

Meeting To Plan The Future Of Astronomy In Africa Kicks Off In Cape Town

The Astronomy in Africa Business meeting will be hosted at the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town on 25-26 March 2019. The meeting will focus on strategy, policy, and governance issues related to the field and plan the future of astronomy on the continent. It will also relaunch the African Astronomical Society (AfAS), a professional astronomy society, with a clear mandate.

“This meeting is of particular significance given the growing stature of astronomy on the continent, and the fact that several countries have research facilities and astronomy observatories”, said Kevin Govender, director of the International Astronomical Union’s Office of Astronomy for Development, which is the local organizer.

The discussions will leverage on the massive international projects such as the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) and African VLBI Network which will soon have African countries and scientists leading cutting edge research. These are complemented by capacity building efforts training young Africans in astronomy, engineering and related fields, such as the [DARA Newton Fund program](#). The African science community and international commitment to astronomy in Africa recently received a boost when Cape Town was chosen to host the biggest conference in astronomy, the International Astronomical Union General Assembly (IAU GA), in 2024. This will be the first time that the GA is hosted in Africa since the founding of the IAU in 1919 and presents an opportunity for the continent to demonstrate to the world its prowess in one of the most technical scientific fields.

Around 80 delegates from 20 different countries will be present at the Astronomy in Africa meeting in Cape Town, including astronomy researchers and stakeholders from government and research institutions. Anyone interested in Astronomy in Africa can [provide input online](#).

An informal day of discussions and networking to explore collaborative opportunities between [space and astronomy](#) communities will precede the meeting on Sunday, 24 March.

In addition, media personnel are invited to meet and interact with the African astronomy community on Tuesday, 26 March 2019 between 10:30 - 11:30am at the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town. RSVP to info@astro4dev.org.

The meeting is sponsored by the South African Department of Science and Technology with the support of the National Research Foundation and organized by the IAU Office of Astronomy for Development. It is hosted by the South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town.

Program: <http://africa.astro4dev.org/programme/>

Remote participation: Interested participants from around the world can join the meeting online at <https://zoom.us/j/7022965767> Or via telephone: find your local number at <https://zoom.us/j/7022965767>, Meeting ID: 702 296 5767

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