

## PRESS RELEASE

**Entries for the 21st Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) Open — Submissions Close 15 January 2026**  
**Festival Dates: 19th to 25th March 2026 | Kamani Auditorium & Shri Ram Centre, New Delhi**

**New Delhi, December XX, 2025:** Entries have officially opened for the 21st edition of the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META). India's most respected national platform celebrating brilliance across the theatrical arts, instituted by the **Mahindra Group** and produced by **Teamwork Arts**, META 2026 marks an important milestone as it enters its twenty-first year. The festival will take place from **19th to 25th March 2026**, at **New Delhi's iconic Kamani Auditorium** and **Shri Ram Centre**, both long-standing homes for META that have witnessed some of its most memorable performances over the past two decades. Submissions for the upcoming edition have been open for quite a while, and will close on **15 January 2026**. With the deadline fast approaching, time is running out for potential productions.

Over the years, META has established itself as a benchmark of excellence, showcasing more than 1500 productions and honouring over 7000 theatre practitioners across India. The awards have consistently celebrated the diverse cultural, linguistic, and artistic landscape of Indian theatre, from experimental solos and contemporary political narratives, to large-scale productions, mythological reinterpretations, and powerful social dramas. Each year, ten productions from across the nation are shortlisted from hundreds of entries, and staged in Delhi, before being evaluated by a distinguished national jury. Excellence is recognised across 14 award categories, along with a Lifetime Achievement Award, making META one of the most comprehensive recognitions of stagecraft in the country. Reflecting the award's enduring legacy, META was recently honoured with the **Bronze for Longstanding IP at the EEMAX Global Awards 2025 in Udaipur, reaffirming its significance as a cultural institution, and its role in spotlighting Indian theatre on a national scale.** META 2026 also retains a focus on inclusivity and representation, encouraging applications from independent troupes, emerging artists, first-time applicants, and student productions, broadening the stage for newer voices and younger practitioners.

Speaking on the launch of META 2026 entries, **Jay Shah, Vice President, Head - Cultural Outreach, Mahindra Group, said,** *"At Mahindra, we have always believed in the transformative power of the arts to inspire, provoke, and bring communities together. META stands at the heart of this belief. As we enter the 21st year of the awards, we are proud to continue championing the richness and diversity of Indian theatre. META has grown into a platform that not only celebrates excellence but also nurtures the creative spirit that defines our cultural identity. We look forward to discovering the next wave of powerful stories and visionary theatre-makers from across the country."*

Sharing his thoughts on the upcoming edition, **Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, said,** *"Over the last two decades, META has evolved into a remarkable journey of discovery - of playwrights with bold ideas, actors with extraordinary command, directors with distinctive voices, and designers who reimagine the boundaries of stagecraft. It has become a meeting ground for India's most compelling theatre traditions and contemporary expressions. As we step into the 21st edition, we are excited to welcome artists old and new, and to celebrate the creativity that continues to shape the story of Indian theatre"*.



**Submission Deadline: 15th January 2026**

**Eligibility Criteria:** Plays performed in India between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 to 15th January 2026 are eligible. For more information, visit: <https://metawards.com/application-2026>

**How to Apply:** Visit the official META website for full guidelines and the submission form. To access the application with the link below: <https://metawards.com/registration#/addApplications>

### **About META:**

The Mahindra Excellence In Theatre Awards (Meta) is Indian theatre's most venerated and esteemed recognition, continuing to set benchmarks in excellence in every aspect of stagecraft. Over the years, META has given voice to diverse themes ranging from contemporary and pressing social issues, mythology, religion, gender, caste, politics, and classics, through the plays it has showcased. META aims to increase awareness and appreciation of Indian theatre and is the only national arena for recognising and rewarding the country's best productions and theatre-practitioners. Out of over 400 plays received every year, 10 are nominated to be staged over a week in Delhi and vie for the coveted awards. The Awards Night is awaited across theatre communities in the country, when awards in 13 categories (this year onwards, in 14 categories) and a Lifetime Achievement Award are given out. Over its 20 glorious years, META has represented plays and artists from every corner of the nation. It is with the same legacy of inclusivity and representation that META entered its 20th year with the shortlisted plays in 6 languages, including Hindi, English, Bundeli, Kannada, Bengali, and Malayalam. META hosted over 156 artists in a grandiose festival celebrating their talents in multiple avenues of stagecraft, from phenomenal acting, elaborate set designs, myriad original scripts, and ravishing costume designs. META, instituted by the Mahindra Group, has become more than just an awards ceremony, growing into the most significant celebration of Indian theatre in all its glory. From script to stage, META recognises and honours every facet of theatrical brilliance, from playwrights to performers, directors to designers. Going into its 21st year, META reaffirms its dedication to nurturing and promoting the diverse voices and talents that define Indian theatre.

**To apply and learn more, visit <https://metawards.com/>**

### **About Mahindra:**

Founded in 1945, the Mahindra Group is one of the largest and most admired multi-national federations of companies, with 2,60,000 employees in over 100 countries. It enjoys a leadership position in farm equipment, utility vehicles, information technology, and financial services in India and is the world's largest tractor company by volume. It has a strong presence in renewable energy, agriculture, logistics, hospitality, and real estate. The Mahindra Group has a clear focus on leading ESG globally, enabling rural prosperity and enhancing urban living, with a goal to drive positive change in the lives of communities and stakeholders to enable them to Rise. Learn



more about Mahindra on [www.mahindra.com](http://www.mahindra.com), Twitter and Facebook: @MahindraRise. For updates, subscribe to <https://www.mahindra.com/news-room>

**About Teamwork Arts:**

Teamwork Arts, India's pioneering arts company, crafting cultural experiences for over 30 years, has taken India to the world and brought the world to India, presenting the finest of Indian performers, writers, change makers and visual artists to the forefront. Every year, we produce over 33 festivals in 45 cities and 19 countries in the fields of performing & visual arts, knowledge and literature. We produce the world's largest literary gathering: the annual Jaipur Literature Festival; JLF international now travels to the US, UK, and Europe. Through its digital avatar, the Jaipur Literature Festival reached over 35 million viewers in January 2024. Some key offerings among our digital and hybrid endeavours are - Art Matters, which empowers artists across India to collaborate by commissioning them to create new works, and Be Inspired: Fast tracking the future, that changes the narrative of scientific possibility to innovation. Two new milestones were added to our festival repertoire in 2024 - the Jaigarh Heritage Festival in Jaipur, celebrating India's regal past and rich legacy of art, culture and architecture, and Voices of Faith in London, exploring the philosophies of faith to find a way towards collective empathy and understanding.

**More information at: [www.teamworkarts.com](http://www.teamworkarts.com)**

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