

Bernard Fanaroff FRS is a South African astronomer and trade unionist, and a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS).

While working on his PhD at the University of Cambridge, in collaboration with British astronomer Julia Riley, he made a breakthrough in the classification of radio galaxies known as the Fanaroff–Riley classification, which is used to classify radio galaxies based on the radio luminosity of their emissions.

After completing his PhD in 1974, Fanaroff returned to South Africa and lectured in Astronomy at WITS for two years. He resigned from the university at the end of 1976 to work as an organizer for the Metal and Allied Workers Union. He became involved in labour unionism, became a trade unionist and served as the national secretary for the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa. He joined the government as a Deputy Director-General in the Office of President Nelson Mandela from 1994–1999. He served as head of the Office for the Reconstruction and Development Programme; Deputy director-general of the Department of Safety and Security (1997-2000); Chair of the integrated Justice System Board and Steering Committee for Border Control. In May 2010 he was appointed a Non-executive director of Eskom.

In 2003 Fanaroff was appointed the Project Director of South Africa's Square Kilometre Array (SKA) bid, a position he held until his retirement in 2015, although he still continued on in an advisory capacity.

He is a recipient of the Order of Mapungubwe: Silver (2013); a Lifetime achievement award by the National Research Foundation (2018); and Honorary doctorates from six South African Universities. In 2019 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He is also Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, a member of the International Astronomical Union, and a Founder member of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

