



SA urged to rally behind SKA project

Barry Bateman | 7 Days Ago

Science and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor on Friday called on South Africans to rally behind the country's bid to host the Square Kilometre Array Telescope (SKA).

The SKA will be the biggest telescope ever built and will allow astronomers to study the universe as it was billions of years ago, even before stars were born.

South Africa and Australia are neck-and-neck in the final stretch of the bid. Pandor says with the country's support, South Africa will win the race.

Lead SA has also called on South Africans to support the bid.

Pandor says although the project will greatly benefit communities around the site in the Northern Cape, it will be a massive boost for the entire country.

"The benefits will be through our ability to offer training and development opportunities for young people," she said.

It will also spark science interest among the youth.

"If Africa gets this bid, we will make astronomy young again," Pandor said.

The project's Adrian Tiplady says this will have a global impact.

"We have actually created a succession plan for the world astronomy community right here in South Africa," he said.

If South Africa wins, construction will begin in 2016.

(Edited by Lindiwe Mlandu)