



South African Radio Astronomy Observatory Undergraduate Block Grant starting in 2025

Application Guide Closing date for applicants: 31 August 2024

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 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 a once-off grant for student laptops.
- 1.3. The selection of the 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 HCD's transformation targets (which will be provided to successful universities).

2. Eligibility for a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant

For 2025, SARAQ will consider applications from university departments that propose to support South African citizens/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
- 2.10. Bachelor of Science in Physics and Electronics / Astrophysics / Computer Science

3. Structure of a SARAQ Undergraduate Block Grant for 2025

- 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 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. The 2025 undergraduate scholarship level is R173 040. In addition to the scholarship, students funded by a block grant are eligible for a once-off laptop grant of R12 000.

3.4. Funding for this programme is for a maximum of four years (2025, up to and including 2028), to cover the full duration required by any student entering the first year in 2025, to complete a B.Eng. degree, or B.Sc. degree, by the end of 2027 and 2028, respectively.

4. Evaluation of Applications for a SRAO Undergraduate Block Grant for 2025

Applications will be evaluated using the following:

- 4.1. University's track record of graduating students, generally.
- 4.2. University's track record of graduating Black South Africans (African, Coloured and Indian), and South African women.
- 4.3. Support systems in place (and the success of these systems), 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 engineering, and 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. How to Apply for a SRAO Undergraduate Block Grant

- 5.1. Download the application form at: <https://www.srao.ac.za/students/undergraduate-block-grant-scholarships/>
- 5.2. Complete the application form and submit as a PDF document to Mr. Mkhululi Jodwana, mjodwana@ska.ac.za, by **31 August 2024**.

6. SRAO 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.**