

SARAO Postgraduate and Post-Doctoral Alumni Tracer Study

Tracing report

Submitted to the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory
By the Human Sciences Research Council
October 2019

Submitted to the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory
By the Human Sciences Research Council
October 2019

Andrea Juan
Lolita Winnaar
Sylvia Hannan
Hilda Watani

HSRC Board: Prof. Mvuyo Tom (Chairperson), Prof. Lindiwe Zungu, Ms Precious Sibiya, Dr Abdalla Hamdok, Ms Nasima Badsha, Prof. Relebohile Moletsane, Advocate Roshan Dehal, Prof. Mark B. Prof. Crain Soudien (CEO)

www.hsrc.org.za

INTRODUCTION

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was awarded the contract to conduct a tracer study of the career movements of 170 of the SARAQ postgraduate and post-doctoral alumni and to investigate the impact of the SARAQ human capacity development programme. This first part of the study involved tracing the identified graduates, and provide information related to the following:

- The highest qualification which these alumni have obtained to date
- The current activity of the alumnus (including employed/studying, job title/program of study, organisation, location of organisation)
- Alumnus' contact information (email address, telephone number and/or social media handle).

The following section details the methodology which was used in the first part of the study.

METHODOLOGY

The HSRC was provided with a database of postgraduate and post-doctoral alumni who participated in the SARAQ human capacity development programme since 2005.

In total, 236 graduates without details rather than 170 were identified from the database.

SARAQ provided some of the following information:

- Name (and nationality, at the start of grant tenure);
- (South African) university where they held the SARAQ grant;
- Name of university supervisor(s) (where this is known);
- Degree/programme for which they were registered (MSc/MEng, PhD, or postdoctoral fellowship);
- Month and year in which grant was awarded; and
- Month and year in which SARAQ last awarded funds for the student/post-doc grant to the university

In order to trace the recipients', several methods were employed simultaneously. These included:

- Professional online platform searches (such as ResearchGate, LinkedIn)
- Social media searches (such as Facebook, Twitter)
- Online searches of their Masters or Doctoral theses
- Online searches of the universities they attended
- Contacting the universities and supervisors of the recipients (information dependent).

During this process a number of spelling errors in names of graduates were identified.

Once this was exhausted a **tracing agency** was employed to find the details of the remaining graduates.

FINAL OUTCOMES

The table below sets out the final figures for graduates who were traced:

Graduates to be traced	Graduates with full information traced	Graduates with limited information traced	Graduates not traced
236	199	22	16

The details appear in an excel spreadsheet. We have included the following information where available:

- Professional online profile (Linkedin/Researchgate etc)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) E-mail Telephone number
- Articles/Theses etc

CONCLUSION

While we were not able to trace the full complement of graduates, 84% were traced, with a further 9.3% traced with some information. The number of graduates traced is also above the number which was initially planned for.