



Dr. Jarita Holbrook

AAAS Fellow

Office of International Science and Engineering

Office of Director

Class of 2016-2017

Jarita Holbrook is an associate professor of physics at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. While an AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow in NSF's Office of International Science and Engineering, her goals are to become a Brexit expert, learn another language, and help support some of the cross-agency funding mechanisms.

She is an expert on African Indigenous Astronomy and the principal investigator of the Astronomy & Society group at UWC. Jarita is a Californian holding a B.S. degree from Caltech in physics, a M.S. from San Diego State in astronomy, and a doctorate from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in astronomy and astrophysics. She was a postdoc at UCLA and the Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte (History of Science). Her intellectual interest in African cultural astronomy has resulted in academic positions in applied anthropology and women and gender studies before her returning to physics. Additionally, she is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose works focus on minority astrophysicists. She has recently completed the documentary *SKA ≥Karoo Radio Telescope*, a film capturing the thoughts of community members living near the core Karoo desert site of the Square Kilometre Array – the largest radio telescope being built in the world. In addition to living abroad in Germany and South Africa, Jarita is a Fiji Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) where she taught math, physics, and chemistry at Ratu Navula Secondary School.

Jarita Holbrook's hobbies include writing fiction, fine dining, running, dancing, and, of course, travel.