

CONCEPT NOTE

11th BRICS YOUNG SCIENTIST FORUM AND 9th BRICS YOUNG INNOVATORS PRIZE

2–6 November 2026 | Bengaluru, India

**Organized by: Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India
and National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru**

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A proposal for the creation of a BRICS Young Scientist Forum (BRICS YSF) was adopted at the 2nd BRICS STI Ministerial Meeting in Brasília in March 2015. During the VII BRICS Summit in Ufa, Russia, BRICS countries decided to host the Forum annually, beginning in 2016, with the country holding the BRICS Presidency hosting the event.

The Young Scientist Forum is an important platform for expanding international contacts among young scientists, including through the exchange of experience and best practices in supporting scientific research, with the participation of young scientists and postgraduate students from the BRICS countries.

The Forum promotes initiatives and contributes to establishing an integral system of international cooperation among future representatives of the science, technology and innovation systems of BRICS countries. These activities contribute to the sustainable development of BRICS cooperation and strengthen the role of young scientists and innovators in advancing science, technology and innovation.

The **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum** will provide an opportunity for young scientists from BRICS countries to exchange research experiences, identify emerging scientific and technological opportunities, and develop collaborative approaches to contemporary global challenges.

The **9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will be organized as an integral component of the Young Scientist Forum. The Prize will recognize outstanding young innovators whose technological innovations, products, applications and services demonstrate potential for addressing important societal, environmental and economic challenges and contributing to sustainable development in BRICS countries.

The BRICS Young Innovators Prize provides a platform for young BRICS scientists and entrepreneurs to showcase innovative ideas, products and services and to exchange experiences in innovation and entrepreneurship. The initiative was introduced in 2018 during South Africa's BRICS Presidency and has subsequently become an important platform for young innovators from BRICS countries.

The **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum and 9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will be held from **2 to 6 November 2026 in Bengaluru, India**, organized by the **National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru**, under the overall supervision of the **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India**.

II. EVENTS

A. THE BRICS YOUNG SCIENTIST FORUM – BRICS YSF

The YSF aims to offer opportunities for young scientists from BRICS countries to share their experiences, research, perspectives and ideas in science, engineering and related disciplines, with particular emphasis on emerging scientific and technological developments and their potential contribution to addressing common challenges.

YSF Participants' Requirements

Requirement	Details
Age Limit	Candidates must be under the age of 40 by 31 December 2026 .
Affiliation	Candidates must be affiliated with BRICS countries by nationality (born or naturalized) or residency (permanent residency visa).
Degree	Candidates must hold at least a master's degree, although an ongoing or completed doctorate is preferable.
Nominations per Country	Each BRICS country may nominate three (3) participants for each YSF theme, totalling nine (9) young scientists.

The BRICS Young Scientist Forum seeks to cultivate a cohort of well-prepared and innovative young researchers capable of contributing to scientific advancement, international cooperation and solutions to shared challenges.

Main Objectives

The objectives of the Forum encompass:

- Enhancing interaction among young people of BRICS countries to consolidate knowledge and perspectives in addressing common social, economic and environmental challenges through research and innovation;
- Promoting skills, research and professional development of young scientists in the BRICS countries;
- Strengthening the role of BRICS in the international science and technology landscape through the engagement of creative young scientists with the potential to accelerate innovation;
- Encouraging the development of transnational research networks, collaborations and partnerships that can drive innovation and advance scientific knowledge; and
- Strengthening BRICS STI and youth policies, enhancing the skills of talented young people and promoting entrepreneurial and collaborative approaches.

III. THE BRICS YOUNG INNOVATORS PRIZE – BRICS YIP

The **9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will be one of the key events of the **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum**.

The contest aims to recognize and foster outstanding results of scientific research and innovative projects related to technological innovations that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of scientific and technological sectors and to address important socio-economic and environmental challenges in BRICS countries. The contest will take place within the YSF Programme. Young innovators from BRICS countries will be invited to present their projects to the international BRICS jury members.

YIP Participants' Requirements

Requirement	Details
Age Limit	Candidates must be under the age of 40 by 31 December 2026 .
Affiliation	Candidates must be affiliated with BRICS countries by nationality (born or naturalized) or residency (permanent residency visa).
Project Submission	Only one project may be submitted per candidate.
Authorship	Candidates must be the initial authors of the submitted project.
Nominations per Country	Each BRICS country may nominate three (3) innovators and one (1) jury member.
National Selection Process	Each BRICS member state may select candidates competitively or through nomination.

The works will be evaluated by a BRICS jury, involving an evaluation related to the applicability of innovative technological solutions to current social, economic and environmental problems in the BRICS countries, namely:

- Availability of innovative technological solutions (novelty, social impact);
- Relevance in the short-term period (current demand);
- Relevance in the long-term period (anticipated demand);
- Technical feasibility (accessibility of implementation);
- Market feasibility (business model of the project, applicability and advantage over competitors); and
- Quality of the project presentation (clarity, consistency of information and methodology).

BRICS Jury and Final Evaluation

The BRICS jury, composed of experts from universities, research institutes, enterprises, investment institutions and other relevant organisations in BRICS countries, will be established to monitor and enforce the requirements.

Each BRICS country will nominate one independent member to compose the jury.

The final evaluation of the Young Innovators' projects will be held **in person during the BRICS Young Scientist Forum**.

The presentation of each project is limited to a **10-minute pitch, with 10 minutes for Q&A from the jury**.

The jury will score all the final projects which will then be ranked according to their score. The award-winning projects will be the **top three highest-scoring projects**, with a total prize value of **USD 50,000**, distributed as follows:

- **1st place – USD 25,000 (twenty-five thousand dollars);**
- **2nd place – USD 15,000 (fifteen thousand dollars); and**
- **3rd place – USD 10,000 (ten thousand dollars).**

The prize payment will be made by deposit in personal Bank Accounts.

Candidates must provide a bank account before the beginning of the competition with the following information:

- SWIFT number;
- IBAN;
- Name of the Bank;
- Address of the bank;
- Account number;
- Full name of the candidate; and
- Copy of passport.

YIP Terms and Conditions will be sent separately.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

Each BRICS country is invited to nominate **14 participants**, distributed as follows:

BRICS Country	YSF Theme 1	YSF Theme 2	YSF Theme 3	YIP	HoD	Jury	Total
Brazil	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
China	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Egypt	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Ethiopia	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
India	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Indonesia	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Iran	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Russia	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Saudi Arabia	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
South Africa	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
UAE	3	3	3	3	1	1	14
Total	33	33	33	33	11	11	154

Note: The jury member must be a different person other than the Head of Delegation.

V. SESSIONS AND THEMES

A. BRICS Young Scientist Forum

The **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum** will comprise three parallel thematic sessions:

Theme 1: Science in an Age of Synthetic Reality

The rapid convergence of artificial intelligence, generative models, immersive technologies, synthetic media, digital twins, extended reality and advanced computational systems is transforming the way scientific knowledge is generated, communicated and applied.

This theme will explore the implications and opportunities arising from the emergence of increasingly synthetic digital and physical environments. It will encourage young scientists to examine how science can maintain reliability, transparency, reproducibility and public trust in an environment where synthetic content and AI-generated information are becoming increasingly sophisticated.

Areas of interest may include AI-generated scientific knowledge and content; digital twins and simulation; extended and immersive reality; synthetic data; human-AI collaboration; AI-assisted discovery; scientific integrity and reproducibility; authentication and provenance of scientific information; responsible use of generative AI; and emerging interfaces between physical and digital realities.

Theme 2: Biology as the New Manufacturing Platform

The convergence of biology, engineering, computation and advanced manufacturing is opening new possibilities for producing materials, chemicals, food, therapeutics and other high-value products using biological systems as programmable and scalable manufacturing platforms.

This theme will explore the emerging transition towards a bio-based production paradigm and its implications for the future of manufacturing in BRICS countries.

Areas of interest may include synthetic biology; engineering biology; biomanufacturing; precision fermentation; cell-free systems; biomaterials; bio-based chemicals and fuels; sustainable food production; engineered microorganisms and cells; computational biology; AI-enabled biological design; bioprocessing; scale-up and translation; and circular bioeconomy approaches.

The theme will particularly encourage research and technological approaches that can contribute to sustainable, resource-efficient and economically viable manufacturing ecosystems.

Theme 3: Climate Adaptation as the Next Deep-Tech Frontier

Climate change is creating complex and interconnected challenges for cities, agriculture, water systems, health, infrastructure, energy and ecosystems. While mitigation remains essential, increasing climate risks require science and technology-driven approaches for adaptation and resilience.

This theme will explore climate adaptation as an emerging frontier for deep-tech innovation and scientific research.

Areas of interest may include climate-resilient infrastructure; advanced climate modelling and early-warning systems; resilient agriculture and food systems; water

security and climate-resilient water technologies; disaster-risk reduction; climate-resilient cities; heat adaptation; climate and health; resilient energy systems; nature-based and technology-enabled adaptation; biodiversity resilience; remote sensing and geospatial technologies; and AI-enabled climate risk assessment.

The theme will encourage research and technological solutions that can strengthen the resilience of BRICS societies and ecosystems to current and anticipated climate-related risks.

B. BRICS Young Innovators Prize

The **9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will focus on the following three thematic areas:

Theme 1: AI with Near-Zero Carbon Footprint

The rapid expansion of artificial intelligence is accompanied by growing requirements for computing, energy and data-centre infrastructure. This theme will focus on innovative approaches that enable AI systems and applications to deliver useful outcomes while substantially reducing their environmental and energy footprint.

Projects may address energy-efficient AI hardware and architectures, efficient AI models and algorithms, model compression, low-power inference, efficient data centres, carbon-aware computing, renewable-powered AI infrastructure, efficient training and inference, edge AI, sustainable AI applications and methods for measuring and reducing the carbon footprint of AI systems.

Theme 2: Critical Minerals: From Mine to Circular Economy

Critical minerals are essential for advanced technologies, energy systems, electronics and strategic manufacturing. At the same time, their extraction, processing, use and end-of-life management present technological and environmental challenges.

This theme will focus on innovative solutions across the complete critical-minerals value chain—from exploration and mining to processing, utilization, recycling and recovery.

Projects may include technologies for mineral exploration and resource assessment; efficient and sustainable extraction; mineral processing and beneficiation; recovery of critical minerals from industrial waste and mine tailings; urban mining; recycling and reuse; substitution of critical minerals; circular-economy technologies; traceability; resource-efficient manufacturing; and technologies for reducing the environmental footprint of critical-mineral value chains.

Theme 3: Affordable Diagnostics and Preventive Healthcare

Affordable, accessible and scalable diagnostics and preventive healthcare technologies can contribute substantially to improved health outcomes, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

This theme will encourage innovative products, technologies and services that facilitate early detection, prevention, screening, monitoring and management of health conditions while improving accessibility and affordability.

Projects may include low-cost diagnostic devices; point-of-care diagnostics; AI-enabled diagnostics; portable and decentralized testing; biosensors; digital health technologies; predictive and preventive health solutions; remote diagnostics; population-level screening technologies; wearable and non-invasive monitoring; and technologies enabling accessible healthcare delivery.

VI. LOGISTICS

The **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum and 9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will be held from **2 to 6 November 2026 in Bengaluru, India**.

The event will be organized by the **National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru**, under the overall supervision of the **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India**.

The programme will comprise thematic sessions of the BRICS Young Scientist Forum, the BRICS Young Innovators Prize, plenary sessions, networking and interaction among young scientists and innovators, and other activities as finalized by the host.

Participants are expected to arrive in Bengaluru on **2 November 2026** and depart on **6 November 2026**, subject to the final travel and programme arrangements.

The host/organizing side will make arrangements for local hospitality and related logistical support for the participating delegates, in accordance with the applicable Government of India rules and approved arrangements.

Air tickets, travel documents, medical and travel insurance of delegates shall be borne by the respective BRICS participating countries, as applicable.

Detailed information regarding accommodation, airport transfers, venue, visa requirements, accreditation, travel arrangements and other logistical matters will be communicated separately through an Administrative/Logistics Circular.

Each country will proceed with its national selection of nominees for the Forum and Young Innovators Prize. The nominated delegates will be required to complete the registration/accreditation process and provide the information required by the organizers.

The Head of Delegation for each country will provide the list of nominated participants, indicating their participation in the YSF and/or YIP and the designated thematic area.

VII. PROPOSED TIMESCALE

Task	Indicative Deadline
Circulation of Concept Note and themes	September 2026
Nomination of representatives for the 11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum and 9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize	September/October 2026
Submission of YSF participant profiles and thematic allocation	October 2026
Submission of YIP innovators' profiles and project presentations	October 2026
Submission of jury member nominations	October 2026
Submission of travel details by representatives	October 2026
Full registration/accreditation of delegates	October 2026
Submission of bank-account details and required documents by YIP finalists/participants	Before commencement of competition, as per YIP Terms and Conditions
11th BRICS YSF and 9th BRICS YIP	2-6 November 2026, Bengaluru, India

VIII. PARTICIPATION AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Forum is expected to provide an opportunity for young scientists and innovators from BRICS countries to:

- Exchange scientific knowledge, research experiences and innovative practices;
- Establish new professional and institutional networks across BRICS countries;
- Identify opportunities for collaborative research and innovation;
- Discuss emerging scientific and technological trends and their societal implications;
- Develop interdisciplinary approaches to common BRICS challenges;
- Promote entrepreneurship, technology translation and innovation among young researchers;
- Facilitate interaction between young scientists, innovators, academia, research institutions, enterprises and other stakeholders; and
- Strengthen the long-term engagement of young scientific and innovation communities in BRICS cooperation.

The **9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize** will additionally provide an international platform for young innovators to present their technologies, products and services to an expert BRICS jury and other participants, with the objective of encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and cross-border cooperation.

The outcomes of the Forum and Prize may include identification of promising areas for future BRICS collaboration, development of research and innovation networks, exploration of opportunities for technology development and translation, and enhanced engagement among young scientists and innovators of BRICS countries.

IX. ORGANIZATION

The **National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru** will organize the **11th BRICS Young Scientist Forum and 9th BRICS Young Innovators Prize**, under the overall supervision of the **Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India**.

The detailed programme, nomination procedure, registration requirements, evaluation arrangements, logistical arrangements and other operational aspects will be communicated separately by the organizers in consultation with the BRICS Member States and DST, Government of India.

YIP Terms and Conditions will be circulated separately.