



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 250+ colleges and more than 45,000+ 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.





Transcend - Our Annual Theme

For nearly seven decades, NASA India has connected generations of architecture students through conventions, conversations, competitions, collaborations and collective learning. Every council has contributed another chapter to a institution built not on infrastructure, but on people. Yet history alone cannot guarantee relevance. The question before the 69th Year is no longer what NASA India has achieved. It is what NASA India chooses to become before its seventieth year.

Architecture today exists in a world profoundly different from the one that shaped NASA's origins. Students graduate into uncertain professions. Artificial intelligence is transforming design processes. Climate change demands architects who think beyond buildings. Communities demand participation instead of prescription. Cities require systems thinkers rather than object makers. Yet much of architectural education continues to measure success through drawings, grades, competitions and placements alone. NASA India must ask itself: Is architecture merely a profession or is it a responsibility towards society?

What does it mean to Transcend? Transcend is often mistaken for moving higher. It is not. To transcend is to move beyond inherited limitations, beyond assumptions, beyond comfort, beyond systems that no longer serve their purpose. For NASA India, transcendence is not abandoning its legacy; it is about honouring that legacy by refusing to become complacent. **Transcend** is to question before accepting, to research before concluding, to collaborate before competing, to create impact before recognition and to understand that architecture extends beyond buildings into culture, policy, ecology, technology and communities.

To transcend is not to leave the past behind; it is to carry it forward in ways the past could never imagine.

For NASA India to transcend is to become more than an event organiser, more than a representative body, more than an annual convention. NASA India must become a platform of discourse, a generator of research, a catalyst for policy conversations, a bridge between academia and practice and a voice for every architecture student.

The seventieth year should not simply celebrate seventy years of history. It should celebrate an institution that was courageous enough to evolve before the celebration arrived. The responsibility of the 69th Year is therefore unique, not to preserve, not merely to reform but to transcend. Architecture has always challenged the limits of material, imagination and society. The architects of tomorrow must challenge the limits of architecture itself. Let this year be remembered not for the scale of what we organised, but for the scale of what we dared to imagine.

Let us Transcend, because the future will not be built by those who preserve boundaries, but by those who have the courage to question them and the 69th Year belongs to every student who are willing to rethink and redefine what architecture can become.



INTRODUCTION

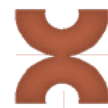
NASA INDIA RESEARCH CELL

UNLOCKING ARCHITECTURAL INSIGHTS: THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Research stands as the bedrock of academic enrichment, particularly in the field of architecture. It is the compass guiding students through the labyrinth of seminars, dissertations, and theses, providing the necessary tools for critical thinking and innovative problem-solving. In the realm of architectural studies, research is the linchpin connecting theoretical knowledge to practical application, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the discipline. The intrinsic linkage between research and academic pursuits becomes palpable in the production of seminars, dissertations, and theses, indispensable components in nurturing the intellectual prowess of budding architects.

THE GRASSROOTS

Inception and Successful Execution: The Start of NASA India Research Cell



In the 62nd year of NASA India (2019-2020), a visionary step was taken with the initiation of the **NASA India Research Cell (NIRC)**. The inaugural year witnessed the successful execution of three seminal papers, each delving into critical aspects of architectural education and practice. These were categorized into Group A: Architectural Awareness, Group B: Course Structure and Duration, Education System, and Mental Health, Economics of Architecture Students, and Group C: Women in Architecture: The Past, Present, and Future. These papers served as the foundation, embodying the spirit of inquiry and exploration.

NASA India Research Conference (NIRC)

The **NASA India Research Conference (NIRC)**, an initiative of the NASA India Research Cell, was launched to give architectural research a focused and meaningful platform for students. Started in 2024, the conference was conceived to strengthen the role of research within architectural education, NIRC encourages students to critically **question, investigate, and document** the built environment, while introducing them to academic writing, research protocols, and peer-reviewed discourse. The conference also offers mentorship and dialogue with academics and professionals, culminating in students presenting rigorous research at the conference proceedings.



Glimpses from previous editions of NASA India Research Conference

National Association of Students of Architecture
NIRC 2026-27
Transcend



Theme: Reclaiming the Commons, Reimagining the Public Realm in Indian Cities

Introduction :

In new aspirational India, citizens have, to a lesser or greater degree, turned their backs on the cities they live in. As one's means improve, so does the desire to inhabit spaces sanitised from the city at large, to move into self-imagined enclaves of pristine, protected spaces, uninfected by the perceived ills that are the imagined hallmarks of our cities today. This makes the areas outside these enclaves, outside these 'gated' live-work-play spaces, into no-man's land, left to the occupation of those bereft of the advantages of this new isolated community living.

Indian cities are rapidly evolving into patches of such enclaves. Redevelopment, expanding infrastructure, privatisation, environmental pressures, and evolving systems of urban governance are reshaping the **urban landscape** in ways that widen the divide between those who fulfil these desires and aspirations and those who are devoid of the means of fulfilling them. In the process, both the public realm (the streets, parks, open and civic spaces, transit networks that structure everyday urban life) and the commons (shared spaces, resources, and systems that make collective life possible) are changing the nature of the Indian city itself.

The public realm and the commons are closely connected, though not identical. The **public realm** speaks to the spaces through which city life becomes open, visible, and accessible. The commons, by contrast, brings into focus questions of shared use, collective rights, care, stewardship, and the often-messy negotiations through which people inhabit and sustain the city. Taken together, these ideas offer a useful way of thinking about how cities are shaped, governed, occupied, and, ultimately, shared.

In Indian cities, the line between the two is rarely clear-cut. Maidans, streets, chaurahas, mandis, waterfronts, transit spaces, and ecological landscapes often do more than function as public spaces. They become places of informal exchange, cultural practice, everyday negotiation, and collective use. In other words, they are not simply designed environments; they are lived and continually remade.

And yet, it is these very spaces that are under strain. Public environments are increasingly privatised, securitised, or tightly managed. Ecological systems and open lands are shrinking. Informal practices and shared modes of occupation are displaced or pushed to the margins, either by the State directly or by laissez-faire redevelopment pressures. Access to the city has become more uneven.

Architects and designers face a pressing question:

How might Indian cities cultivate public realms that are genuinely open and inclusive, while also nurturing forms of common life grounded in participation, care, and shared responsibility?

NIRC 2026-2027 invites research papers that examine the relationship between the commons and the public realm in Indian cities through the perspectives of architecture and urban design.



Sub-Themes

The research papers may address any of the following sub-themes. The contributors must indicate which sub-themes are addressed:

1. Public Space and the Urban Commons

Streets, maidans, parks, markets, and the spaces of everyday civic life
Courtyards, thresholds, collective facilities, communal infrastructure, and housing commons.

2. Politics of the Public Realm

Accessibility, walkability, mobility, inclusivity, and the experience of urban public life. Who is allowed in, and who is excluded?

3. Informality, Negotiation, and Shared Urban Life

Street vending, temporary occupation, adaptive reuse, and contested urban territories. Making the best of strained circumstances.

4. Ecological Commons and Environmental Publics

Rivers, lakes, wetlands, coastlines, urban forests, and climate-responsive public landscapes. How will climate change impact these city edges?

5. Privatization, Enclosure, and Exclusion

Gated developments, surveilled environments, restricted access, and controlled public space. Addressing the myth of safety and NIMBY attitudes.

6. Participation, Stewardship, and Community-led Urbanism

Co-design, local governance, civic initiatives, and collective management of shared environments. What does it mean to co-own spaces with those you don't know.

7. Heritage, Memory, and Cultural Landscapes

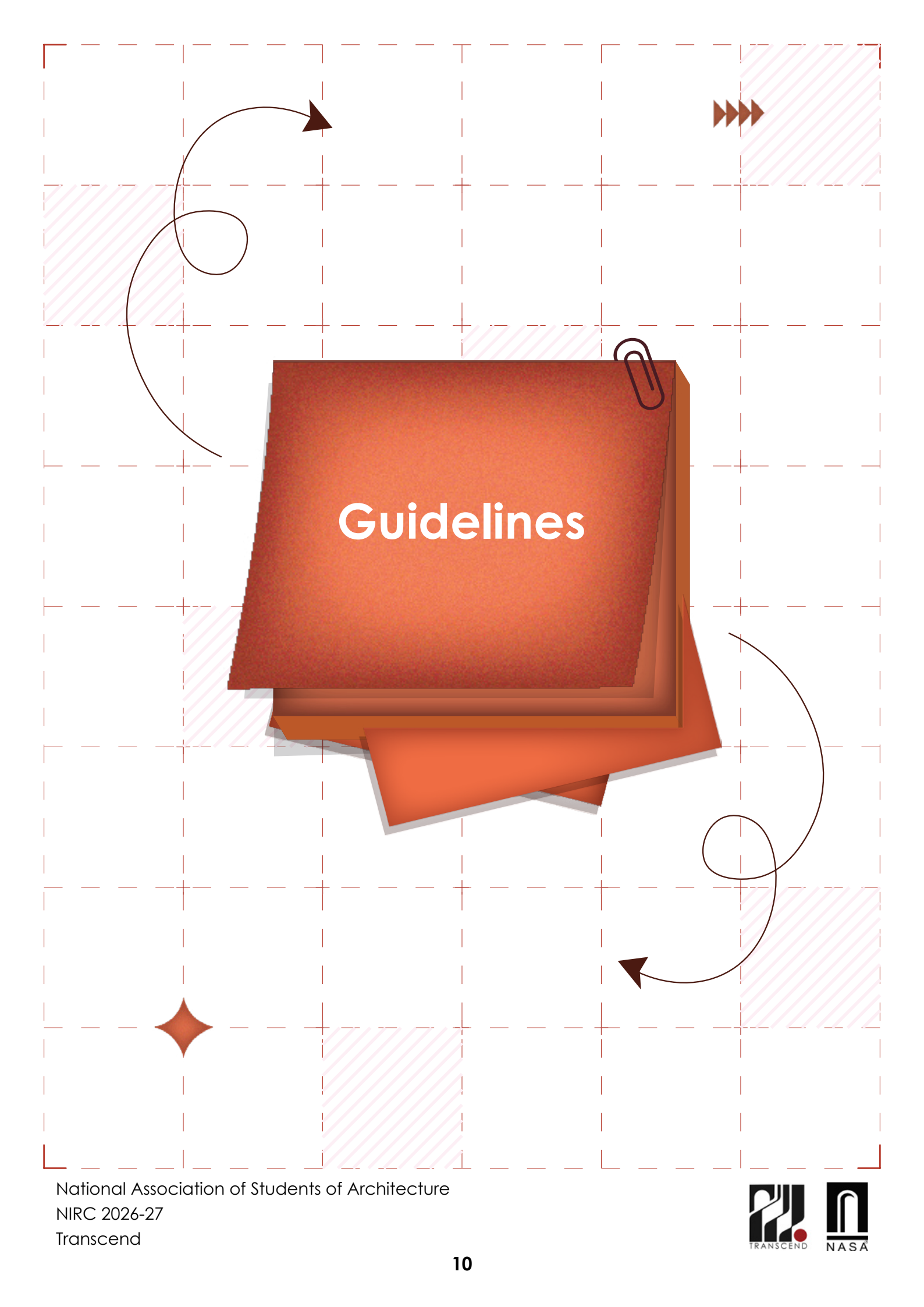
Historic precincts, ritual spaces, vernacular urbanism, and shared cultural worlds. Losing urban memory in a constantly changing urban realm.

8. Future Models for Indian Cities

Can new models be created that embed the Commons and the Public Realm as fundamental articles of faith in their very imagining. Can better Development Rules be framed?

Submissions may be research-based, theoretical, historical, design-led, practice-oriented, or grounded in case studies. NIRC welcomes contributions from **undergraduate, recent graduates, post-graduates** students of architecture engaged with the making and understanding of cities.





Guidelines

Format and Guidelines:

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

NASA India Research Conference '26-27 will be a **three stage** research paper process, which includes the initial abstract submission, followed by the final paper presentation submission of the shortlisted abstracts.

Submission Requirements:

- **Abstract** - We are looking for 300-word abstracts that explores the listed themes with fresh ideas and clear insights. Please specify the relevant sub-theme and ensure your submission is original, thoughtful, and contributes to research in architecture. ([Format](#))
Abstract submissions should include:
 1. Paper title
 2. Author names and designations
 3. Abstract (max. 300 words) with 3-5 supporting images
 4. Keywords
 5. A brief author bio (up to 100 words, not counted in the 300-word abstract)
 6. All text should be in English
- **A5 poster** supporting your abstract and sub-theme. This needs to be submitted separately in high resolution .jpg/.pdf format. The poster must have the registration code mentioned in **bottom right corner in the given template**.
- **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, registration code and unit shall abide by whatever may be the final results.
- **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.

Author Guidelines:

A **maximum of TWO (02)** students per paper currently enrolled in **undergraduate, post-graduate, or recent graduates (Graduates of 2026 batch)** of architecture.

Mentor:

Professor of the same college to guide the research paper. If the students do not have a mentor, NASA India will allocate based on the research topic and the quality of the initial abstract submitted for the further proceedings of the paper.

Key Links:

All registrations, query submissions, and abstract submissions to be done through [NASA India website](#).



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 - [Click here](#)

General Submission Guidelines

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



- Multiple entries will be accepted per college for the NASA India Research Conference 2026-27.
- [Queries](#) to be put forward through the trophy page on the website (<http://www.nasaindia.co>).
- Registration should be done by Unit Secretary of each college for all participants on NASA India website before the registration deadline.
- Late registration and submission will not be entertained and henceforth the defaulters shall be disqualified.
- NASA India will publish the shortlisted abstracts as part of the Conference proceedings in a Book of Abstracts.
- The use of **AI for creating posters is discouraged**. We encourage participants to showcase their **creativity, originality, and visual expression** through their A5 poster designs.
- All submissions must present **original research** undertaken by the participant(s). The submitted paper/abstract **must not have been previously published, presented, or submitted for consideration at another conference, competition, journal, or publication**.

- Participants must appropriately **acknowledge all sources, references, images, datasets, and other materials used in their research.** Any fieldwork, interviews, surveys, photographs, or other primary research must be conducted with due consent and ethical consideration. **Plagiarism or misrepresentation of research will result in disqualification.**
- The soft copy (non-editable format) of the deliverables 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 deliverables should not be corrupted or incomplete or in low
- 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 the property of 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 paper/abstract submitted for the NASA India Research Conference shall remain the property of NASA India and may not be used or published elsewhere without prior consent from the Executive Council.

NASA India Research Conference is now open to Post-graduate, recently graduated (Batch of 2026) and Non Associated College students of Architecture

Registration Fee

- Undergraduate Level
Non-Associated Colleges - Rs. 1500/-
- Post Graduate Level and Recent Graduates - Rs. 1500/-

No Registration Fees for NASA India Associated Colleges Undergraduate Level

Registration through NASA India Website for all participants - [Click here](#)

Important Dates

Release of Brief:

26th September 2026, Saturday

Queries Deadline:

10th October 2026, Saturday 1800 hrs IST

Registration Deadline:

1st November 2026, Sunday 1800 hrs IST

Submission Deadline

8th November 2026, Sunday 1800 hrs IST

Further stages and submissions would be announced after the shortlisting of the initial abstracts.

Awards

Best Paper Award

**Most Promising
Research Proposal**

Juror's Choice Award

Awards for Each Category and different Levels

Prize Pool of

INR 1,50,000/-

will be divided amongst different categories and awards.



Moderator

Dr. Mustansir Dalvi

*Architect, Author &
Academician*

Dr. Mustansir Dalvi is an architect, academic, author, and conservationist. He was Professor of Architecture at Sir JJ College of Architecture, University of Mumbai, from 2003 until his retirement in 2024. He is currently a Trustee of Art Deco Mumbai and serves on the Board of Governors of the MMR Heritage Conservation Society.

An alumnus of IIT Bombay and Sir JJ College of Architecture, he has been deeply involved in architectural education, syllabus development, heritage conservation, and archival work. He has also contributed to the vision and establishment of the Sir JJ School of Art, Architecture and Design.

He is the author and editor of several books, including *Citizen Charles: A Biography of Charles Correa* and *The Romance of Red Stone*, and regularly writes on architecture, culture, heritage, and urbanism for publications including *The Hindu*, *National Herald*, *The Wire*, and *Scroll*.

He has lectured extensively across India and internationally on architecture, culture, and urbanism. We are honoured to have Dr. Mustansir Dalvi with us as the moderator for this session.

All the Best !

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