



संस्कृति मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
CULTURE

THE
STUDENT
BIENNALE
ARDÉE
FOUNDATION

4.12.26 - 21.3.27 | DELHI

THE INDIA
BIENNALE

तत् त्वम् असि

YOU ARE THAT



संस्कृति मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
CULTURE

SHEFALI VARMA

Chairperson | Ardee Foundation

**IS DELIGHTED TO JOIN THE
ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF
THE INDIA BIENNALE**

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India Art, Architecture &
Design Biennale 2026 Set to
Open in December in Delhi >>>

The Curatorial Vision

The Biennale's curatorial theme, Tat Tvam Asi ("You Are That"), borrows from the Upanishads to address a distinctly contemporary anxiety: we live in the most connected moment in human history, and often the least attentive. Speed, abundance and the endless demands of digital life, the curatorial statement argues, have thinned three essential relationships, our connection with ourselves, with each other, and with the built and natural world we inherit.





The Details



From 4 December 2026 to 21 March 2027, the India Art, Architecture & Design Biennale (IAADB) 2026 will unfold across monuments, museums, galleries, embassies, studios and streets, with Purana Qila as its principal venue.

Organized by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, the second edition of the Biennale will be a prolonged, citywide meditation on attention, presence and connection.





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THE INDIA
BIENNALE 2026

PURANA QILA
NEW DELHI

THE STUDENT BIENNALE 2026 – 2027

OPEN CALL

Are you enrolled in an Arts, Architecture or Design
Programme in India?

Begins

01

OCTOBER
2026

Ends

15

OCTOBER
2026

FROM EVERY CORNER OF INDIA

THE CURATORIAL THEME
OF THE INDIA BIENNALE

तत् त्वम् असि

YOU ARE THAT

The curatorial theme of the India Biennale, with a focus on:

I

REFLECTION

Looking inward and becoming more aware.

II

REJUVENATION

Restoring what has become exhausted or neglected.

III

RENEWAL

Imagining new possibilities for people, places and traditions.

IV

RECONNECTION

Rebuilding relationships with communities, nature and heritage.

CURATORIAL PROMPT FOR THE STUDENTS' BIENNALE

The theme of The India Biennale 2026, Tat Tvam Asi, comes from a conversation between a father and his student son.

In the Chandogya Upanishad, the young Svetaketu comes home after twelve years of study. He is learned, and proud of it. His father, the sage Uddalaka Aruni, asks him a simple question. Has he learned the one thing through which everything else is understood?

Svetaketu has no answer.

So the father teaches him differently. Not through books, but through experience.

He asks his son to break open a banyan seed. What does he see? Nothing. Yet from that invisible essence, the great tree rises.

He asks him to dissolve salt in water overnight. In the morning the salt cannot be found. But taste the water from the top, the middle, the bottom. It is everywhere.

Each lesson ends with the same words. Tat Tvam Asi, Svetaketo. You are That.

The Ardee Foundation Students' Biennale takes its spirit from Svetaketu, the first student. He was brilliant, well taught, and not yet awake to what he already carried. Every student stands where he stood.

Uddalaka did not tell his son he was separate from the tree or the water. Create work in which the audience recognises itself. Work that closes the distance between maker, viewer and world.

Respond through any medium: installation, sound, image, movement, space, object, or something not yet named. Work alone or across disciplines. An upcoming paper mache artist or a sculptor. A musician and an architect. The Upanishad teaches by experience, so should your work.

Ask yourself one question before you begin:

Have I learned the one thing through which everything else is understood?

You don't need to answer it. You only need to begin looking.

The Students' Biennale places the next generation inside the same citywide conversation as India's leading institutions. They are not a side programme. They are part of the main dialogue.

Like the banyan seed, what they make now carries the forest that India's creative future will become.

We invite students of art, architecture and design to respond through three movements.

1 What do you carry that no one can see yet?

A language spoken at home. A craft in the family. A street, a ritual, a song, a fear, an unfinished idea. Break it open. Show us the tree hidden inside.

2 What is present everywhere, yet invisible?

Memory in a city. Labour inside an object. Grief inside a festival. The ancestor inside a gesture. Make the unseen tangible. Let the viewer taste what cannot be shown.

3 Where does the self end and the world begin?

Uddalaka did not tell his son he was separate from the tree or the water. Create work in which the audience recognises itself. Work that closes the distance between maker, viewer and world.

WHO CAN APPLY

AVAILABLE IN ALL 22
OFFICIAL INDIAN LANGUAGES



MAP PUBLISHED BY
SURVEY OF INDIA

1

Currently enrolled in
an arts, architecture or
design programme in
India.

2

Any Year, Any
discipline or medium

3

Must be an Indian
Citizen.

ANY DISCIPLINE · ANY MEDIUM

WHAT CAN YOU SUBMIT?

01
PAINTING

02
DRAWING

03
SCULPTURE

04
PHOTOGRAPHY

05
VIDEO

06
FILM

07
SOUND

08
PERFORMANCE

09
INSTALLATION

10
NEW MEDIA

11
CRAFT

12
MIXED MEDIA

13
TEXTILE

14
CERAMICS

15
PRINT

IF SELECTED

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

Your artwork will
be exhibited at
Purana Qila, New
Delhi — the
Biennale's main
venue.

YOU WILL RECEIVE

- 01** Inclusion in the wider Biennale programme.

- 02** A travel stipend for the selected participants.

- 03** An opportunity to be seen by curators, artists and writers from India and the global arts community.

- 04** Participation Certificate from Ministry of Culture.

- 05** Curated access to heritage sites, museums and galleries in Delhi.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED

READY TO APPLY?

1

ARTWORKS PORTFOLIO PDF

UP TO 15 IMAGES OF YOUR WORK

*For each work: Title | Medium | Size | Edition
(if applicable) | Year*

2

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

UP TO 300 WORDS

*Your degree + year | Where you're from | Where
you're based*

3

WRITTEN RESPONSE

300 WORDS

*To the curatorial prompt: "Tat Tvam Asi" -
"You Are That"*

KEEP THESE IN MIND

BEFORE YOU HIT SUBMIT

01 Write in the language you are most comfortable with.

02 Do not use AI tools anywhere in your application.

03 Applications are accepted only through the Google Form.

04 Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

05 Name your file: Full Name – Artist Application – Students Biennale India 2026

OPEN CALL ENDS

15

OCTOBER
2026

THURSDAY

BEFORE
11:59 PM IST

APPLICATION PROCESS

**APPLY VIA
THE FORM
LINK IN BIO**

FOR QUERIES

sb@ardeefoundation.com

FOR MORE DETAILS

www.theardeegroup.com/foundation

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MEET THE CURATOR

RAHUL KUMAR

ARTIST | CURATOR | JOURNALIST

Rahul Kumar is a contemporary artist, a mentor and curator working with early-career practitioners, and an art journalist who bridges analytical rigour and creative inquiry.

A Fulbright Scholar with an MFA from the United States, his work has been recognised by the Sovereign Asian Art Prize (2026) and Business World Art Excellence Award (2025). His international residencies include the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Pro Helvetia, Garage Museum, and Charles Wallace.

His work is held in prominent collections, including the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art. He continues to engage with contemporary art through his practice, writing, curatorial work, and contributing to art education.



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INDIA'S SECOND **STUDENT BIENNALE**

A national platform for young voices, ideas & artistic expression.

IN
COLLABORATION
WITH INDIA
BIENNALE

PRESENTED BY
THE ARDEE
FOUNDATION

WHY A STUDENT BIENNALE?

Because students are not just learning about the world.

They are learning to shape it.

A Student Biennale gives young minds a space to question, explore, create and express what they see.

BECAUSE EVERY IDEA DESERVES A SPACE.

*A thought becomes an idea.
An idea becomes an experiment.
An experiment becomes a creation.*

The Student Biennale celebrates this journey from
imagination to expression.

BEYOND THE HORIZONS

ART IS NOT ONLY SOMETHING TO STUDY.

It is something to experience, question, create and share.

A Student Biennale brings young creators into a larger cultural conversation, connecting their ideas with artists, educators and audiences.

A SPACE TO

IDEATE . INNOVATE . EXECUTE . INSPIRE . ENGAGE .

Because when young people are given the space to create, they don't just participate in culture.

THEY HELP SHAPE WHAT COMES NEXT.



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THURSDAY

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

IN COLLABORATION
WITH
INDIA BIENNALE

PRESENTED BY
**THE ARDEE
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QUESTION 01

**“ I GRADUATED IN
2026, AM I STILL
ELIGIBLE TO APPLY? ”**

Yes! **If you are currently a student or have graduated in 2026** (*whether at Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD level*) you will be considered for The Ardee Foundation's Student Biennale.

QUESTION 02

“ WILL THERE BE ANY FEES? ”

No. There will be no application fee. Selected participants will be given **INR 10,000** for **packing and shipping their artworks**. For larger installations and sculptures, provisions will be made. A stipend of **INR 2,500** will be given for **Biennale visits for the dates of 4th-6th December**.

QUESTION 03

**“ WILL I HAVE TO
INSTALL MY OWN
WORK? ”**

No. *The Ardee Foundation* will be responsible for framing and installing the artworks.

QUESTION 04

“WHAT DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT?”

You are required to submit two documents:

- a) **An artworks portfolio** (up to 15 images of your work)
- b) A document containing your **Artist Biography** and a written response (300 word limit) to the curatorial prompt **“I AM _____”**

QUESTION 05

**“ WHEN IS THE LAST
DATE TO APPLY? ”**

Applications close on the

Friday, 16th October 2026, 11:59 pm IST.

We will not be accepting submissions after that.



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In response to numerous requests for additional time, we are pleased to extend the application deadline by 24 hours to
Friday, 16th October 2026, 11:59 PM IST

**APPLY THROUGH
THE LINK IN OUR BIO.**

TAT TVAM ASI
YOU ARE THAT

PURANA QILA
NEW DELHI



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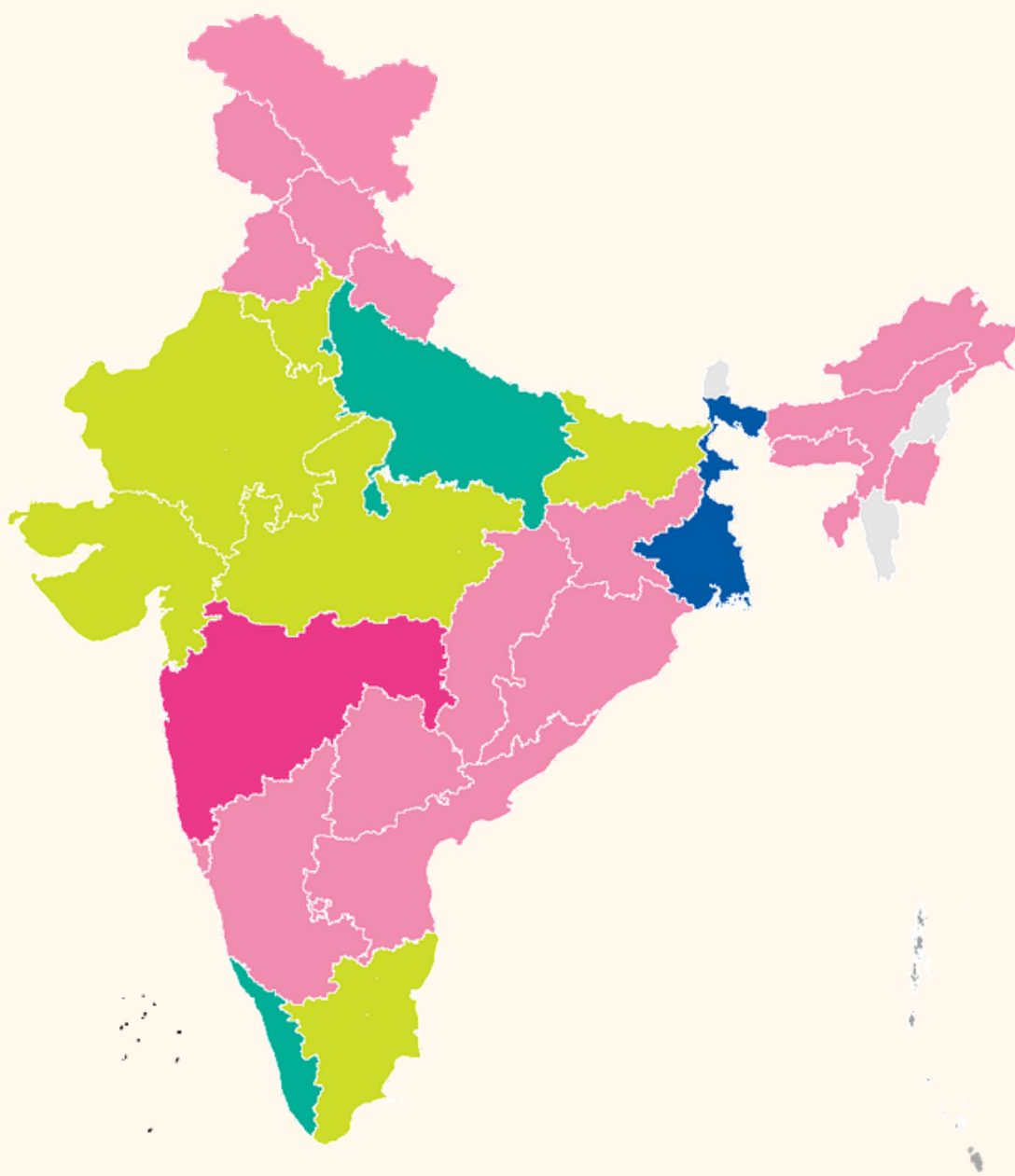
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Thank you students

**850+ RESPONSES received
for our open call pan India**

We are OVERWHELMED. SELECTION PROCESS HAS BEGUN.



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**PURANA QILA
NEW DELHI**