	NA
<b>VI. Home Travel Grant</b>	NA	Cost of one return ticket, with one change permitted, per year	Cost of one return ticket, with one change permitted, per year
<b>VII. Repatriation Fee</b>	NA	Paid in full, if required	Paid in full, if required
<b>VIII. Emergency Medical Insurance</b>	NA	Paid in full	Paid in full
<b>IX. Assistive Technology Device</b>	R20,000	R20,000	R20,000

- I. Maximum duration of a SARAO Scholarship
  - a. Honours: One year, however, SARAO will provide two years funding to students who register for the NASSP Extended Honours Course
  - b. Master's: Two years
  - c. Doctoral: Three years
- II. SARAO will pay the international student fee due to the university, for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
- III. Travel grants are awarded annually, for the duration of the scholarship.
  - a. The student must use the travel grant for travel related to his/her research. It is compulsory for a student to travel at least once a year to a conference/workshop for research purposes.
  - b. Travel grants, or any funds remaining from a travel grant, for a particular year, will be carried over to the following year, for the duration of the scholarship.
- IV. The equipment grant is a total amount available for the full duration of the scholarship (i.e. this is not an annual amount).
  - a. The equipment grant is available to the student to support the purchase of equipment required for his/her research.
  - b. Equipment grants, or any funds remaining from an equipment grant, will be carried over to the following year, for the duration of the scholarship.
- V. Laptop grants are available to Honours students.
- VI. SARAO will organise and pay for one return ticket, per year, for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia, to travel to South Africa.
- VII. SARAO will pay the repatriation fee, if required, for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
- VIII. SARAO will pay the cost of emergency medical insurance for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
- IX. Students living with a disability may apply for a grant of up to R20 000. This is the maximum amount allowed during the tenure of the scholarship. An assistive device is defined as any device, product, equipment or tool that is designed or adapted to enable persons with disabilities to participate in activities, tasks or actions including: (i) mobility aids such as wheelchairs, prostheses and crutches as well as service animals (ii) communication aids such as hearing aids, Frequency Modulation (FM) systems; (iii) sensory aids such as white canes; noise reducing headphones and coloured lenses (iv) technology aids such as computers for alternate and augmentative communication, screen readers, magnifiers, texts in audio format (Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the PSET, 2018).