

HEASA2023

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Takalani Nemaungani //
Department of Science and Innovation

Session 1 //
Wednesday, 6 September @ 08:35 SAST

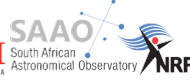
Takalani Nemaungani is a leader in global astronomy initiatives and holds the position of Chief Director of the Astronomy portfolio at South Africa's Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). Astronomy is a flagship project receiving the single largest investment in the budget within the DSI.

Takalani, an engineering graduate from the University of Witwatersrand, began his professional journey in 1994. He made significant progress in the private sector, working with reputable companies like Samancor and Sasol. Later, he transitioned to the CSIR, where he made remarkable contributions to the field of astronomy.

His work in astronomy transcends the borders of South Africa, and his impact is felt across the continent and internationally. Takalani's leadership and involvement are evident in cornerstone projects such as the Square Kilometer Array (SKA), the African Very Long Baseline Interferometry (AVN), and the HESS telescope. Moreover, he has been instrumental in organizations like the African Astronomical Society (AfAS) and the IAU-OAD. He has also been a beacon for funding and strategic support, crucially bolstering the multiwavelength astronomy community in his home country.

On the international stage, he serves as the secretariat for the prestigious BRICS Astronomy Working Group, an alliance of the leading emerging economies. Before ascending to his current role in Astronomy, Takalani showcased his adeptness in global collaboration as the Director of the Global Projects unit in the International Cooperation and Resources division of DSI. He championed as the Project Coordinator of the Promoting Africa-Europe Research Infrastructure Project (PAERIP) there, further amplifying his legacy in science and innovation.

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