



National Association of Students of Architecture
Writing Architecture Trophy 2025-26
Catalyse



About NASA India



The National Association of Students of Architecture (NASA, India) is the world's largest architectural student-run organization. Founded in 1957 with just seven colleges, it has grown to include over 350+ colleges and more than 66,000+ students, making it a significant voice for architecture students across India. The association aims to provide a platform for learning and interaction among students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

NASA India functions as a non-profit and non-political organization. It is officially registered under the Societies Act of 1860, with its headquarters at the Department of Architecture, School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi.

NASA India organizes various events, programs, and competitions throughout the year. These include partnerships with organizations like HUDCO, GRIHA, and CPK for design trophies. There are 11 design trophies in total, with the Annual NASA Design Competition being the flagship trophy and offering students a platform to showcase their creative talents and design innovations. We have partnered with the Council of Architecture, India, for the Student of the Year trophy as well.

The association's flagship event is the Annual NASA Convention (ANC), the world's largest gathering of student architects. This event attracts over 4000+ students participating in workshops, masterclasses, and programs led by more than 200 esteemed architects. Additionally, there are regional Zonal NASA Conventions held annually.

NASA India's initiatives extend beyond traditional academics. The summer-winter school programs offer immersive experiences that enhance students' practical skills and broaden their educational horizons. The "Insider" initiative allows students to engage directly with experienced architects, gaining insights into office management and professional practice. This interaction fosters mentorship and provides valuable guidance. The Louis I Kahn Documentation series aims to preserve and disseminate architectural knowledge by documenting significant but often overlooked sites.

NASA India hosts programs both nationally and internationally, in countries like Japan, Sri Lanka, the USA, and South Korea. These experiences provide students with enriching learning opportunities and enhance their networking capabilities.

The NEXUS is an informal meeting ground where students can form bonds, share ideas, and collaborate. It emphasizes learning, mentoring, and networking, allowing students to showcase their talents and develop new ideas with peers from around the globe. We have also expanded into podcasts with our Spotify exclusive, The Archade.

For more information, you can visit NASA India's website - <https://www.nasaindia.co/>
Our social media pages are [@wenasaindia](#) and [@mynasaindia](#) on Instagram.



Catalyse - Our Annual Theme

For nearly seven decades, NASA India has stood as a movement - built by students & led by students. As we step into the 68th year of our association's existence, I call upon the stakeholders to honour the legacy not by looking back, but by asking what we can spark next.

NASA India has always been more than just an association. It's been a force: a surge of youthful energy, ideas, voices, and action. This year, we recognise and compound over the force for what it truly is.

In the grand reaction of change, whether in our built environments, our learning systems, or the profession itself, we, the students, are the accelerators. With over 66,000 students across the country, our numbers are not just statistics. They are the untapped potential of a generation ready to shape what's next. This year, we reflect on the immense power of coming together - not just to participate, but to instigate. A catalyst doesn't wait for change. It creates movement, breaks inertia, and opens new paths. **NASA India today stands not just as a platform for learning and collaboration, but as an agent of impact - nationally & globally.** One that ignites bold conversations, challenges outdated practices, and pushes the profession toward more inclusive, ethical, and relevant futures.

So what does it mean to catalyse?

It means taking responsibility.

It means using architecture as a lens to rethink society, equity, and the future.

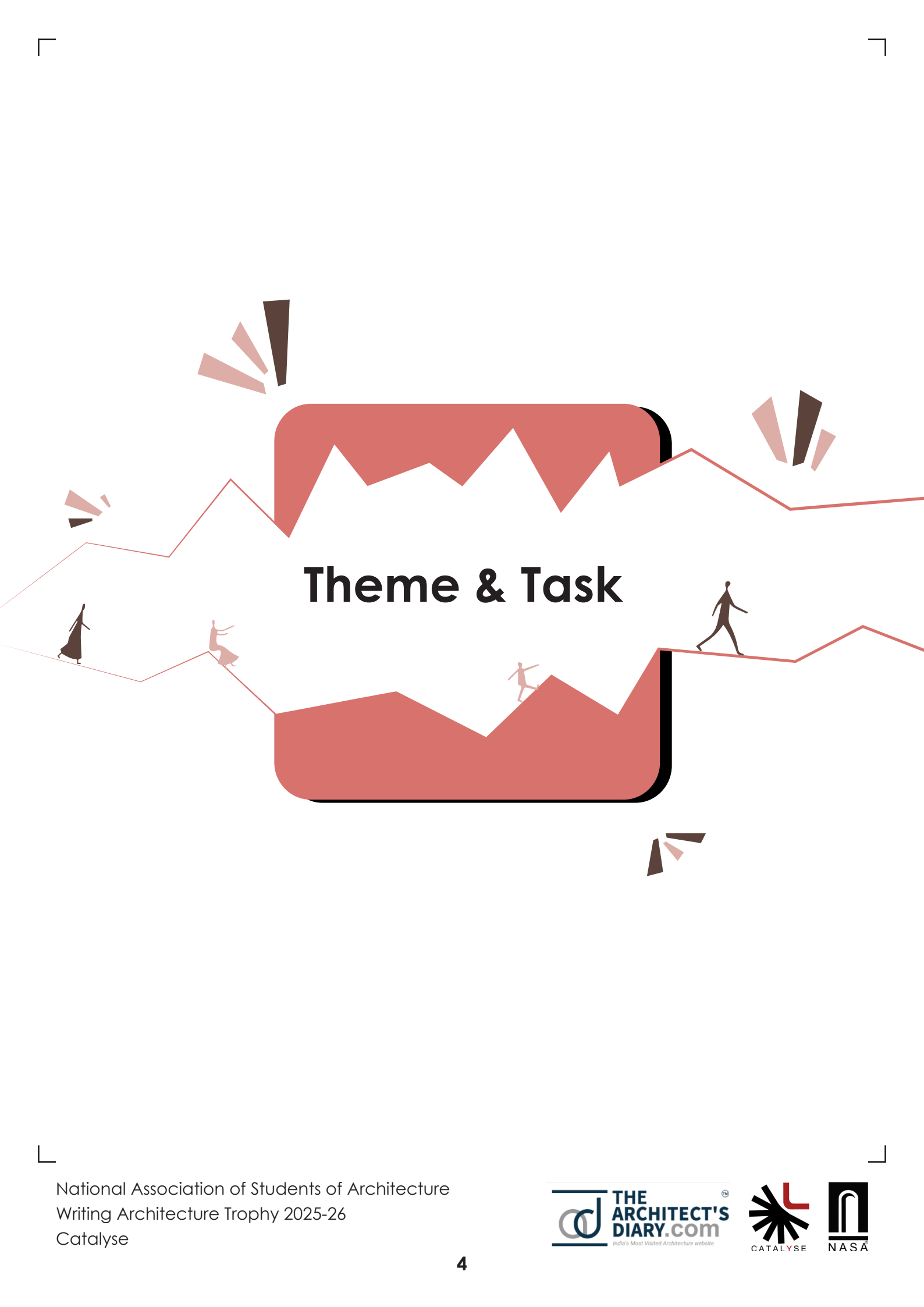
It means challenging what no longer serves us.

It means questioning the boundaries of architecture and expanding its purpose.

This is a call to all students, designers, thinkers, makers, rebels:
Catalyse conversations, communities & the future.

Because this is our moment in the reaction.
Let's use it to spark something irreversible.

Come, let's **CATALYSE** the reaction that serves the greater good!



Theme & Task

Who is an architect? Catalysts of change at the edges of practice

In India, architecture is a recognised profession, defined and regulated by the Council of Architecture (COA) under the Architects Act of 1972. The Council describes it as “the process and the product of planning, designing and constructing buildings and related environments that provide us with the physical space we live in.” By law, only those registered with the COA may use the title and style of ‘Architect’ and practise formally, a distinction that carries both privilege and responsibility. Each year, thousands of students graduate from more than 360 accredited institutions with a five-year professional degree, entitled to register with the Council and enter the profession.

Yet not all who are trained as architects go on to build. Some step away from the discipline altogether. Many move into diverse fields owing to an expansive education that fosters critical thought, spatial sensibility, visual literacy, and an ability to hold together systems of great complexity. And there are those who remain connected to architecture, but through less conventional routes: research, teaching, publishing, governance, communication, development, among many others. Increasingly, such directions are not only possible but also acknowledged as credible choices. These practitioners may not lay brick or pour concrete, yet they continue to contribute to the discipline in ways that cannot be ignored.

This widening of professional trajectories prompts a series of questions: *Can those who engage from the edges, through writing, policymaking, or civic debate, still be considered architects? If they do not design structures but instead give form to ideas, communities, or cultures, are they extending the practice or stepping outside it? Can the profession, as defined by the COA, contain this breadth, or does Architecture itself stretch beyond the figure of the licensed architect? Who, in this expanded field, claims authorship, and by what measure?*

Architecture, after all, has always been more than a credential or a licence. It is also a way of thinking: attentive to the present, alive to the future, alert to the contradictions in between. The skills nurtured through its study—contextual analysis, speculative imagination, the ability to build both arguments and spaces—often surface far from construction sites. They appear in classrooms where knowledge is exchanged, in exhibitions and journals where narratives are crafted, in civic forums where questions of land and housing are debated, and in images and films that influence how the built environment is remembered. Each of these sites perhaps reveals a different form of practice, suggesting that Architecture may be as much about shaping discourse as it is about making space?

What appears secure at the centre often shifts because of movements at the edges. Those who practise differently do not abandon the discipline, they return to it with questions that unsettle convention and open fresh directions. Their work may not always be framed as traditional practice, yet it contributes in ways that reorient priorities and expand the discipline's reach. From these positions come insights that situate Architecture within wider cultural, political, and social frameworks. Whether regarded as central or peripheral, such roles keep the field alive to change.



The 68th Year Writing Architecture Trophy invites you to reflect on these questions. Your essay may be a critique, a narrative, a personal reflection, or a speculative story. It may address one provocation or several, depending on the path you wish to take. Above all, it should carry the clarity of your own voice, which must be thoughtful in approach, critical in stance, and imaginative in scope.

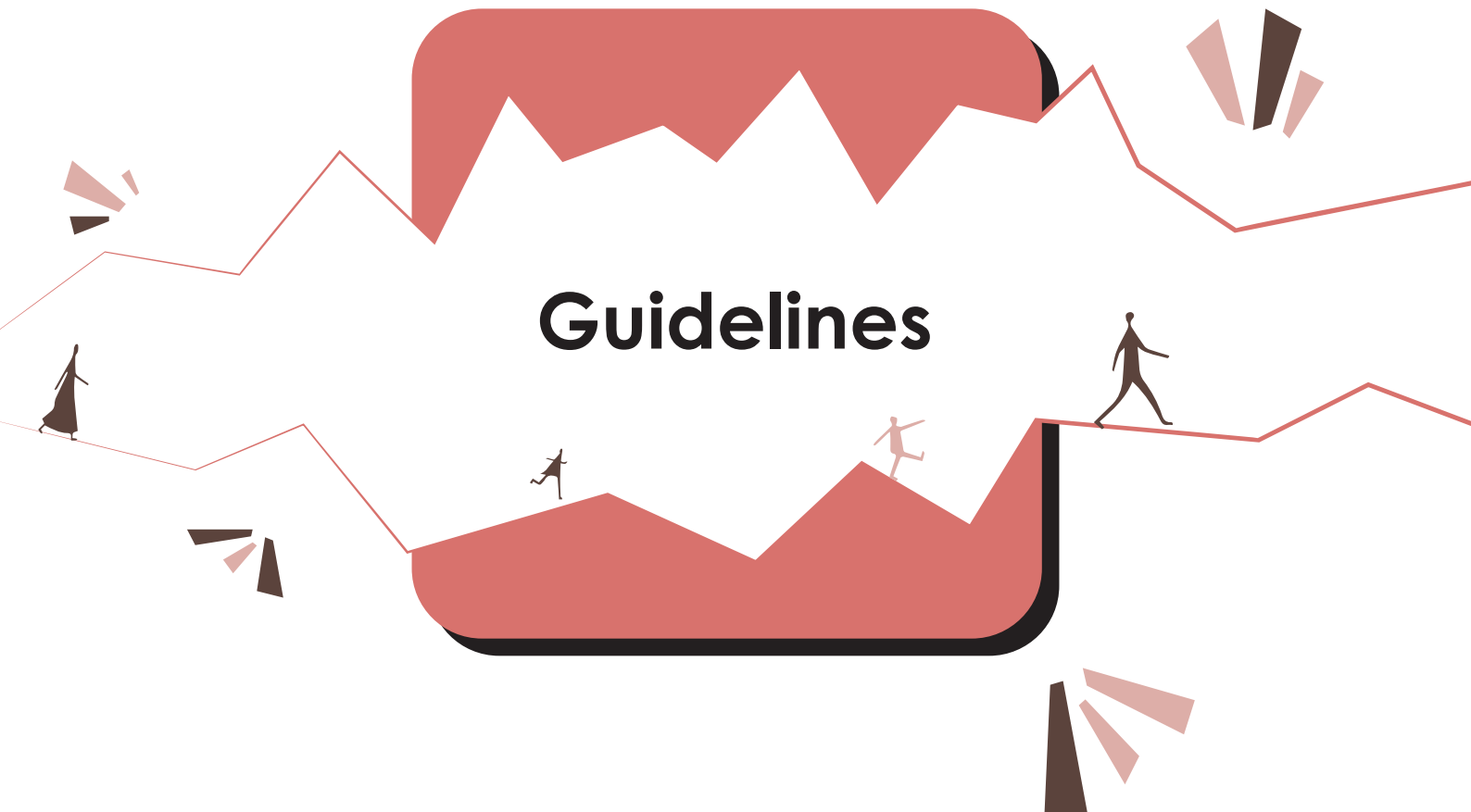
To write about architecture may be an opportunity to practise it differently. Your words, in their reflections and provocations, could themselves act as catalysts, opening new horizons for what it might mean to be an architect today.

Key Provocations

- Who is the architect? Who has the right to call themselves an architect, and what makes that claim legitimate?
- How can architectural practice be defined? If some architects shape buildings while others shape ideas, how might we understand the act of practising Architecture today?
- Can the profession, as defined by the COA, contain the breadth of these practices, or does Architecture stretch beyond the figure of the licensed architect?
- Are critiques, policies, images, and debates as essential to Architecture as drawings, contracts, and construction?
- What new futures might open if practice shifts to the edges instead of holding only to the centre?
- Does architectural education respond to the present needs or definitions that architecture discipline carries?
- And in this expanded field, how do you imagine your own path—as a practitioner, a thinker, or perhaps both?



Guidelines



Submission Requirements

Your essay may be a critique, a narrative, a personal reflection, or a speculative story. It may address one provocation or several, depending on the path you wish to take. Above all, it should carry the clarity of your own voice, which must be thoughtful in approach, critical in stance, and imaginative in scope.

The Two-stage submission process:

- **Stage 1 Submission:** Abstract of the Entries are to be submitted in the form of a single pdf file (maximum size: 10MB and maximum 250 words. These will be evaluated and shortlisted by jurors.)
- **Stage 2 Submission:** Shortlisted entries would be given a fixed time period in which an entire essay must be submitted. The essay shall be approximately 2000 words.

Checklist for submission

1. Write-up PDF of **not more than 10MB** in size
2. Original Copy of Authentication Letter **not more than 10MB** in size
3. Original Copy of Declaration Letter **not more than 10MB** in size

Sheet & NASA India Logo Guidelines

Failing to comply with any of the guidelines may lead to disqualification at the discretion of the executive council.

- NASA India Internal Logo shall always be placed on the right-hand bottom corner of the sheet.
- NASA India logo should not be merged, overlapped etc. with any sort of text, graphic, image, etc.
- NASA India logo should be in true black with a perfectly white background.
- **Sheet Template to be followed is available in the drive link - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1F82YkD2ZzFs3xCeMXg_pVnbBaVFcLY89?usp=sharing**



General Submission Guidelines

Failing to comply with any of the guidelines may lead to disqualification at the discretion of the executive council.

- All text should be in English.
- In case matter is sourced from anywhere due credit to the original writer should be given in Harvard style referencing only.
- The soft copy (non-editable format) submission along with authentication letter, declaration letter and any other required documents prescribed in the submission requirements should be uploaded on the website by the submission deadline.
- The soft copy file should not be corrupted or incomplete or in low resolution.
- It is mandatory to produce the original copy of the Authentication Letter for each entry (entry code should be mentioned if allotted) with the name of participant(s) and stating the unit will abide by whatever may be the final results and also agree that this entry is a property of both the institute and NASA India.
- The Authentication Letter should be signed by the HOD/Principal/Director of the unit. Failing to which the entry will be strictly disqualified.
- It is mandatory for the colleges to produce the original copy of the Declaration Letter for each entry (entry code should be mentioned if allotted) signed by the participants stating the work submitted is genuine and they have endorsed copy- rights for the same and to adhere by all the rules and regulations, jury process and the results.
- Authentication & Declaration formats to be followed are available in the drive link - <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mschiSd0GIM4gjzg5914bdkUi54ZzluS?usp=sharing>
- The Prize Money Authenticating Letter signed by the Director/ Principal / HOD in the college letterhead specifying the account details (Account Name, Account Number, Bank Name, IFSC Code) in which the money is to be credited for each entry (entry code should be mentioned if allotted) shall be collected at a later stage.
- Any misconduct such as exposing identity through college name/ stamp participant(s) name or college code on the submission template will be disqualified.

Important Information

- **Maximum (2) participants only per entry for the 68th Year Writing Architecture Trophy.**
- **A participant can submit only one entry, whether as group of two or individually** for the 68th Year Writing Architecture Trophy.
- No limit to the number of entries per unit for the 68th Year Writing Architecture Trophy.
- Queries to be put forward through trophy page on the website (<https://www.nasaindia.co/Trophy?groupid=2>).
- Registration for one/multiple entries should be done by the **Unit Secretary through the Z-ID** in the NASA India website before the registration deadline.
- Registration of the trophies will be final and cannot be changed or withdrawn henceforth.
- Late Registration & submission will not be entertained, henceforth the defaulters shall be disqualified.

Important Dates

Release of Brief:

12th October 2025, Sunday

Queries Deadline:

26th October 2025, Sunday 1800 Hrs IST

Registration Deadline:

31st October 2025, Friday 1800 Hrs IST

Stage-1 Submission Deadline:

10th November 2025, Monday 1800 Hrs IST

Stage-2 Submission Deadline:

Will be announced along with shortlisting



Prize money of **1.5 Lakh**
INR is allotted

The prize money will be divided according to the number of Citations and Special Mentions based on the jury.

Prize Money

Moderator



Mrinalini Ghadiok

Mrinalini Ghadiok is an architect, writer, and design culturist with over two decades of experience across architecture, editorial, and cultural programming. Her multidisciplinary practice sits at the intersection of critical inquiry and creative storytelling - shaping narratives that reveal the deeper intelligence behind design and provoke meaningful dialogue.

Through long-form writing, curation, and communication strategy, she collaborates with architects, studios, and cultural organisations to articulate ethos, build voice, and connect ideas with audiences. Her work is driven by empathy, editorial precision, and a belief in the power of conversation to shape more inclusive and intelligent futures.

Recognised among 80 women architects 'Shaping the Built' at the 2023 Indian Art, Architecture & Design Biennale, her current focus lies in writing, consulting, and curating across platforms that seek to make a lasting cultural impact.



Sponsored By



The Architect's Diary

Established in 2016, The Architect's Diary envisioned transforming the Indian creative community through the digital forum, a domain then largely untapped. The Architect's Diary now has a digital footprint of 250M+ on their effortfully built website, social media platforms, and other assets with more than 1M+ readers on the website monthly.

Beginning as a digital forum, TAD has grown into a multifaceted ecosystem that extends across print, digital, and experiential initiatives. Its website serves as a dynamic archive of projects, insights, and thought leadership, while its strong presence on social media channels and Pinterest fosters a global dialogue and provides daily inspiration for designers, students, and enthusiasts alike.

Beyond digital presence, TAD actively nurtures design community connections through Elev8, a platform that brings together architects, designers, and design collectives to showcase products, ideas, and innovations in architecturally rich, curated settings. With Archioo, an ultimate destination for sourcing interior products. With 10000+ products by 100+ product designers. Its flagship TAD Print Magazine extends this ethos into a collectible format, delivering thoughtfully curated content with design precision.

All the Best !

Don't forget to follow our social media handles!
Visit them by clicking the icons below



www.nasaindia.co