



Ministry of Information &  
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Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

# WAVES 2025 Animation Film makers Challenge announces top 42 finalists

WAVES brings to the fore a global showcase of original Animation, VFX, AR/VR & Virtual Productions

Talented finalists of animation film-making competition to pitch their projects in WAVES 2025

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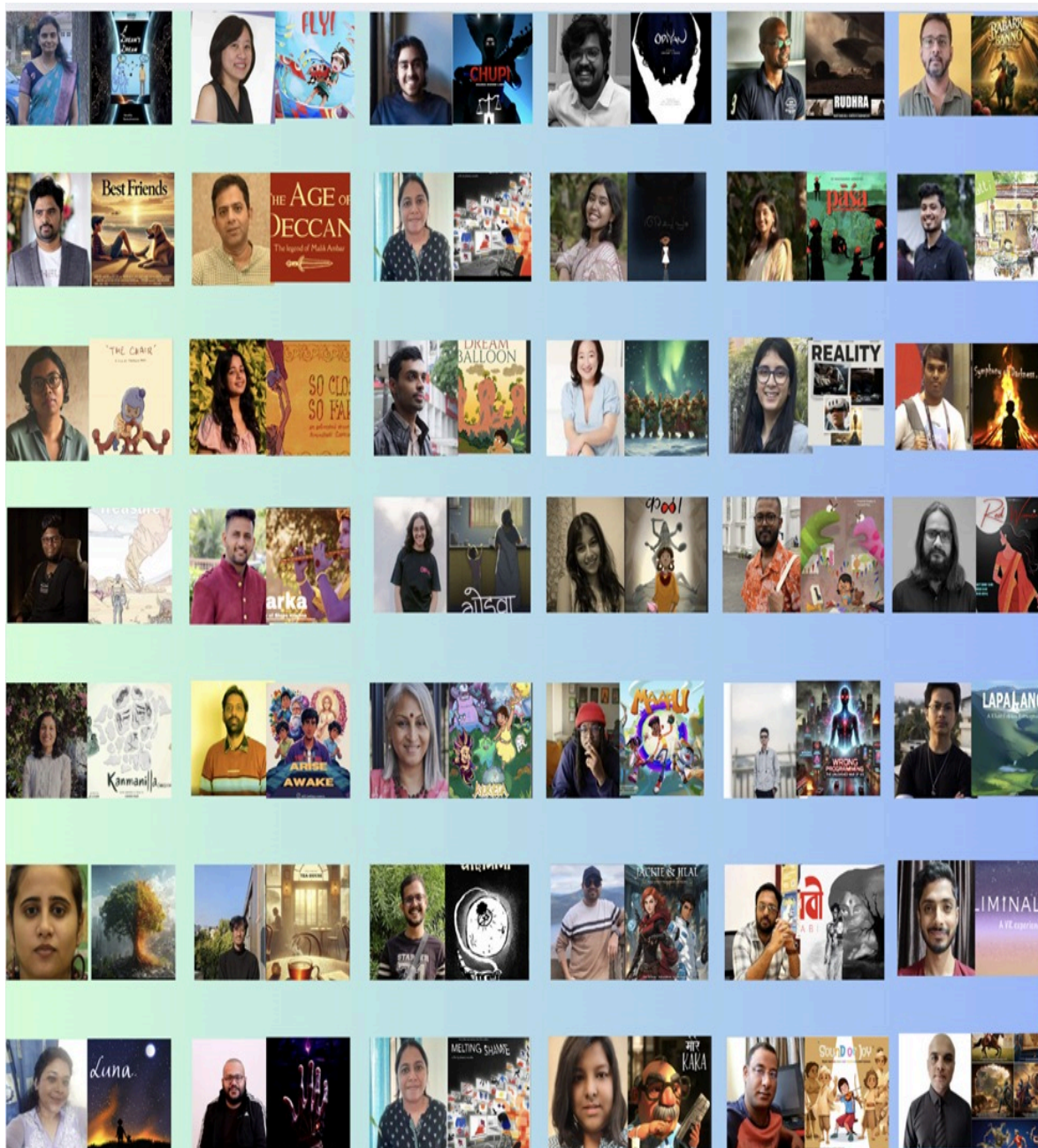
: Mumbai, April 19, 2025

The finalists of the Animation Film Makers Competition (AFC) being held as part of the 'Create in India Challenge Season-1' of WAVES 2025 has been announced. The best 42 projects, focussing on original storytelling across the entire spectrum of animation, encompassing traditional animation, VFX, Augmented Reality (AR)/Virtual Reality (VR), and virtual production, have made it to the final round. These talented participants will now have the opportunity to pitch their original projects during the WAVE Summit which will be held in Mumbai from May 1-4, 2025. The top 3 winners will each receive a cash prize of up to INR 5 Lakhs.

The selection of the top-42 finalists was the result of a rigorous nine-month evaluation process led by the Dancing Atoms team, in collaboration with the WAVES team. The dedicated efforts of the participants were complemented by the discerning expertise of an esteemed panel of national and international jury members, including:

- Anu Singh
- Farrukh Dhondy
- Dan Sarto
- James Knight
- Jan Nagel
- Gianmarco Serra
- Indu Ramchandani
- Vaibhav Piwlatkar

The list of top-42 finalists and their projects are available in Annexure.



The potential economic impact of their projects is significant, with each animated VFX feature film capable of generating employment for 100-300 individuals. WAVES AFC 2025 represents a crucial investment in creative talents of India, fostering job creation and global opportunities. The competition's ambition extends to fostering international co-productions.

This groundbreaking global initiative, supported by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and spearheaded by Dancing Atoms, marks the first time all four verticals of the AVGC sector are represented under one umbrella in such a competition.

WAVES AFC 2025 garnered an overwhelming response, receiving approximately 1900 registrations and 419 diverse entries from amateur enthusiasts, talented students, and seasoned professionals worldwide. This enthusiastic participation underscores the competition's vital role in identifying and nurturing fresh creative voices within the animation industry.

Beyond showcasing talent, the initiative has prioritized mentorship at all stages. All contestants, regardless of their final selection, benefited from invaluable masterclasses led by renowned industry leaders such as Academy Award winner Guneet Monga, acclaimed producer Shobu Yarlagadda, and Saraswathi Buyyala. These sessions focused on refining pitching skills and navigating the complexities of the industry. These projects will be pitched to various OTT platforms and key industry players. Dancing Atoms Studios founder Saraswathi Buyyala is actively engaging with embassies from 17 countries (Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Korea, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom) to facilitate collaborations for these top- 42 projects. In order to promote these projects, meetings are also being scheduled with prominent distributors. The top 42 projects represent a diverse spectrum, including 12 feature films, 9 TV series, 3 AR/VR experiences, and 18 short films, offering a rich variety for potential viewers and collaborators.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's crucial support has been instrumental in elevating AFC WAVES 2025 to its current stature. The dedication to fostering original storytelling within the animation, VFX, AR/VR, and virtual production sectors has provided invaluable resources and recognition, empowering emerging talent on a significant platform. This competition and its rigorous screening processes and enriching learning opportunities, underscored the government's commitment to nurturing India's creative potential in the dynamic world of animation. Each selected entry offers a unique narrative and showcases diverse creative approaches, including compelling international submissions. Going forward, the future of animation, VFX, AR/VR, and virtual production storytelling will unfold at WAVES AFC 2025.

### About WAVES

The first World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES), a milestone event for the Media & Entertainment (M&E) sector, will be hosted by the Government of India in Mumbai, Maharashtra, from May 1 to 4, 2025.

Whether you're an industry professional, investor, creator, or innovator, the Summit offers the ultimate global platform to connect, collaborate, innovate and contribute to the M&E landscape.

WAVES is set to magnify India's creative strength, amplifying its position as a hub for content creation, intellectual property, and technological innovation. Industries and sectors in focus include Broadcasting, Print Media, Television, Radio, Films, Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, Sound and Music, Advertising, Digital Media, Social Media Platforms, Generative AI, Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Extended Reality (XR).

Have questions? Find answers here\_

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