

Call for applications for the SAAO Prize PhD Scholarship

The South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) invites applications for the SAAO Prize PhD Scholarship from academically excellent students who wish to pursue PhD studies in optical or multi-wavelength astrophysics. Applicants must be South Africans or citizens of other African countries who have, or are studying towards, an MSc degree in physics, astrophysics, or a closely related area, and must be ready to register for a PhD at the start of the 2020 academic year.

The scholarship will be based at SAAO, and provides a stipend of R180 000 per year, as well as support for equipment and travel. The successful applicant will be expected to register at a South African university by end of February 2020. Depending on their choice of project, the student may be free to choose a university, or be required to register at the university of a co-supervisor. The following projects are available in this round:

- Mass Loss, Pulsation and Atmospheric Mixing in Intermediate Mass Stars
Supervisors: John Menzies (jwm@sao.ac.za), Patricia Whitelock (SAAO and UCT; paw@sao.ac.za), and Albert Zijlstra (University of Manchester; a.zijlstra@manchester.ac.uk)
- 3D Simulations of Stellar Interactions
Supervisor: Shazrene Mohamed (shazrene@sao.ac.za)
- Planetary and substellar companions to Planetary nebulae and other post-AGB stars
Supervisors: Brent Miszalski (brent@sao.ac.za) and Rajeev Manick (rajeev@sao.ac.za)
- Transients in the LSST Era
Supervisors: David Buckley (dibnob@sao.ac.za), Patrick Woudt (UCT; pwoudt@ast.uct.ac.za), and Brian van Soelen (UFS; VanSoelenB@ufs.ac.za)
- Vertical structure evolution of spiral galaxy disks using optical and near-infrared integral field spectroscopy
Supervisor: Matt Bershady (mab@sao.ac.za)
- Design, development and commissioning of a fibre slit-mask integral-field unit for SALT prime-focus spectrograph
Supervisor: Matt Bershady (mab@sao.ac.za)

Applicants are encouraged to contact the potential supervisors before applying, in order to find out more about these projects, although they do not need to choose a project at this stage. To apply, send a motivation letter, CV, and academic transcripts to scholarship@sao.ac.za, and arrange for two reference letters to be sent to the same address, by 31 July 2019.

For more information, including project descriptions and an application guide, please visit <https://www.sao.ac.za/scholarships>

