



South African Radio Astronomy Observatory
Call for Applications for an Undergraduate Block Grant starting in 2022

Application Guide

Closing date for applications: 31 August 2021

1. SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grants

- 1.1. The objective of SARAQ's Undergraduate Block Grant Programme is to partner with South African universities, to increase the number South African graduates available to pursue postgraduate research in areas relevant to the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes.
- 1.2. Eligible university departments (see Section 2), at South African universities, may apply for a block grant from SARAQ, to provide scholarships to undergraduate students.
- 1.3. Successful university departments will be awarded a grant, which includes funds for student scholarships, as well as for academic support for students who may require additional assistance with their studies.
- 1.4. The selection of the undergraduate students to be funded by a SARAQ block grant, is the responsibility of the relevant university department, however, students selected for the programme, must align with SARAQ's HCD transformation targets (see Section 5).

2. Eligibility for a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant

SARAQ will consider applications from university departments that propose to support between four and eight South African citizens or permanent residents, studying any of the following degrees:

- 2.1. Bachelor of Electronic Engineering
- 2.2. Bachelor of Electrical and Electronic Engineering
- 2.3. Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering
- 2.4. Bachelor of Mechatronic Engineering
- 2.5. Bachelor of Computer Engineering
- 2.6. Bachelor of Science in Mathematics/Applied Mathematics and Physics
- 2.7. Bachelor of Science in Physics and Electronics
- 2.8. Bachelor of Science in Astronomy/Astrophysics and Physics
- 2.9. Bachelor of Computer Science, with co-major in Mathematics/Applied Mathematics

3. Structure of a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant for 2022

- 3.1. Successful university departments will be awarded a grant that includes funds for scholarships (at the same level as SARAQ free-standing undergraduate scholarships), and funds for additional academic support, for students who require assistance with their studies.
- 3.2. The value of the award will be dependent on the number of students to be supported by the grant.
- 3.3. A SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant is for a maximum of four years for Engineering degrees (2022, up to and including 2025), to cover the full duration required by any student entering first year in 2022, to complete a BEng degree by the end of 2025, and three years for Science degrees (2022 to 2024) a BSc degree, to cover the full duration required by any student entering first year in 2022, to complete a BSc by the end of 2024.

4. Evaluation of Applications for a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant for 2022

Applications will be evaluated using the following:

- 4.1. The university department's track record of graduating students, generally.
- 4.2. The university department's track record of graduating Black South African students (African, Coloured and Indian), and Women South African students.
- 4.3. Support systems in place, or to be implemented, at the university, to ensure the success of the students selected for the undergraduate block grant.
- 4.4. Structure of the degree, and its relevance to MeerKAT/SKA science or engineering, or the "ability" of the degree to prepare the students for postgraduate research in MeerKAT/SKA science or engineering.
- 4.5. Availability of postgraduate research in MeerKAT/SKA-relevant science or engineering at the university.

5. Conditions of Award for SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant Programme

- 5.1. The list of students selected by the university to be funded by the block grant, should first be submitted to SARAQ HCD for approval before the students are notified and given award letters.
- 5.2. The students selected by the university must align with SARAQ's HCD Transformation Policy, which provides the following targets for undergraduate scholarship recipients:
 - 100% of scholarships must be awarded to South African students (including permanent residents), of which:
 - 70% to 90% must be awarded to Black South Africans (African, Coloured and Indian), and

- 30% to 50% must be to South African Women
- 5.3. Students selected for the programme must maintain a minimum average of 60% in their mid-year and year-end results. The university is required to submit the students' mid-year and year-end academic transcripts, for evaluation, to SARAQ. Students who do not obtain a minimum of 60% may not be eligible to receive further funding from the programme, unless motivated for by the university, for SARAQ's consideration.
 - 5.4. The grant is renewable each year, at the sole discretion of SARAQ, and is subject to the satisfactory performance of the students.
 - 5.5. In the event that any of the students selected for the programme do not meet the minimum academic requirements, change their degree of study, do not graduate from their degree, or leave the programme for any reason, the university may NOT replace these students with new students.
 - 5.6. If, in the first year of the grant, a university selects less than the number of students to be supported by the grant, the funds not used in the first year of the grant, may be carried over to the next academic year, if approved by SARAQ, for a maximum of one year only.
 - 5.7. If, in the first year of the grant, a university selects less than the number of students to be supported by the grant, the funds not used in the first year of the grant, may be carried over to the next academic year, if approved by SARAQ, for a maximum of one year only.
 - 5.8. The annual grant provided by SARAQ will include scholarship funds, at the same level as freestanding SARAQ undergraduate scholarships, which is R148,714 per student for 2022, as well as a student support grant, which is R14,500 per student for 2022.
 - 5.9. The university must ensure resources and programmes are in place to support students who may require academic support, to maximise the success of the students selected for the programme.
 - 5.10. On completion of studies supported by the block grant, the university is required to submit a copy of the respective student's degree certificate to SARAQ.

6. How to Apply for a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant

6.1. [Download the application](#)

- 6.2. Complete the application and return as a PDF document to Mr. Mkhululi Jodwana, mjodwana@ska.ac.za, by **31 August 2021**.

7. SARAQ Contact Information

Should you have any queries with regards to the application requirements or the application procedure, please contact: **Mr. Mkhululi Jodwana Email: mjodwana@ska.ac.za; Telephone: (011) 268-3412.**