



The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)
cordially invites you to a conversation with

Kevin Govender

&

Vanessa McBride

on

Astronomy in Africa

Date: 6 July 2021
Time: 11:00 – 12:00
Venue: Zoom
RSVP: [Click here](#)

Astronomy is one of the most challenging of all scientific endeavours, requiring technologies and skills that are usually beyond the reach of what is currently available. As such it is a field that pushes the boundaries of human capacity and moves us into new realms of discovery, technology and thought. In this talk we will reflect on Astronomy in Africa and explore how this continent has become a global player, if not leader, in this field, and what this means for how the world sees us. We will touch on the exciting science being done in Africa; the incredible infrastructure both current and planned; the vibrant and growing network of African astronomers; and the opportunities presented by events like the General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), which is to be held for the first time in Africa in 2024.



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About Kevin Govender

Kevin Govender is the founding and current director of IAU Office of Astronomy for Development (OAD), established in 2011, now with 11 regional offices and language centres globally. Previously Manager of the Southern African Large Telescope's Collateral Benefits Programme at the South African Astronomical Observatory, and facilitator for the establishment of the African Astronomical Society. He has a background in experimental nuclear physics, with experience in community and school development initiatives in post-apartheid South Africa. Together with the IAU, Kevin is a joint recipient of the Edinburgh Medal, for "the creation and practical establishment of the Office of Astronomy for Development, which integrates the pursuit of scientific knowledge with social development for and with those most in need".



About Dr Vanessa McBride

Vanessa McBride is an astronomer at the Office of Astronomy for Development, where she works towards bridging the gap between the community of professional astronomers and the development world with a view to helping astronomers apply their skills to socioeconomic issues. She has a PhD in Astrophysics from the University of Southampton and her research centres around populations of massive stars and related objects in binaries. She is head of research at the South African Astronomical Observatory and is an adjunct associate professor at the University of Cape Town.

Programme

11:00 – 11:05	Welcome, Background and Introduction Prof Himla Soodyall, ASSAf Executive Officer
11:05 – 11:45	Astronomy in Africa Kevin Govender, IAU Office of Astronomy for Development (20 min) Dr Vanessa McBride, IAU Office of Astronomy for Development (20 min)
11:45 – 11:55	Q&A Facilitator: Prof Himla Soodyall
11:55 – 12:00	Closing Prof Himla Soodyall



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