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

Closing date for applications: 10 October 2022

NB: SARAO will only consider applications from Engineering Departments for Undergraduate Block Grants for 2023

1. SARAO Undergraduate Block Grants

1.1. The objective of SARAO's Undergraduate Block Grant Programme is to partner with South African universities to increase the number of South African graduates available to pursue postgraduate research in areas relevant to the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes.

1.2. Successful university departments will be awarded a grant, which will include funds for student scholarships, as well as for a laptop grant per student.

1.3. The selection of the students to be funded by a SARAO block grant is the responsibility of the relevant university department, however, students selected for the programme, must align with SARAO HCD's transformation targets (see Section 5).

2. Eligibility for a SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant

For 2023, SARAO will only consider applications from <u>Engineering</u> departments that propose to support students studying one 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

3. Structure of a SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant for 2023

3.1. Successful university departments will be awarded a grant that includes funds for scholarships (at the same level as SARAO free-standing undergraduate scholarships), and funds for the laptop grant per student.

3.2. The value of the award will be dependent on the number of students to be supported by the block grant.

3.3. A SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant is for a maximum of four years for Engineering degrees, to cover the full duration required by any student entering first year in 2023, to complete a BEng degree by the end of 2026.

4. Evaluation of Applications for a SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant for 2023
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 and Women South African students.

4.3. Support systems in place 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, or the "ability" of the degree to prepare the students for postgraduate research in MeerKAT/SKA engineering.

4.5. Availability of postgraduate research in MeerKAT/SKA-relevant engineering at the university.

5. **Conditions of Award for SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant Programme**
   5.1. In the selection of students to be funded by the block grant, the university must meet the following targets: 100% to South African Students, of which 90% must be awarded to Black South Africans (African, Coloured and Indian), and 50% to South African Women.
   5.2. The list of students selected by the university to be funded by the block grant must be submitted to SARAO HCD for approval, prior to the university notifying the students.
   5.3. Students selected for the programme must maintain a minimum average of 65% in their mid-year and year-end results. The university is required to submit the students' mid-year and year-end academic transcripts to SARAO. Students who do not obtain a minimum of 65% may not be eligible to receive further funding from the programme, unless motivated for by the university, for SARAO's consideration.
   5.4. The grant is renewable each year, at the sole discretion of SARAO, 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 SARAO, for a maximum of one year only.
   5.7. The annual grant provided by SARAO will include scholarship funds, at the same level as freestanding SARAO undergraduate scholarships, which is currently R144,700 per student, as well as a laptop grant, which is currently R10,000 per student.
   5.8. 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.
   5.9. 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 SARAO.

6. **How to Apply for a SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant**
   6.1. Download the application form at: https://www.sarao.ac.za/students/funding/
   6.2. Complete the application form and submit as a PDF document to Mr. Mkhululi Jodwana, mjodwana@ska.ac.za, **by 10 October 2022.**

7. **SARAO 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.**