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## The Virtual Observatory - A New Era for Astronomy Education

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### Abstract content <br> &nbsp; (Max 300 words)

The Virtual Observatory (VO) is a powerful medium of training as it brings vast astronomical resources, along with very easy to use but highly sophisticated techniques. It allows students and teachers to conduct highly informative experiments/exercises with relatively simple and inexpensive tools. NRF has approved to establish South African Virtual Observatory (SAVO) which has already started programmes to train students within the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme (NASSP) and has developed several student projects with the help from other VO projects across the globe. The SAVO aims to help other institutes and universities within South Africa and Africa to develop similar student projects with help from IAU Office of Astronomy for Development (OAD) hosted at SAAO. These projects demonstrate the latest, interesting results in astronomy and at the same time expose the students to modern developments taking place in the astronomy as well as IT domains. The projects deal with different astronomical topics ranging from our solar system to the most distant galaxies. They are developed in such a way that they can be adapted for students with different backgrounds in science. The student projects were applied at the NASSP summer school and NASSP honours course with great success. We intend to run a series of workshops within South Africa and Africa with the intention of providing access to the huge collection of astronomical data by making it understandable for students interested in Astronomy. Our goal is to make the VO a standard with a set of dedicated tools and exercises which teachers at the universities can use to introduce the knowledge and beauty of the sky which is hidden behind huge amounts of data.

### Apply to be<br> considered for a student <br> &nbsp; award (Yes / No)?

No

### Would you like to <br> submit a short paper <br> for the Conference <br> Proceedings (Yes / No)?

No

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