



SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY

MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2021

APPLICATION GUIDE

**READ THIS GUIDE CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING AN
APPLICATION FORM**

1 CLOSING DATE FOR MASTERS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR 2021

Individual universities will set their own internal closing dates for applications. Please find out from the university where you intend registering for your Masters degree, what their internal closing date is, and ensure you submit your application by that date.

2 ELIGIBILITY FOR SRAO MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2021

SRAO WILL CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FROM:

- 2.1 South African citizens and citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia, who wish to complete a relevant Masters degree at a South African university.
- 2.2 Academically excellent students who have completed/are completing an undergraduate or honours degree, which is relevant to the scientific or technical focus areas of SRAO.
- 2.3 Students who have selected a SRAO-approved research project, from the list of approved postgraduate projects for 2021, which are available on the SRAO website (see Section 3 for more details).
- 2.4 Students who have obtained written agreement from the supervisor of the SRAO-approved research project, stating that the supervisor agrees to supervise the student (see Section 3).

3 RESEARCH PROJECTS FOR STUDENTS APPLYING FOR SRAO MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2021

All projects approved by SRAO for postgraduate research for 2021, as well as the contact details of the relevant supervisors, are available at:

<https://www.srao.ac.za/students/funding/>

- 3.1 Prior to submitting an application for a SRAO Masters Scholarship, students must review the list of approved postgraduate research projects for 2021, and identify a project they wish to pursue for their Masters degree.
- 3.2 Once a student has identified a project, he/she must then contact the supervisor of the project to discuss the project, and determine if they (the student) have the required qualifications, skills and abilities to undertake the project.
- 3.3 If the supervisor of the approved project agrees to supervise a student for his/her Masters degree, the supervisor must provide the student with a signed letter, on a university letterhead, stating that he/she has agreed to supervise the student for the relevant project. **The student**

must upload a copy of this letter with their application. SARA O will NOT consider an application if there is no supervisor-agreement letter.

- 3.4 The student must use the details of the research project, as provided on the SARA O website, to complete the “Research Project Information Section” of the application form.
- 3.5 Note: Supervisors are under no obligation to agree to supervise a student.
- 3.6 Students awarded a SARA O Masters scholarship will have to register at the university where the supervisor of the research project is based, and the student will have to undertake his/her Masters degree at that university.

4 MASTERS SCHOLARSHIP STRUCTURE AND FUNDING LEVELS FOR 2021

The funding levels quoted in the table below are the current levels, and may be adjusted to take into account changes in university fees and inflation.

Grant Item	Current Level	Comments
Scholarship	R 142,000 per year	For a Masters degree, scholarships are awarded for a maximum of two years.
Travel grant	R 29,000 per year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel grants are awarded annually, for the duration of the scholarship, which is two years for a Masters degree. 2. The student must use the travel grant for travel related to his/her research. 3. It is compulsory for a student to travel at least once a year to a conference/workshop for research purposes. 4. Travel grants, or any funds remaining from a travel grant, for a particular year, will be carried over to the following year.
Equipment grant	R 27,000 once-off, for the duration of the degree	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The equipment grant is a total amount available for the full duration of the scholarship (i.e. this is not an annual amount). 2. The equipment grant is available to the student to support the purchase of equipment required for his/her research. 3. Equipment grants, or any funds remaining from an equipment grant will be carried over to the following year.

Home travel grant	Cost of one return ticket, with one change, per year	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.
Repatriation fee	Paid in full, if required	SARAO will pay the repatriation fee, if required, for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
Emergency medical insurance	Paid in full	SARAO will pay the cost of emergency medical insurance for students from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
International student fee	R3,750	For non-South African students, SARAO will pay the international student fee due to the university.

5 CONDITIONS OF AWARD OF A SARAO MASTERS SCHOLARSHIP

- 5.1 The duration of a SARAO scholarship is two years for a Masters degree.
- 5.2 Students must be registered as full-time students at the university where their supervisor is based.
- 5.3 Students are required to submit proof of registration at their university, to SARAO. No funds for a scholarship will be released until SARAO has received the proof of registration.
- 5.4 Once SARAO has received proof of registration for a student's first year of their Masters degree, SARAO will pay 100% of the student's scholarship (excluding the travel and equipment grants) to the university. It is the responsibility of the student to manage his/her scholarship funds to ensure that he/she has sufficient funds for one full academic year (twelve months). Under NO circumstances will SARAO release additional scholarship funds to a student.
- 5.5 The second year of a student's Masters scholarship is renewable at the sole discretion of SARAO. Renewal is subject to satisfactory performance, which will be determined through Annual Progress Reports (APR), detailing progress on deliverables as per the original research proposal. In the report, deliverables should be demonstrated by showing evidence thereof e.g. peer-reviewed papers, conference proceedings, developed hardware, preliminary results of simulations or data analysis, etc. APRs must be drafted and submitted to SARAO by the student's supervisor.
- 5.6 Following approval of a student's APR, and on receipt of proof of a student's registration for his/her second year of a Masters degree, SARAO will pay 100% of the student's scholarship

(excluding the travel and equipment grants) to the university. It is the responsibility of the student to manage his/her scholarship funds to ensure that he/she has sufficient funds for one full academic year (twelve months). Under NO circumstances will SARAQ release additional scholarship funds to a student.

- 5.7 Students are required to submit APRs at the end of the second year of their Masters degree.
- 5.8 Students may not hold full-time salaried employment during this scholarship, but may undertake up to twelve hours of work per week. If a student is found to be working for any organisation for more than twelve hours per week, his/her scholarship will be cancelled and he/she will have to refund all payments of the scholarship already received by them (this includes funds paid out from a student's travel and equipment grants).
- 5.9 All research papers published by students must acknowledge the financial assistance of SARAQ. "The financial assistance of the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAQ) towards this research is hereby acknowledged (www.saraq.ac.za)" A copy of research papers published by students must be provided to SARAQ.
- 5.10 Students are required to attend the annual SARAQ Postgraduate Scholarship Conference, and to present their research at the conference.
- 5.11 Following the National Research Foundation's policy, students are allowed to hold supplementary grants or emoluments, during this scholarship, to a maximum of 50% of the SARAQ award, but the student must inform SARAQ via his/her university of such awards or emoluments.
- 5.12 If a student wishes to change his/her research project, field of study, or the university, for which the scholarship was offered, he/she must provide a motivation to SARAQ for approval, prior to any changes. SARAQ is under no obligation to continue to support a student if the changes do not align with the original criteria on which the scholarship offer was made.
- 5.13 Students who do not obtain the degree for which the scholarship was awarded will have to refund all payments of the scholarship already received by them (this includes funds paid out from a student's travel and equipment grants).
- 5.14 On completion of a degree, funded by a SARAQ scholarship, students are required to submit a copy of their degree certificate to SARAQ.

5.14.1 The annual travel grant is available to support travel related to a student's research.

- An application for travel must be submitted to SARAQ, via the university research office.
- To allow for the time taken to process the payment of grants from SARAQ to the university, travel grant applications for international travel should be submitted at least two months before any trip is to be undertaken, and for local travel, at least one month before any trip is to be undertaken.
- Travel grant applications must be endorsed by a student's supervisor.
- The approval of a travel grant application is at the sole discretion of SARAQ.
- The grant includes subsistence and accommodation.
- Unspent travel grant funds will automatically be carried over from one year to the next, for the duration of the scholarship award.

5.14.2 The equipment grant is available to support the purchase of equipment required to enable a student to do his/her research, and is a total amount for the duration of the scholarship.

- An application to purchase equipment using this grant must be submitted to SARAQ, via the university research office.
- The approval of an equipment grant application is at the sole discretion of SARAQ.
- Unless circumstances are motivated as exceptional, SARAQ will NOT approve funding to purchase books, cellular phones, media players, E-readers, printers, digital projectors, iPads or other tablets.
- Unspent equipment grant funds will automatically be carried forward from one year to the next, for the duration of the scholarship award.

6 HOW TO APPLY FOR A SRAO DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP

- 6.1 Applications must be submitted electronically on the NRF Online Submission System at **<https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/nrfmkii/>**
- 6.2 In completing an application form for a Doctoral scholarship from SRAO, you accept the Conditions of a SRAO Doctoral Scholarship, listed in Section 5.
- 6.3 No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.
- 6.4 Successful applicants will be notified by 30 November 2020.
- 6.5 SRAO reserves the right not to accept any application in part or in whole. The decision of SRAO will be final and no correspondence will be entered into after the decision.

7 SRAO CONTACT INFORMATION

Queries with regards to the application requirements or the application procedure, may be directed to:

Dr Mthuthuzeli Zamxaka

Email: mzamxaka@ska.ac.za

Telephone: +27 11 442 2434