68TH YEAR
ANDC TROPHY

National Association of Students of Architecture
Annual NASA Design Competition 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!

Introduction

"Conversations with the Context"
Responsibility | Restraint | Resilience

Human settlements have historically emerged on flat and stable terrain. Yet, India's mountainous regions, particularly the Himalayan belt shelter some of the nation's most vital ecological systems, including dense forests, rich biodiversity, snow-fed river origins, and deeply rooted cultural landscapes. These terrains are not only environmentally invaluable but also geologically young and inherently fragile.

Architecture, by nature, intervenes in land. It cuts, reshapes, and redirects natural systems. In sensitive hill environments, such interventions carry amplified consequences such as landslides, soil instability, disrupted hydrology, ecological loss, and erosion of cultural memory.

The 68th Year Annual NASA Design Competition invites students to confront this reality. It urges participants to reimagine architecture not as an act of dominance, but as an ongoing dialogue with land, climate, ecology, culture, and community. This brief challenges future architects to reconsider what it truly means to build responsibly in landscapes where errors are irreversible and restraint is essential.

Responsibility | Restraint | Resilience

Context is not a backdrop. It is an active, living system.

This competition positions context: physical, ecological, cultural, climatic, and ethical as an equal participant in the design process.

"Conversations with the Context" encourages architecture that listens before it speaks, adapts rather than dominates, and responds rather than imposes. The theme foregrounds the idea that in fragile environments, especially hills and slopes, architecture must negotiate its presence rather than assert it.

Objectives

The competition aims to:
- Foster a deep understanding of context-responsive architecture in environmentally sensitive terrains.
- Encourage awareness of the ecological, cultural, and ethical implications of built environment.
- Demonstrate how architecture can create spaces for reflection and dialogue while exercising environmental restraint.
- Translate these ideas into a built form that can be experienced, occupied, and critically evaluated.
- Instill accountability and responsibility in architectural decision-making.

The Task

The Design Challenge

Participants are required to design a Centre for Contemplation and Conversation, a place dedicated to pause, reflect and for collective engagement of the society. The Centre may function as a research and inquiry-oriented institution exploring environmental degradation, human impact on natural systems, and pathways toward more responsible ways of living.

Rather than a singular architectural built form, the project must unfold as a carefully choreographed sequence of spaces, ranging from open to semi-open to enclosed. The form, scale, and relationships of these spaces must emerge directly from the site's natural, social, and ecological conditions.

The Centre should support both individual introspection and collective exchange. Quiet, inward-looking spaces must coexist with areas for discussion, debate, learning, and shared reflection. Architecture is expected to mediate between people and landscape, knowledge and experience, contemplation and conversation, remaining inseparable from its context and purpose.

Programme Requirements

1. Capacity
- The space may be occupied as one large gathering or by multiple smaller groups simultaneously.

2. Sequence of Spaces
- The design must include a clear spatial progression through:
    - Open spaces (fully exposed to landscape and climate)
    - Semi-open spaces (shaded, filtered, transitional)
    - Enclosed spaces (protected, introspective, climate-moderated)
- These spaces must be experienced as a continuous journey, not as isolated components.

3. Activities
- The Centre may support:
    - Contemplation and quiet reflection
    - Conversation and dialogue
    - Storytelling, learning, or community interaction
    - Individual and guided research
    - Group and individual meditation
- Activities may be formal or informal, spontaneous or programmed, but must be clearly articulated by the team.

Students must design all of the following components, spatially organised as a sequence rather than a cluster.

- **Arrival & Threshold Spaces**
  - Entry court / landscape forecourt
  - Gathering spill-out zone
  - Orientation / pause space

Capacity: 50-80 people | **Intent:** Transition from outside world into a contemplative environment.

- **Collective Assembly Space (Convention Hall)**
  - Primary space for large group interaction
  - Can host dialogues, discussions, public conversations, performances, or assemblies

Capacity: 250 people | **Nature:** Covered but permeable; responsive to climate and site

- **Smaller Conversation Courts**
  - A series of smaller spaces distributed across the site
  - Designed for parallel conversations or group discussions

Capacity: 15-30 people per space | **Minimum number:** 4 such spaces

- **Spaces for Individual Contemplation (Research Center)**
  - Quiet zones integrated into the landscape
  - May include seating, platforms, or minimal architectural articulation

Capacity: 1-5 people per space | **Minimum number:** 10 such spaces

- **Enclosed Reflection Space (Library / Meditation Cells)**
  - A protected, inward-looking space for silence, reflection, or focused dialogue
  - Climatically moderated

Capacity: 30-40 people

Guidelines

Design Guidelines

Spatial Sequence

The project must demonstrate a **clear experiential progression** and the sequence must be:
- Evident in drawings and sections
- Rooted in topography and climate
- Reinforced through materiality and spatial proportion

Contextual Response

Design responses must explicitly address:
- **Topography:** Cut–fill strategy, slope logic, terracing, structural adaptation
- **Hydrology:** Drainage lines, runoff, water harvesting, permeability
- **Climate:** Sun, wind, rainfall, seasonal variation
- **Ecology:** Vegetation retention, soil stability, biodiversity corridors
- **Culture:** Local spatial practices, gathering traditions, ritual, memory

Each decision must be **justified as a response to context.**

Site and Context

- Teams may choose any site, but **hill and slope conditions** are mandatory.
- The design must demonstrate a thorough reading of:
  - Topography and slope behaviour
  - Natural drainage and hydrology
  - Vegetation and ecological systems
  - Climate and microclimate
  - Cultural practices and community patterns

Structure and Construction

- The intervention must be permanent.
- Construction must prioritise:
  - Minimal slope cutting and land disturbance
  - Reversible or low-impact foundations where possible
  - Respect for natural drainage lines
  - Use of locally available materials and skills

Responsibility and Accountability Statement

Each submission must include a concise written statement addressing:
- Environmental impact of the intervention
- Disturbance caused and measures taken to minimise it
- Choices made to reduce material use and footprint
- Long-term implications of the project
- What the design consciously chooses **not** to build

This statement will be a **key parameter in jury evaluation.**

Requirements

1. A2 Sheets | (Maximum 20, Minimum 15)
Presenting:
- Site/context analysis & topographic studies
- Concept diagrams
- Design drawings & sections
- Material & structure rationale
- Ecological responsibility statement

2. Portfolio Booklet | A4 25 Pages
The content in the A1 sheets and added to that:
- Narrative
- Ethical accountability statement
- Implementation strategy

3. Authentication & Declaration Letters

Submission Guidelines

- **Drawings**
  - Site plan with contours and ecological mapping
  - Plans showing spatial sequence and capacities
  - Long sections cutting through slope and programme
  - Short sections demonstrating enclosure transitions
  - Structural and material strategy diagrams

- **Analytical Diagrams**
  - Topography and slope analysis
  - Water flow and drainage mapping
  - Climate response diagrams
  - Ecological impact and mitigation diagrams

- **Narrative**
  - Design intent
  - Contextual reading
  - Programme justification
  - Spatial sequencing explanation

- **Responsibility & Accountability Statement**
  - Impact assessment
  - What is disturbed and how it is mitigated
  - What is consciously avoided
  - Long-term ecological implications

Evaluation Criteria

1. Contextual Understanding – 25%
2. Programme Handling & Capacity – 20%
3. Spatial Experience & Sequencing – 15%
4. Environmental Responsibility – 15%
5. Architectural Resolution – 15%
6. Representation & Communication – 10%

What the Jury Must Discourage
- Pavilion-like objects
- Generic forms imposed on terrain
- Over-enclosure
- Token sustainability gestures

Jury Lens
The jury must ask:
- Could this architecture exist anywhere else?
- Does the land lead the design?
- Is restraint visible as a design choice?
- Are consequences understood and addressed?

Checklist for submission

1. Online Submission of A2 size **Sheets** in form of PDF of not more than **25MB**
2. Online Submission of A4 size **Booklet** in PDF format of not more than **20MB**
3. Original Copy of **Authentication Letter** not more than 10MB
4. Original Copy of **Declaration Letter** not more than 10MB
5. Editable Format of the Sheets (Applicable if shortlisted)
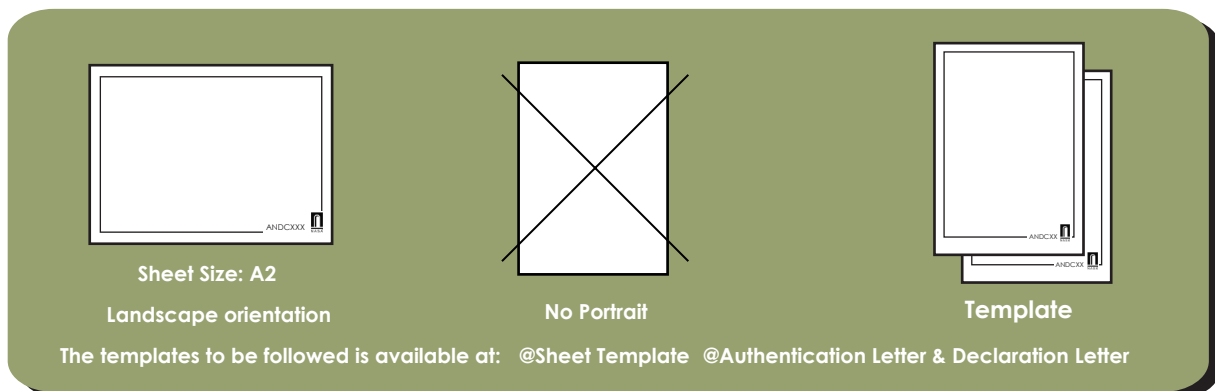
Sheet & NASA India Logo Guidelines

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/11ZYRj96vvhuCE0B_zqK4kJ20C-gBSsH8?usp=sharing

NOTE
- For **NASA India Associated Institutes one entry per college will be allowed** without any registration fees.
- For **Non-Associated Institutes/International Institutions** a registration fees of **2,500 INR** is charged per entry.
- For **registration of international students**, kindly write to us at trophieshead@nasaindia.co before the registration deadline.

Sheet Size: A2

Landscape orientation

No Portrait

Template

The templates to be followed is available at: @Sheet Template @Authentication Letter & Declaration Letter

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.
- The projects should use the decimal metric system and contain a metric graphic scale in order to enable publication in reduced formats. The format of the sheets should clearly mention the name of the trophy followed by the year i.e., **"Annual NASA Design Competition 2025-2026"**
- The format of the sheet should contain a square box of 25mm*25mm at the bottom right-hand corner, next to the NASA INDIA logo which should have the unique registration number allotted to the participants after registrations.
- 10MM White margin is to be left on all sides of A2 sheets.
- The scale is left to the discretion of the participant(s) to the condition that the scale should be in metric system and all the drawings should be clear and legible.
- Manually rendered entry should be scanned at least in 300*300dpi (dots per Inch) resolution.
- **The soft copy (non-editable format) of the sheets 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 of the sheets 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.
- The working files in editable formats of the Shortlisted Entries should be submitted to the Council, failing which, the submission requirements would be deemed incomplete leading to the prize money being withheld.
- Shortlisted Entries with manual hand-done sheets should submit high quality scans(min. 300*300dpi) along with the content in a word document of the shortlisted entries should be submitted to the Council, failing which, the submission requirements would be deemed incomplete leading to the prize money being withheld.
- **Any disclosure of a college's identity through any method or medium will result in disqualification.**

Other Information

- Maximum One (01) Entry Will Be Accepted Per College For ANDC Trophy.
- Queries to be put forward through trophy page on the website.
- Submission should be done by the Team Lead/Unit secretary through the NASA India website.
- **Registration for Associated Institutes should be done by the Unit secretary in NASA India website before the registration deadline through the NASA India website.**
- **Registration for Non-Associated Institutes should be done by the Team lead in NASA India website before the registration deadline through the NASA India website.**
- Registration of the trophies will be final and cannot be changed or withdrawn henceforth.
- Late Registration and submission will not be entertained and henceforth the defaulters shall be disqualified
- NASA India website, ANDC Trophy page: https://www.nasaindia.co/Trophy?groupid=1&trophyid=NnhZejEyMyFAIw==

National Association of Students of Architecture

Annual NASA Design Competition 2025-26

Catalyse

Important Dates

Release of Brief:
19th December 2025, Friday

Queries Deadline:
7th January 2025, Wednesday 1800 hrs IST

Registration Deadline:
12th January 2026, Monday 1800 hrs IST

Submission Deadline
14th February 2026, Saturday 1800 hrs IST

Prize Money

Prize money of **2.5 Lakh INR/2,790.24 USD/ 2,390.72 Euro** is allotted

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

Moderator

Ar. Prashant Pradhan

Prashant Pradhan is an architect known for context-driven, terrain-responsive, and culturally rooted design practices across diverse regions of India. His work emphasizes building with the land, allowing climate, topography, material culture, and local craft to shape architecture that is deeply embedded in its setting. With professional exposure in India, Amsterdam, and New York, he brings a globally informed yet locally grounded approach, balancing environmental responsibility with contemporary expression. Alongside practice, he teaches at CEPT University, where his studio focuses on contextual analysis in hospitality and interior design. His notable works include the award-winning Vivanta, Sikkim, and several public and hospitality projects.

All the Best !
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