



NCRST
NATIONAL COMMISSION
ON RESEARCH SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

WORLD SPACE WEEK

4 – 10 October 2021

...Namibia joins over 90 other countries around the world to celebrate the World Space Week 2021...



About the World Space Week

The World Space Week (WSW) is an annual event celebrated globally between 4 to 10 October. The WSW is a United Nations (UN)-declared event which is celebrated to recognize the importance of space, and specifically science and technology, to the betterment of humanity.

The theme for this year's WSW is **"Women in Space"**. This is to honor the gender diversity in the space industry and to increase the participation of women. Just over 20% of the entire space industry are women.

Namibia's Women in "Space"

While definite statistics on Namibian women in space is scant, the country has recently seen an increase in women graduates in fields related to space sciences and technology, both from Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the University of Namibia (UNAM). Some members of the NUST alumni have graduated with Masters in Satellite Engineering. Remarkably, this year has seen the first female Namibian graduating with PhD in Space Physics, a lecturer in the School of Science at UNAM.

Space Science and Technology's relevance to Namibia

Namibia aspires to become one of the global players in space sciences and technology. As such, Namibia has recently launched its very first policy on Space Science and Technology (SST) in June this year (available at <https://ncrst.na/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/>). The vision of the SST Policy is "Coordinated space science and technology programmes that ensure optimal and sustainable use of space resources contributing towards socio-economic growth and development of Namibia."

Namibia's good atmospheric conditions such as clear skies and limited light pollution makes it ideal for earth observation, navigation, astronomy and communication related activities and research. Further, Namibian researchers are actively involved in studying the most violent processes in the universe with the High Energy Stereoscopic System

(H.E.S.S.) telescopes (<https://www.mpi-hd.mpg.de/hfm/HESS/>), and are participating in other projects such as the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT), the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) (see <https://www.skatelescope.org/the-ska-project/>), African Very Long Baseline Interferometry Network (AVN), and the Africa Millimetre Telescope (AMT). Computing powers provided the Higher Performance Computers (HPC) at our local universities enable researchers to handle data-intensive challenges and computations in science and engineering.

Lastly, Namibia benefits from SST in various ways. Namibia Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) under the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) has improved access and use of geoinformation in planning, mapping, disaster risk management, crime prevention and tracking, logistics, and others. Regular weather forecasting, telecommunication and broadcasting are all enabled by SST. Critical industries such as health also benefit from SST spin-off technologies, i.e., technologies that were originally developed for use in space, and were later adapted to improve people's health on Earth.

For Learners / educators

Interested teachers can download the "World Space Week: Heinlein Teacher Guide", available at: <https://www.worldspaceweek.org/wp-content/uploads/> for various activities to stimulate the interest of learners in SST.

For higher education, local universities such as NUST and UNAM offer courses related to SST, including Geoinformation, Astronomy and Engineering. Please visit their respective websites for more information.

*****Anyone interested in learning about hands-on astronomy by gazing at the skies with telescopes is invited to join the Namibia Scientific Society for the Southern Star Party at Gross Barmen this weekend (Oct 8-10):**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/236826651775377> .

ISSUED BY: The National Commission on Research, Science and Technology, In collaboration with:

The University of Namibia

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