

aspiringminds

India Science Festival

Celebrating Science. Opening Minds.



ISAAC Tell a tech-tale, Spin a sci-verse

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ISMO: India Science Month Online
January 2021

India Science Fest invites entries for ISAAC, a science fiction story/poem writing competition! Tell us a short story or a poem which brings to life technologies that may have existed in the past, how deeply science interacts with our present or a vision of what lays in the dystopian future...

Why should science be limited to a lab
Or textbooks which are ever-so-drab

Science bears fruits for society to relish
Science is for everyone to celebrate and cherish

A sprinkle of creativity , a dash of innovation
Merge a science topic with your imagination

Give an enjoyable to spin to science,
Let your inner genius blow our minds!

Pen down a poem or spin up a science story,
This is the platform that brings you glory!

Let the #voiceofscience reach far and wide
Join us on this adventurous science ride!

What is science fiction? Does it serve any purpose?

Science fiction is a genre of writing based on the amalgamation of science with imagination and fantasy! It is based on scientific theories, inventions, discoveries, ideas, and principles, while sometimes being speculative, abstract, presenting ethical dilemmas and even being dystopian!



Think Isaac Asimov's 'Foundation', Jayant Narlikar's 'The rare idol of Ganesha', James Cameron's 'Avatar' or Netflix's 'Dark'!

Science fiction can tell us how to conceive the impact of science on our lives today, but also suggests what the future might look like. Science fiction is said to have a vision that is almost 'prophetic'! It's a genre that appeals to both science buffs as well as literature enthusiasts, so there's a larger audience to cater for.

Sci-fi explores possibilities that exist beyond the universe, with a combination of imaginative and realistic. It can provide insight into implications of scientific discoveries (*think Star Wars, Matrix, Transformers, Wall-E*).

Fantastical creatures inspired by robots, space shuttles off to discover parallel universe, perhaps somewhere inside a black hole? UFOs delivering messages from aliens, humans teleporting from one place to another...

Sci-fi is not just about the future. It could also be a realistic depiction of society's interaction with science or an inflated view of how it exists in our day to day life. For example, it could be a mystery involving a rare disease, or a person who befriends an AI-bot.

Send in your entries for ISAAC! Tell a tech-tale, Spin a sci-verse!

Give us a mix of science, innovation, philosophy, mystery, fantasy, humour...we're game for all of it! Let your thoughts run free, for science knows no bounds.

Eligibility:

The competition is mainly for writers of 17 years and above. We will yet not discourage entries from others. There are no restrictions on background, education, or nationality! We're looking at bringing attention to all you talented people, who can combine science with creativity. We believe, **#anyoneCANwrite.**

Guidelines:

1. Your science story/poem should be strictly under 1500 words. Entries exceeding the word limit will be automatically disqualified.

2. All entries must be original. This means that your poem or story should not have been published elsewhere, in any form. The entry should not be previously submitted to any competition (online or offline). In short, we need you to be as original and imaginative as possible!

3. The story or poem can be based on any science topic. If you are using a current science or tech concept in your story, do make sure to give an accurate representation. We wouldn't want to misinform our audiences, sensationalize an issue or propagate fake science!

4. We will be accepting entries in English primarily. If you wish to submit a story in another language, please write to us. We will do our best to accommodate your request.

5. All interested participants will be required to register [here](#).

6. The portal for submitting your entries will open on 1st September 2020. The deadline is 15th October 2020.

7. The story/poem should be submitted in both Word and PDF format with the following typeface:

Font: Arial
Size: Title - 12, Body - 10
Margins: 2.5 cm
Spacing: 1.0

8. At the end of the story/poem the document should contain the following information:

Name
DOB
Institution
Occupation
Contact information (Email and phone number)

9. While writing might be considered a loner's job, we are allowing teams of up to TWO participants. How about a writer teaming up with an illustrator?

10. Along with your story / poem, you can send ONE illustration. This will be an attractive addition to your entry, and will definitely grab our attention. Don't worry if you don't have an illustration though, we will not penalize stories without artwork.

11. The stories and poems will be evaluated by a professional jury, consisting of experts in science, art, literature and story-writing. The jury's decisions will carry 70% weightage. The remaining 30% will be done through public polling. We will be opening up the entries on our social media channels and audiences will be able to vote for their favourite stories/poems.

12. The top five shortlisted entries will be announced in mid-November and will be mentored by members of our jury to refine content further.

13. All submitted stories/ poems will be published on our website after quality assurance.

14. Finalists will get a chance to read out their stories/poems in front of a live online audience at ISMO (India Science Month Online) in January 2021. These top 5 entries will further compete for the top three positions in the final round to be held at ISMO. These stories will also be converted to a podcast and put up on our website!

Tips:

1. Think when you are writing your story, try to think, will a 12-year-old understand this? If yes, you're good to go.

2. Wondering where to start, but not too sure?

We've compiled a list of online resources for you to have a look at.

Happy reading!

[Daily Science Fiction](#)

[East of the Web](#)

[EscapePod](#)

[Lightspeed Magazine](#)

[Strange Horizons](#)

[Abyss and Apex](#)

[Bustle](#)

[Owlcation](#)

[Chicago Review of Books](#)



Tashan Mehta, author of the Sci-Fi book 'The Liar's Weave', delivers a talk at ISF 2020.

3. In case you're nervous about reading your story/poem out loud for an audience, don't worry, that's what your mentors will prepare you for. They will also help you improve your entry - give you feedback on concept and writing. We're here to help you too!

Evaluation Parameters:

Originality:

While we're all for inspiration, if your story/poem reminds us a little too much of a famous movie, series, novel or story, may be your imagination didn't take a plunge deep and wide enough. Do be mindful, for originality matters!

Structure of poem or the story/Narrative

Fiction can flow freely, but a little structure, a definitive plot and a narrative – these matter to us.

Imagination/Creativity

We are on the lookout for the most imaginative minds out there. Science knows no boundaries, let your creative juices flow!

Our context:

Stories in context of our lives and circumstances, of our larger community, including the rural, will have our special interest.

Timeline:

Submission: A link will open on 1st September 2020 to upload all files.

Deadline for submitting application: 15th October 2020

Results declared (Top 5): 31st October 2020

Mentors Assigned: 15th November 2020

Final online talk: January 2021

Winners declared: January 2021

Prizes:

We have attractive cash prizes for the top three, so get started!

Winner: 30000 INR

1st runner up: 20000 INR

2nd runner up: 10000 INR

India Science Festival reserves rights of publication of all entries.

Make sure you register for this competition on our [website](#) at the earliest! For any information/queries/help, write to us at: info@indiasciencefest.org