

ASCI Academy's pioneering work shines at 2025 Global ICAS Awards with a double-win.

Mumbai, 18th March 2025: At the 2025 Global ICAS Awards, The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has been awarded two prestigious awards during the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (ICAS) Global Dialogues Summit 2025. The accolades recognise ASCI Academy's pioneering work in promoting responsible and progressive advertising through its consistent work on DEI and "The Conscious Patterns" report: A study of deceptive patterns in top Indian apps

This recognition highlights ASCI's consistent efforts to maintain high standards in the Indian advertising industry and ensure responsible, ethical advertising practices that serve the public interest. In 2023, ASCI had also received an award for its thought leadership initiatives in creating a roadmap for more progressive advertising through collaborations with multiple stakeholders. These wins showcase the ASCI Academy's commitment to building the capacity of all stakeholders in creating an ethical and inclusive advertising ecosystem.

The "DEI Award" for "*Shaping Progressive Advertising Narratives through consistent work on DEI*" celebrates the ASCI Academy's sustained efforts in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in Indian advertising. This award recognises ASCI's continuous stream of work and projects every year, making ASCI a key participant and thought leader on the subject of diversity and inclusion in advertising. This journey began with GenderNext in 2021,, addressing stereotypes of women in Indian advertising, followed by the GenderGains whitepaper with Kantar, demonstrating the ROI of progressive portrayals. In 2023, ASCI expanded its focus with two seminal studies: The "Mainstreaming Diversity and Inclusiveness in Advertising" report, released on December 7, 2023, was India's first-of-its kind, conducted with Kantar and the Unstereotype Alliance (UA). It examined advertising diversity across ethnicity, LGBTQI+ communities, disability, age, and skin tones. Building on these insights, ASCI hosted the D&I Edge Summit with UA, engaging over 200 professionals and 35 experts—activists, marketers, filmmakers, and actors. In 2024, ASCI initiated a qualitative study exploring masculinity in Indian media and advertising, which is due to be released at the Global Adda event on March 19th, 2025.

The second "Excellence Award" recognises the ASCI Academy's pioneering study, "Conscious Patterns: A study of deceptive patterns in top Indian apps". The study is first of its kind to establish the prevalence of dark patterns in India and develop the tools to measure and improve. India's top apps representing over 21 billion downloads were studied via 12000 screenshots. The study showed that 52 out of 53 top apps deployed dark patterns, and that privacy deception was the most common dark pattern used in Indian apps. Collaborative engagements with organisations like the Nasscom, Broadband India Forum, and the DPO Club further demonstrated ASCI's commitment to inclusivity and technological collaboration.

Few of the report findings:

- 52 out of the 53 apps featured at least one deceptive pattern.
- Privacy deception emerged as the top violation, with 79% prevalence.
- The study revealed that 100% of e-commerce apps created barriers to account deletion, and 80% of health-tech apps deployed false urgency tactics.

ASCI CEO and Secretary General accepted the award during the ICAS Global Dialogues Summit's Day 1 held in Mumbai this year. The summit brings together self-regulatory organisations across 17+ ICAS member countries and leading global advertising associations. It is an important platform for exchanging knowledge, shaping global standards, and driving responsible advertising practices in the industry. Critical topics to be explored include AI in advertising, masculinity and its representation, ensuring trust in digital ads, and the challenges and opportunities in shaping the advertising ecosystem.

Receiving this award, **Manisha Kapoor** said, *"We are deeply honoured to receive this recognition. This award is a testament to ASCI's efforts in making advertising more responsible and progressive in India. Working with expert partners and stakeholders has allowed us to create path-breaking work that we believe is very critical to the advertising ecosystem. We also congratulate the other SRO's winners for their remarkable work."*

These two awards build upon ASCI's legacy of thought leadership in advertising standards, as evidenced by its previous award win for thought leadership work at the last ICAS Global awards. This consistent recognition highlights the impactful and forward-thinking work undertaken by the ASCI and its Academy.

The other awarded SROs were ASA UK for their work on sustainability, South Africa for their training course, Romania for best practices for influencer marketing, Netherlands for their comprehensive and innovative efforts for the influencer ecosystem, and Brazil won a special recognition award.

About the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI): The ASCI, established in 1985, is committed to the cause of self-regulation in advertising, ensuring the protection of consumer interests. ASCI seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for SelfRegulation, which requires advertisements to be legal, decent, honest, and truthful and not hazardous or harmful while observing fairness in competition. ASCI looks into complaints across all media, such as print, TV, radio, hoardings, SMS, emailers, the internet/website, product packaging, brochures, promotional material, point of sale material, etc. ASCI has collaboratively worked with various government bodies, including the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the Ministry of AYUSH, and the Ministry of Information and PRESS RELEASE Broadcasting (MIB). In August 2023, the ASCI Academy, a flagship program of ASCI, was launched to build the capacity of all stakeholders to create responsible and progressive advertising. ASCI Academy aims to raise standards of advertising content through training, education, outreach, and research on the preventive aspects of advertising self-regulation.

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