

SAAO Prize Scholarship 2020 Application Guide

Eligibility:

The scholarship is currently open to South Africans or citizens of other African countries who hold, or are studying towards, an MSc degree in physics, astrophysics, or a closely related area (ideally with some astronomy background), and must be ready to register for a PhD at the start of the 2020 academic year.

The PhD scholarship funding is available for 3 years.

Funding Amount: Stipend of R180,000 per year (tuition fees will be covered by SAAO and additional support for travel and equipment will be made available).

Applications Open: 11 June 2019

Applications Close: 31 July 2019

The applicant is expected to take up the scholarship at the start of the 2020 academic year.

Application Procedure:

The applicant should send their CV, a letter of motivation and academic transcript to scholarship@saa.ac.za, and arrange for 2 letters of reference to be sent directly to scholarship@saa.ac.za by the closing date.

The selection criteria will be academic merit, motivation, aptitude for research, transformation considerations, and results of the interview.

Scholarship Rules/Conditions:

1. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to the SAAO for interviews (at the cost of the SAAO) and an offer will be made to the successful candidate within a few weeks of the interviews.
2. Project selection will be done after the shortlisting and interview. Applicants will have the opportunity to meet and talk to the potential supervisor/s during the interview visit.
3. The successful applicant must be ready to start their PhD at the beginning of the 2020 academic year, with their MSc either completed or approval to upgrade to a PhD granted.
4. A maximum of one scholarship will be awarded each year.
5. Funding is limited to 3 years, in which time the degree should be completed.
6. The successful applicant will be expected to register at a South African university and will be required to follow the registration procedures of that university. The choice of university should be discussed and agreed upon with the supervisor and co-supervisors.
7. Funding is contingent on proof of registration from the host university and signing of the SAAO student memorandum of understanding (MoU). The student will be expected to follow the MoU and regulations of their host university, and abide by the SAAO code of conduct.
8. An annual progress report should be submitted, and the student should participate in the PhD Advisory Committee process put in place by the SAAO to ensure that sufficient progress is made each year.
9. The successful applicant should spend a minimum of 60% of their time at SAAO and is required to visit their host university at least once a year.