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Towards a Century of Physics in South Africa: Achievements and Advances

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South African physics dates back to 1751 when Nicholas Louis de Lacaille made significant astronomical observations of the southern sky at the Cape of Good Hope. Also, at Cape Town's Royal Observatory, John Herschel began investigating double stars, clusters, and nebulae between 1834 and 1838. In the second half of the 19th century, geomagnetic and surveying work was introduced, and several universities and colleges were established. Following the establishment of the mining industry in the early 20th century, physics research in several universities in the country gained popularity.

In 1923, South Africa became a founding member country of the IUPAP, bringing physics to international prominence. South Africa has witnessed tremendous growth in physics, including international collaborations, research institutes, infrastructures, facilities, scientific innovations, discoveries, and inventions. In this study, we present an overview of the significant achievements and innovations made by South African physicists between 1920 and the current century as a result of the study of physics.

Apply to be considered for a student ; award (Yes / No)?

Yes

Level for award;(Hons, MSc, PhD, N/A)?

Hons

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