

Announcement of ASPIRE 2025–26

Artful Science Communication to Popularize Impactful Research Popular Science Article, Photography & Short Video Competition for BSIP Research Scholars

ASPIRE 2025–26: From Labs to Citizens—Science for a Viksit Bharat

India’s journey towards Vision Viksit Bharat 2047 is firmly rooted in knowledge, innovation, scientific temper, and informed citizens. Research institutions and scholars play a decisive role in this transformation—not only by generating new knowledge, but by connecting that knowledge with society.

In this context, the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) announces ASPIRE 2025–26 (Artful Science Communication to Popularize Impactful Research)—a comprehensive science communication initiative encouraging research scholars to present their work through words, visuals, and digital storytelling.

Participation in ASPIRE is a meaningful academic exercise that aligns with the Fundamental Duty under Article 51A(h) of the Constitution of India, which urges every citizen *“to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.”*

Communicating science to fellow citizens is no longer optional—it is a national responsibility and a contemporary research imperative.

Why ASPIRE Is the Need of the Hour

While Indian research is globally respected, much of its potential impact remains limited to scholarly publications. Complex language, technical formats, and restricted access often prevent the fellow citizens from understanding how scientific research shapes everyday life, policy, sustainability, and national resilience.

ASPIRE bridges this gap by enabling scholars to:

- Translate complex research into simple, engaging narratives
- Connect research to societal relevance
- Build confidence as scientist-communicators
- Contribute directly to science literacy and public trust
- Align individual research initiatives with nation-building goals

A Viksit Bharat requires not only scientific excellence, but also scientists who can communicate with clarity, empathy, and purpose.

Competition Components

ASPIRE 2025–26 invites original submissions in three categories:

1. **Popular Science Article**
2. **Scientific Photography**
3. **Short Science Video**

Submissions may be based on:

- Ongoing or completed research
- Any aspect of palaeoscience, palaeobotany, geology, earth science, environmental science, climate studies, fossils, stratigraphy, fieldwork, laboratory work, or related interdisciplinary themes

Participants are permitted to participate in all three competition categories.

Guidelines for Submission

1. Popular Science Article

Word Limit: 2000–3000 words

Purpose

The objective of the Popular Science Article is to translate your research—or a closely related scientific theme—into a clear, engaging, and socially relevant narrative that can be understood by non-specialist readers, students, policymakers, and the general public. The article should demonstrate how scientific research contributes to society and supports India's journey towards a Viksit Bharat.

Recommended Framework: The 5 Ws and 1 H

To ensure clarity and public engagement, contributors are strongly encouraged to structure their article around the **5 Ws and 1 H**:

What

- What is the research problem or scientific phenomenon?
- What are the key findings or observations?
- What makes this research important or unique?

Why

- Why does this research matter to society, the environment, or the nation?
- Why should citizens care about this scientific issue today?
- How does it relate to sustainability, resources, climate, heritage, or development?

Who

- Who benefits from this research (communities, policymakers, industries, ecosystems, future generations)?
- Who conducted the research, and in what context (field, lab, region)?

Where

- Where was the research carried out (geographical region, field site, laboratory, geological formation)?
- Where are its impacts most relevant—local, regional, national, or global?

When

- When did the scientific process or phenomenon occur (geological time, historical period, recent study)?
- When are the findings most relevant—now or in the future?

How

- How was the research conducted (methods explained simply)?
- How do the findings help address real-world challenges?
- How can this knowledge guide future research, policy, or public awareness?

Suggested Structure

- **Introduction:**
Introduce the topic using the *What* and *Why*. Clearly explain why the research matters in everyday life or national context.
- **Main Body:**
Elaborate the *Who*, *Where*, *When*, and *How* using:
 - Logical flow with subheadings
 - Examples, anecdotes, or field experiences
 - Simple explanations of methods and results
- **Conclusion:**
Summarize key insights and highlight broader implications for:
 - Society and sustainability
 - Scientific temper and public awareness
 - Future research directions

Language

- Use simple, clear, and engaging English or Hindi suitable for a general audience
- Avoid technical jargon as far as possible
- Explain unavoidable scientific terms in layman's language to ensure wider public understanding

Title: Concise and impactful; curiosity-driven and citizen-centric; reflects societal relevance rather than technical complexity.

Format: PDF only

2. Scientific Photography

Theme:

Photography related to:

- Palaeoscience, palaeobotany, geology, earth science
- Fieldwork, fossils, sections, samples, landscapes, laboratory processes
- Any visual aspect connected to the scholar's research

Technical Requirements:

- High-resolution photograph
- Captured using a good-quality camera / mobile camera
- Image must be original and copyright-free

Description:

- A brief description of up to 100 words, explaining:
 - What the photograph depicts
 - Its scientific significance
 - Its connection to the research or discipline

Submission Format:

- Photograph (JPEG/PNG)
- Description to be included in the same PDF or email body

3. Short Science Video

Theme:

Same thematic scope as photography and articles:

- Palaeoscience, palaeobotany, geology, earth science
- Research processes, findings, field experiences, or societal relevance

Duration: Minimum: 2 minutes | Maximum: 5 minutes

Language: English or Hindi

Style:

- Informative, engaging, and suitable for a general audience
- Can include narration, visuals, field shots, animations, or interviews

Submission Process:

- Upload the video on YouTube
- Keep the video password-protected / unlisted
- Submit:
 - YouTube link
 - Password
 - 200-word synopsis explaining the video content

Mandatory Author Details (For All Categories)

For article, photograph, or video submissions, participants must clearly mention:

- Name
- Designation / Research Scholar details
- Laboratory / Division
- Supervisor / PI
- Mobile Number
- Email ID

Awards, Recognition & Publication

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- Best entries in each category (Popular Science Article, Photography, and Short Video) will be awarded Certificates of Recognition by BSIP.
- Outstanding popular science articles and scientific photographs will be published in *Palaeoscience Today*, the popular science quarterly of BSIP. These selected contributions will also be considered for inclusion in an ISBN-assigned edited publication, ensuring long-term academic and outreach value.
- Best short science videos will be showcased at the PRITHVI Film Festival, scheduled to be held from 25–27 March 2026, providing contributors a prestigious national platform to present their work to scientists, students, educators, filmmakers, and the general public.
- Exceptional photographs and videos may further be utilized for:
 - BSIP outreach and science communication initiatives
 - National and institutional exhibitions
 - Digital, social media, and public engagement platforms

Through these recognitions and dissemination avenues, ASPIRE 2025–26 ensures that scholarly research travels from laboratories to classrooms, communities, and citizens, reinforcing the role of science communication in building an informed, engaged, and Viksit Bharat.

Submission Deadline



20 February 2026



18:00 Hours



All submissions to: aspire@bsip.res.in

A Call to BSIP Research Scholars

ASPIRE is more than a competition—it is an opportunity to:

- Extend your research beyond academia
- Engage directly with citizens
- Strengthen India's scientific temper
- Contribute meaningfully to Vision Viksit Bharat

Let your research speak—not only to peers, but to the nation.

Join ASPIRE 2025–26 to inspire the youth and contribute meaningfully to India's societal transformation.