



SKA SA INVESTS IN THE NORTHERN CAPE





SKA SA invests in the Northern Cape

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The Square Kilometre Array South Africa (SKA SA) project has invested heavily in the Northern Cape province, from upgrading knowledge centres to creating jobs and providing deserving students with much-needed academic funding. With its partners, SKA SA has contributed towards social and technological development in areas such as Carnarvon, Vosburg, Williston, Van Wyksvlei and Brandvlei.

The contributions have been made around five focus areas: investing in the youth, supporting community upliftment programmes, developing small to medium enterprises (SMEs), nurturing learners' talent; and ensuring that communication connectivity is not compromised.

The focused investment in social development in the region of the SKA SA site will ensure that neighbouring communities can fully benefit from the far-reaching astronomy project, through better education and training, investment in small businesses, and increased job opportunities. >>



Investing in the youth

- SKA SA sponsors five matric learners' bursaries to study science and engineering-related fields from 2016. The learners achieved matric exemptions in maths and science, a first for Carnarvon High School.
- SKA SA has awarded more than 40 student bursaries since 2011.
- SKA SA has supported more than 116 Masters students and 52 PhD students as well as funded six research chairs at South African universities.
- SKA SA bursaries have supported the training of seven young people, who are now completing their training at the Losberg site, 90 kilometres outside Carnarvon and will start work in industry once their training is completed. They will work as electricians, fitters and turners; and in instrumentation and control.
- SKA SA has employed four local young people from Carnarvon as interns after they have received training in optical fibre technology.
- So far, SKA SA has spent more than R2.5 million on laptops, training and connectivity, with 366 new computers with state-of-the-art software being donated to schools and the library in Carnarvon.

Supporting community upliftment programmes

- SKA SA has helped to bring a little more colour to Carnarvon as they painted 20 refuse bins with winning colours from an annual art competition for the community.
- The winners of the latest competition has been announced, through which primary school learners, high school learners and non-learners or adults had to submit a 30-word essay on what more SKA SA can do to uplift the community. The prizes included laptops for first prize winners and cash vouchers for second and third prize winners.
- 17 teachers from Carnarvon High School graduated in 2016 after completing the Information Communication Technology for Rural Education (ICT4RED) tablet integrated training, which was provided through a partnership with SKA SA, the CSIR Meraka Institute and the Department of Science and Technology.
- SKA SA has created more than 1000 jobs through infrastructure upgrades and construction on and around the SKA SA site.>>



...SO IN THE SAME WAY IF YOU HAVE LOTS OF DISKS YOU CAN EITHER A LOT MORE INFORMATION FROM OUTER SPACE...

...TRKA... THE... ABIL... ECH...

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Developing small to medium enterprises (SMEs)

- Local business has also been given a boost as SKA SA has partnered with Absa to fund 40 local contractors. These businesses are subcontractors to NMC Civils, the construction company contracted to build the road between Carnarvon and the Losberg site.
- This was preceded by training provided by SKA SA and NMC Civils to 10 local business owners on submitting tenders for the 80 kilometre road upgrade between Carnarvon and the SKA site.
- In November 2014 SKA SA helped to establish the Kareeberg and Karoohoogland Contractors' Forum.

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Nurturing learners' talent

- SKA SA has used its Schools Programme to help to recruit qualified maths and science teachers, construct and equip a Cyberlab and science laboratories, provide role modelling and career guidance, and fund field trips and exchange programmes.
- SKA SA partnered with Teach SA to appoint Itumeleng Molefi to teach mathematics and science at Carnarvon High School. Molefi will be attending the 2016 High School Teacher Programme at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland.
- SKA SA has supported the hosting of a Career Day/Science Exhibition, to which a number of universities and science exhibitors were invited at Carnarvon High School. This was followed by an Internal Science Expo where some of the learners at the school exhibited their projects following the scientific method. This was in preparation for the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists, in which some of the learners will participate.
- As part of Science Tube, also known as the Science Without Borders Festival, SKA SA partnered with the Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory (HartRAO) for an outreach component with the community from Carnarvon.
- SKA SA optical fibre trainee interns hailing from Carnarvon and surrounds, MacCalvin Kariseb, Lourence Malan, Samantha Pieterse and Austin Julius, were roped in to talk to learners and young >>

people about study and career opportunities within SKA SA.

- A week-long Science Spaza was held at Carnarvon Primary School during which the youth, astronomers and hip-hop music enthusiasts got together to advance scientific engagement and development in the community. The learners were engaged on science education and focused on science related challenges affecting communities. The week culminated in a "Music of the Stars" talent show for the community. Learners were required to form pop-groups and perform science-themed songs. The songs were recorded live and will be made available for widespread engagement around the SKA SA telescopes.
- Part of the outreach was an engagement with learners from the Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre in the UK via Skype link-up from Carnarvon, which was filmed by the Children's BBC Newsround team. The team was on a visit to South Africa to film in various locations, and visited Carnarvon, the SKA SA Losberg site and surrounds for footage for four inserts aimed at explaining the SKA SA project to its audience of six to 12-year old children.
- One of the world's foremost scientists, synonymous with making science fun and entertaining for kids, Dr Graham Walker, visited the SKA SA site in the Northern Cape as part of his Science Circus Africa tour. This was coupled by visits to Carnarvon, Sutherland and Williston, where he staged interactive and entertaining science shows for school children in the towns.

Ensuring communication connectivity is not compromised

- SKA SA has connected more than 300 homes with broadband through a partnership with Vox Telecom.

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