# THE CHRISTOPHER BENNINGER
## GOLD MEDAL

# 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!
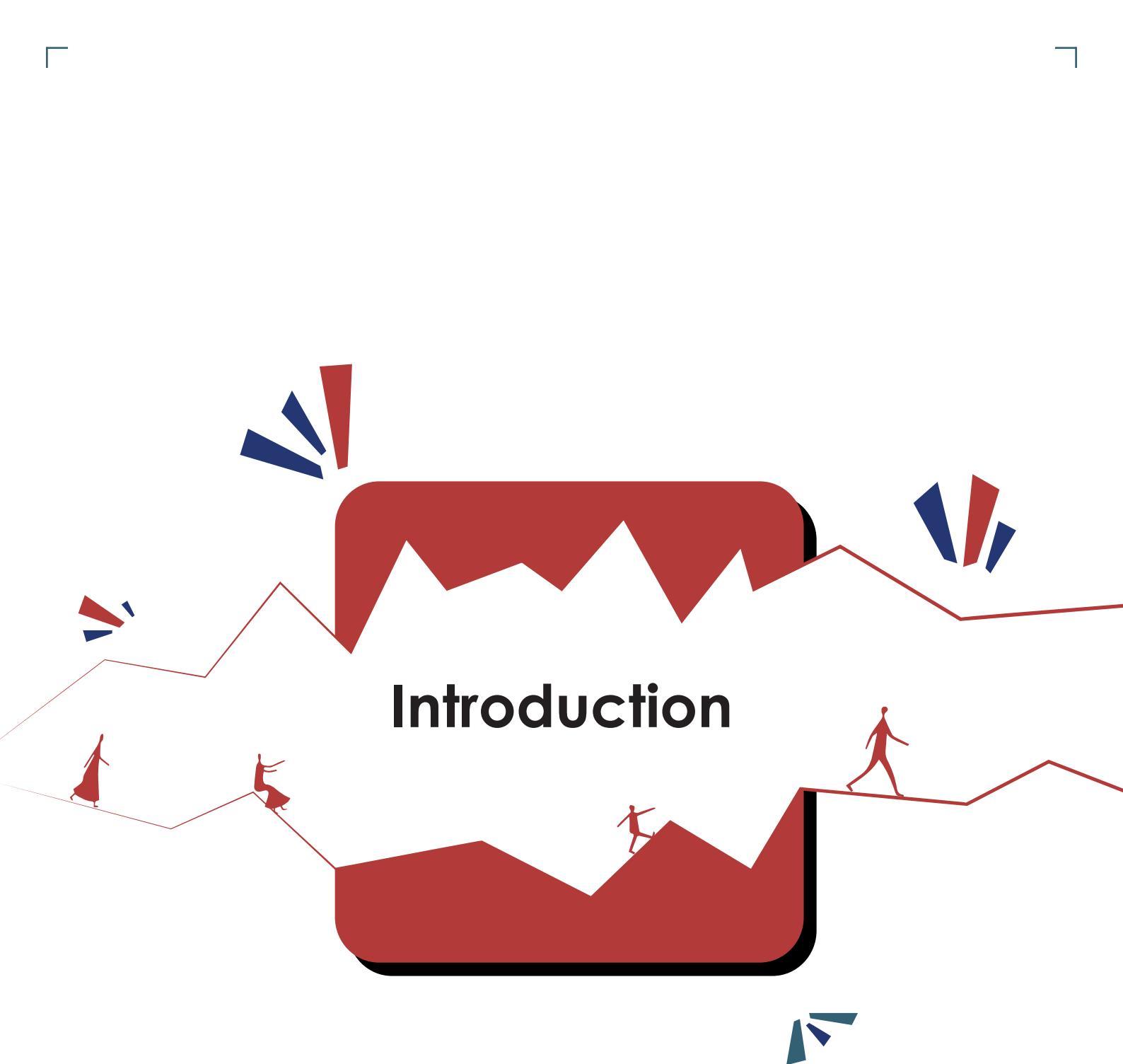
# Introduction

# The Christopher Benninger Gold Medal

The Christopher Benninger Gold Medal shall stand as the most prestigious recognition for an undergraduate architecture student in India. Established in memory of the legendary architect Prof. Christopher Benninger, this award seeks to honor a student who exemplifies the highest standards of architectural excellence, social responsibility, and innovative thinking.

With more than 66,000 undergraduate architecture students across India, this award celebrates visionary future architects whose work and ideas push the boundaries of architectural discourse, design innovation, and urban responsibility. The recipient of the award will stand as a torchbearer of ethos, sensitivity, and commitment-values that defined Prof. Benninger's extraordinary career.

The award will be bestowed annually to one student who demonstrates a profound understanding of architecture's role in shaping society, exceptional design ability, and a body of work that showcases critical thinking, originality, and depth.

The Christopher Benninger Gold Medal aims to build a legacy of young architects who carry forward the principles of timeless design, human-centric urbanism, and ethical architectural practice. This award will spotlight India's most promising architectural minds, setting the foundation for a progressive, inclusive, and resilient built environment.

**"We must understand that our talents and our wealth are only loaned to us, in trusteeship, to use toward the greater good."**

~Prof. Christopher Benninger,
Letters To A Young Architect, 2011

## Award Significance

The Christopher Benninger Gold Medal will serve as:
- A **benchmark for excellence** in architectural education in India.
- A **platform to recognize and amplify the voices** of the most promising young architects.
- A **stepping stone for the awardee's journey** towards greater architectural and urban contributions.
- **A legacy of architectural integrity and innovation**, reflecting Prof. Benninger's philosophy of designing with empathy, humility, and deep cultural understanding.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Open to all final-year undergraduate students of Architecture in India.
- Students must be enrolled in a Council of Architecture (COA)-recognized institution.
- Individual nominations only-group entries will not be considered.
- The nominee must demonstrate outstanding design work, academic excellence, research contributions, and a commitment to social impact through Architecture.

## Selection Criteria

### Design Excellence
- A demonstrated ability to innovate and challenge conventional architectural paradigms.
- Mastery in architectural composition, materiality, sustainability, and spatial experience.
- The ability to translate complex challenges into meaningful design solutions.

### Academic Rigor & Research Depth
- A strong academic record with a body of work that reflects intellectual depth and critical inquiry.
- Contributions to architectural research, publications, or academic discourse.
- Thought leadership in emerging architectural concerns—be it sustainability, urbanism, heritage, or technological advancements.

### Social & Urban Impact
- Projects and ideas that demonstrate a commitment to public good, equity, and inclusivity.
- Sensitivity towards community engagement and cultural contexts in architecture.
- A vision for architecture as a tool for progressive societal transformation.

### Originality & Vision
- A strong individual voice in architecture, showcasing an ability to think beyond the academic curriculum.
- The ability to propose new ways of looking at architecture, blending traditional wisdom with contemporary aspirations.
- A passion for pushing boundaries and inspiring future architects

## AWARD CRITERIA SUMMARY

- Social Responsibility: The student's work should contribute positively to the built environment, with a focus on societal, cultural, and environmental sustainability.
- Innovative Excellence: The award celebrates students who exhibit groundbreaking ideas, challenge conventional thinking, and offer solutions to contemporary architectural issues

# Submission Requirements

# SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to submit the following:

**1. Portfolio (Max 20 pages)** – A curated selection of academic projects, competitions, research, or self-initiated work that best exemplifies their architectural journey. The portfolio size and layout depend on the participant's choice.

**2. Resume (Max 2 pages)** - Highlighting milestones and achievements across various fields.

**3. Personal Statement (Max 1000 words)** – A reflection on their philosophy, influences, aspirations, and the role of architecture in shaping the world.

**4. Letter of Endorsement (Max 2)** – From a faculty member or mentor, attesting to the nominee's excellence, integrity, and contributions.

**5. Authentication Letter** - Duly signed and stamped by Head of Department/ Principal for each individual entry stating that work submitted is genuine and they have endorsed copyrights for the same, with the name of participant, entry code and unit shall abide by whatever may be the final results.

**6. Declaration Letter** - Participants must sign stating that work submitted is genuine and done by them, they have endorsed copyrights for the same and adhere to all the rules and regulations, jury process and the final results.

**Link to Authentication, Declaration & Endorsement Letters**

# JURY CRITERIA

The evaluation will be based on depth, originality, and impact, ensuring that the recipient embodies the true spirit of excellence and responsibility in architecture. The jury would be conducted in a two-stage process:

- **Stage 1:** Soft copy entries to be sent in pdf format and evaluated by jurors.
- **Stage 2:** Shortlisted entries from Stage 1 shall present their work to the panel of jurors at the 68th Year Annual NASA Convention in physical mode.

**The decision of the jury shall be final and binding.**

# CHECK LIST FOR SUBMISSION:

1. Online Submission of Portfolio in form of PDF
2. Resume (Max 2 Pages)
3. Personal Statement (Max 1000 words)
4. Letter of Endorsement (Max 2)
5. Original Copy of Authentication Letter
6. Original Copy of Declaration Letter
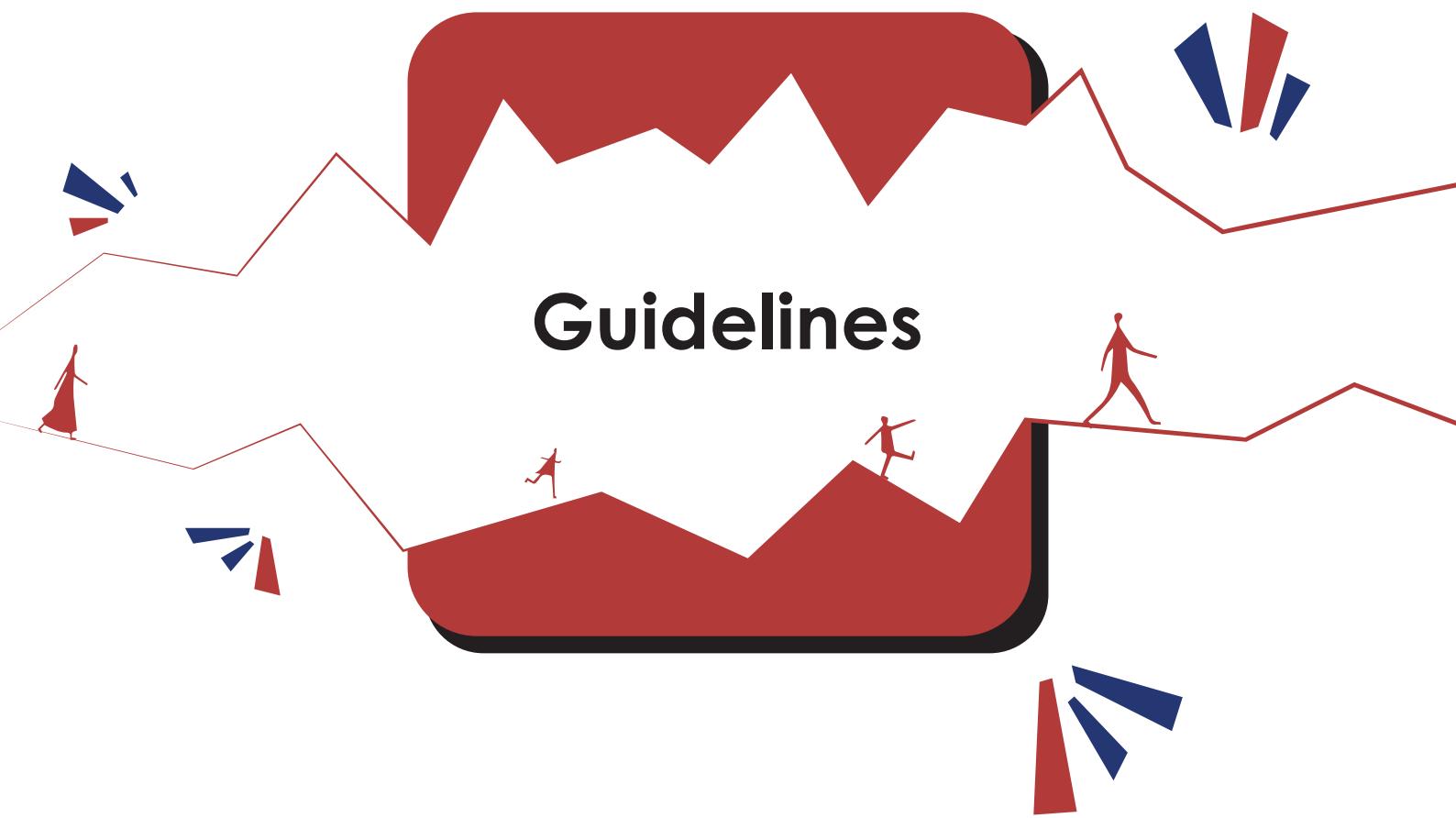
# Guidelines

# General Submission Guidelines

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

- **The registrtion code should be included on every sheet of the portfolio (12pt Century Gothic) and should be mentioned on authentiction and Declaration letters.**
- All text should be in English.
- 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 A1 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.
- 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

- **Multiple entries will be accepted per college for the 68th Year Christopher Benninger Gold Medal.**
- Queries to be put forward through the trophy page on the website (http://www. nasaindia. co)
- Registration should be done by the participnts on NASA India website before the registration deadline.
- 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.

# Important Dates

Release of Brief:
**27th December, 2025 Saturday**

Registration Deadline:
**15th February, 2026 Sunday 1800 Hrs IST**

Queries Deadline:
**28th February, 2026 Saturday 1800 Hrs IST**

Submission Deadline
**15th March, 2026 Sunday 1800 Hrs IST**

# Prize Money

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

National Association of Students of Architecture
The Christopher Benninger Gold Medal 2025-26
Catalyse

# Patron

**CCBA Designs, Pune**

CCBA Designs (formerly known as **Christopher Charles Benninger Architects**) is a world-renowned award winning multi-disciplinary design firm providing comprehensive architecture, urban design and master planning services.

**CCBA Designs** was mentored by Harvard and MIT educated Master Architect Prof. Christopher Charles Benninger; one of India's great modernists and the firm stands on the immense body of experience spanning nearly half a century. CCBA has a portfolio ranging from master planning of international cities and new towns to housing developments and complexes, hotels, resorts, educational and institutional campuses, corporate headquarters, healthcare, and books, with projects located pan India and abroad. CCBA is the recipient of over a hundred National, State and International awards and is the only firm to have received 6 Excellence in Architecture awards from the Indian Institute of Architects.

Ramprasad Akkisetti is the Founding Managing Director of CCBA Designs, which he co-founded with Prof. Christopher Benninger. CCBA Designs is one of India's leading architectural firms, renowned for its commitment to timeless design, sustainability, and human-centric architecture.

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

www.nasaindia.co