

7th Competition

ISAC International Popular & Media
Music Composition Competition
Competition Rules · English version

Version 1.9 | revised 11 September 2026



“To give as many composers as possible the opportunity for their work to be presented and evaluated.”

This international competition welcomes outstanding popular and media music from around the world and seeks to explore the diverse possibilities of musical creation. Entries are invited across a wide range of forms, including pop, vocal works, instrumental music, jazz, DTM, Vocaloid, and music for film, video, and games.

Deadline	Results announced	Frequency
2027.01.31 23:59 GMT	2027.02.28 planned	Once a year Annual edition

Standard entry	Final 14 days	Consolidated jury feedback
JPY 5,000 / work	JPY 7,000 / work	+JPY 5,000 / work

ISE-SHIMA ART COMPANY

en.iseshimaart.com/popular-music-composition-competition

01 Purpose and format PURPOSE & FORMAT

The competition is devoted to the composition of popular and media music and aims to provide opportunities for the evaluation and presentation of outstanding works regardless of nationality or generation.

Annual edition

The competition is normally held once a year, and works submitted to each edition are assessed independently. The official deadline and schedule are published on the official website.

Previous-edition statistics

6th edition (2026): 86 works / 73 applicants / 16 countries and regions

Schedule for this edition

All dates and times are based on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). A high volume of traffic may occur near the deadline, so early submission is recommended.

Item	Date and time (GMT)	Approximate Japan time
Standard period	From the opening of the form to 17 January 2027, 23:59	Until 18 January, 08:59
Final period	18 January 2027, 00:00–31 January 2027, 23:59	18 January, 09:00–1 February, 08:59
Deadline	31 January 2027, 23:59	1 February 2027, 08:59
Results	28 February 2027 (planned)	Official website and email

02 Eligibility ELIGIBILITY

- There are no restrictions on nationality or age.
- A submitted work must have one composer only. Works jointly composed by two or more people are not eligible. Other people may contribute lyrics, arrangement, performance, vocals, recording, or production, provided that the work has only one composer.
- The applicant must enter their legal name, as shown on official documents, in the “Composer’s Legal Name” field. In the “Name for Publication and Certificate” field, enter one name—the legal name, a stage name, or a pen name—exactly as it should appear. The same form of that name will be used in both the public results and the certificate. The Composer’s Legal Name will be used only to dispatch the certificate and, where necessary, verify identity; it will not be published unless the applicant chooses it as the Name for Publication and Certificate. Prize recipients may be required to provide identification or other documents for identity verification.
- A composer may submit more than one work, but each work requires a separate application and separate fee.

03 Eligible works WORKS

- Works in the field of popular and media music are eligible, including pop, songs, instrumental music, jazz, DTM, Vocaloid, band music, music for film, video and games, background music, broadcast music, advertising music and other genres.
- Genre, instrumentation, sound sources and duration are unrestricted. Vocal and instrumental, acoustic and electronic, live-performance and computer-produced works are eligible.

- Works that have already been released, performed, distributed online, recorded or published, and works that have received awards in other competitions, are eligible.
- The competition does not assess the fame of the singer or performer, public play counts or commercial potential. It assesses the compositional technique, originality and sound design of the submitted music.
- Works that are mainly classical, contemporary, experimental or other art music may also be submitted; applicants are nevertheless encouraged to consider the Ise-Shima International Composition Competition (<https://en.ishimaart.com/international-composition-competiti>). For purely electronic or sound-art works, applicants are also encouraged to consider the Aion Digital Art Prize (<https://www.aionlabo.com/en/blank-2>).
- Covers of existing works, works consisting only of an arrangement or remix, and any other work that cannot be regarded as having been composed solely by the applicant are not eligible. Applicants should submit only works that do not infringe any third party's copyright or other rights.
- A work that has not received an award may be resubmitted in a later edition with a new application and fee. The same work may not be resubmitted after receiving a Grand Prize or Special Prize.

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Submission materials SUBMISSION MATERIALS

An external URL for an audio or video recording is required. A PDF containing a score, lyrics, or a description of the work may be submitted if it would help the jury understand the work.

A | Audio or video recording (required)

- Enter an external link in the form that is available for streaming or download. Audio and video files cannot be uploaded directly to the form.
- Live, studio and demonstration recordings, computer-generated sound, audio synchronized with video and other forms are accepted. See the next section for the external-link conditions.

B | Score, lyrics, or description of the work (optional)

- If a score exists, it may be uploaded directly through the form as a PDF; it is not required.
- A PDF containing the structure, purpose, relationship to visuals or narrative, lyrics and other supplementary information may be submitted.
- Before submitting, verify that the PDF file name and its contents match the composer name entered in the "Name for Publication and Certificate" field and the work title.

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External links and review materials AUDIO LINKS & REVIEW**Requirements for external links**

1. SoundCloud, YouTube, Youku, Vimeo, Google Drive and similar services may be used.
2. Access must not require signing in to a viewer's personal account, individual approval, an access request from the competition office or entry of a password.
3. The same URL and the same content must remain available for streaming or download until the results are announced. Check for regional restrictions, link expiry, deletion and replacement of files.
4. The work or recording may not be replaced after the application has been completed. The competition office may ask for correction of an error in the URL or access settings, provided that the submitted content is not changed.

Public play and view counts

Counts displayed by SoundCloud, YouTube, and other external platforms may not reflect actual playback during adjudication because of each service's counting method, embedded playback, or repeated listening to the same passage. The organizer does not use these public figures as records that adjudication took place; it keeps separate internal records of the adjudication status of each entry. A displayed play or view count does not indicate whether the work has been adjudicated or how it has been evaluated.

Handling of review materials

- Solely for adjudication, the organizer may temporarily store and reproduce submitted scores, audio recordings and videos and share them securely with members of the jury.
- All officially accepted works with an accessible audio or video recording are assessed. If an optional PDF containing a score, lyrics, or a description of the work cannot be reviewed, assessment may be based on the recording.
- If the required audio or video recording cannot be accessed, the work may be excluded from adjudication. The competition office does not guarantee that it will request a correction.
- Materials retained for adjudication are normally deleted approximately six months after the results are announced, except for information required by law, payment and prize records, or system backups.

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Application and fees APPLICATION & FEES

1. A separate form must be submitted for each work. If submitting multiple works, complete one application for each work.
2. The standard fee applies only if both the application form and online payment are completed by 17 January 2027, 23:59 GMT. If either is completed on or after 18 January 2027, 00:00 GMT, the final-period fee applies. A valid application requires both to be completed by 31 January 2027, 23:59 GMT. A submitted form with no payment or a payment still in progress does not constitute an official application.
3. Payment is made through the form by credit card or PayPal. All amounts are in Japanese yen; any exchange or payment-processing fees are borne by the applicant.

Fees | per work

Option	Standard period	Final period (14 days)
Application only	JPY 5,000	JPY 7,000
Application + consolidated jury feedback	JPY 10,000	JPY 12,000
Optional simultaneous Lyric Competition entry	+JPY 2,000	+JPY 2,000

The applicable fee is determined by whichever occurs later: submission of the application form or completion of online payment. Check the amount shown on the payment page before paying. If the form remains open across the fee-period changeover, reload the page before submitting.

Optional simultaneous entry in the 2nd ISAC International Lyric Competition

- A song submitted to this competition may also be entered in the 2nd ISAC International Lyric Competition through the combined form only when the applicant composer named in Section 1 of the application form and the lyricist are the same person. Co-lyricists are permitted. If the composer and lyricist are different people, the Lyric Competition entry cannot be made through the combined form; use the dedicated Lyric Competition form instead.
- The Popular & Media Music Composition Competition deadline is 31 January 2027, 23:59 GMT, and results are planned for 28 February 2027. The dedicated Lyric Competition form remains open until 1 March 2027, 23:59 GMT, and Lyric Competition results are planned for 5 May 2027. A Lyric Competition entry submitted through the combined form must be completed by 31 January 2027, 23:59 GMT.
- The simultaneous Lyric Competition entry costs an additional JPY 2,000 per work. The Lyric Competition does not offer feedback of any kind; the consolidated jury feedback option in the combined form applies only to the Popular & Media Music Composition Competition.
- The work title, contact details, delivery address and recording URL entered for the composition entry will also be used for the Lyric Competition entry. Complete the lyricist name(s), lyrics, any optional Japanese or English translation, and acceptance of the Lyric Competition Rules.

Main information required in the form

- The applicant composer's legal name; the "Name for Publication and Certificate" to be used in the public results and on the certificate; the Country/Region to be shown in the public results; the separate Country/Region for certificate delivery; the complete delivery address and postal code (enter "N/A" if the destination country or region does not use postal codes); and the contact email address, entered twice.
- Work title, external link to the audio or video recording, and any optional PDF containing a score, lyrics, or a description of the work.
- Choice of consolidated jury feedback and, if requested, its delivery language; applicable application fee, consolidated jury feedback fee and any Lyric Competition add-on; acceptance of these rules and the handling of personal data.
- If also entering the Lyric Competition: lyricist name(s), lyrics, any optional Japanese or English translation, acceptance of the Lyric Competition Rules, and the JPY 2,000 add-on.
- Works jointly composed by two or more people are excluded from adjudication. If joint composition is discovered after adjudication has begun, the entry will be disqualified; if it is discovered after an award decision, the award will be revoked. Other applications that fail to meet the eligibility or eligible-work requirements, or that have missing required information or payment, contain false information, infringe rights, fail to cooperate with identity verification, or contain serious errors in a name or delivery address, may be declared invalid, excluded from adjudication, disqualified, or have an award revoked. If an application is invalid, excluded, or disqualified for a reason attributable to the applicant, the work will not be adjudicated and no consolidated jury feedback will be provided. The competition office does not guarantee that it will request a correction. Ensure that messages from info@iseshimaart.com can be received.

Changes and refunds after submission

After payment, cancellations at the applicant's request, replacement of the work or recording, and refunds are not accepted. If an application fails to meet the eligibility or eligible-work requirements—including because the work was jointly composed—and is therefore invalid, excluded from adjudication, or disqualified, none of the fees paid, including the entry fee, consolidated-jury-feedback add-on, and Lyric Competition add-on, will be refunded. The applicable amount will be refunded only in the case of duplicate payment, cancellation of the competition by the organizer, or inability attributable to the organizer to provide consolidated jury feedback.

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Consolidated jury feedback (paid option) CONSOLIDATED

JURY FEEDBACK

At the time of application, an applicant may add JPY 5,000 per work to request a consolidated jury feedback report compiling comments and advice from multiple jurors. This service is independent of the award decision.

Contents	Consolidated report compiling comments and advice from multiple jurors
Delivery method	To the registered email address
Expected timing	Within two months after the results (planned)
Additional fee	JPY 5,000 / work

Possible content

Content, format and length depend on the nature of the work and the comments contributed by multiple jurors; inclusion of every point listed is not guaranteed.

- Comments on the work's strengths and originality, melody, harmony, rhythm, form, arrangement, timbre and sound design.
- Specific advice useful for future composition, revision, arrangement, recording or presentation of the work.
- The consolidated jury feedback report is scheduled to be sent to the registered email address within two months after the results are announced. Applicants may choose the report's delivery language. If the selected delivery language differs from the language of the original comments, a translated consolidated report will be provided. Individual jurors' original comments will not be sent separately.

Scope and conditions

- Feedback may be requested only at the time of application and, in principle, cannot be added or cancelled after payment.
- Feedback is not a score sheet, a ranking, or a reconsideration of the decision, and it does not change the competition result. It does not include follow-up questions, reassessment, or ongoing consultation.
- Whether feedback is requested has no effect on adjudication or awards.
- The number of feedback requests accepted may be limited. If the limit is reached, applications with feedback may close while standard applications remain open until the deadline.

If feedback cannot be provided

If the service cannot be provided for a reason attributable to the organizer, only the additional JPY 5,000 is refunded. The entry fee and Lyric Competition add-on are not refunded. This exception does not apply when feedback is not provided because an application is invalid, excluded or disqualified for a reason attributable to the applicant.

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Adjudication ADJUDICATION

The submitted music is assessed on compositional technique, originality and sound design.

- To ensure fairness, each juror must disclose to the organizer, before scoring, any teacher-student, family, or other direct or private relationship with an applicant. That juror may not take part in scoring, preparing feedback on, or jury deliberations concerning that applicant's work.

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Awards AWARDS

Award	Number	Content
Grand Prize	Normally 1 work (maximum 2)	Total prize fund of JPY 100,000 and certificate
Special Prize	Approximately 35 works	Certificate

- Awards are counted by work, not by composer. Multiple works by the same composer may receive awards independently.
- Depending on the adjudication, no work may be selected for a particular award, and the number of Special Prizes may vary slightly from approximately 35. A maximum of two works may receive the Grand Prize; if two are selected, the total prize fund of JPY 100,000 will be divided equally, with JPY 50,000 awarded to each work.

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Results and certificates RESULTS & CERTIFICATES

- Results are planned to be announced on the official website on 28 February 2027; applicants will also be notified at their registered email address.
- Because email delivery cannot be guaranteed, the announcement on the official website constitutes the official result and must be checked by each applicant.
- The name entered in the “Name for Publication and Certificate” field—whether the composer’s legal name, stage name, or pen name—will be used in exactly the same form in the public results and on the certificate. The “Composer’s Legal Name” will be used only for dispatching the certificate and, where necessary, verifying identity. Enter the Country/Region for public results and the Country/Region for certificate delivery in their separate designated fields. The latter, together with the delivery address and postal code, will be used for mailing. Enter “N/A” if the destination country or region does not use postal codes. Provide an address where the certificate can still be received after results are announced; do not use temporary accommodation. Certificates are normally dispatched within one month after results are announced, but delivery may be delayed or an electronic version may be sent because of postal conditions, security concerns, or difficulty delivering to certain regions.
- Grand Prize payment arrangements, identity verification and required documents will be communicated individually to the recipients.

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Rights, publicity and personal data RIGHTS & PRIVACY

- Copyright and all other rights in the submitted work remain with the composer and other lawful rights holders; submission does not transfer those rights to the organizer.
- The composer name entered in the “Name for Publication and Certificate” field, the Country/Region entered in the field designated for public results, and the work title will, in principle, be published on the official website, social media, and other media for announcing results, presenting prize recipients and works, and promoting the competition.
- For an awarded work, the applicant grants the organizer a royalty-free, non-exclusive licence to reproduce, communicate to the public, publish and present, in whole or in part, the work, score, audio or video recording, description and promotional materials supplied with the application, solely for announcing results, presenting recipients and works, promoting and documenting the competition on the official website, social media, other online media, and promotional or archival materials.
- For the uses described above, the organizer pays no copyright or related-right royalties, performance fees, licence fees or other remuneration to the applicant or any other rights holder.
- Before applying, the applicant must obtain from lyricists, arrangers, performers, singers, record producers, producers and other recording or music-production participants, publishers, labels, collective management organizations, and all other rights holders every permission necessary for the uses described above. Submit only works and materials that the organizer may publish online free of charge.
- Personal data is used to administer applications, verify payments, conduct adjudication, communicate results, pay prizes, dispatch certificates, provide feedback, and comply with legal obligations. However, the “Composer’s Legal Name” is used only to dispatch the certificate and, where necessary, verify identity.

Chair of the jury (planned)

Sumio Kobayashi	www.sumiokobayashi.com/about
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Born in 1982 in Komono, Mie Prefecture, Sumio Kobayashi is a composer and linguist. He received a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Kent in the United Kingdom and is an associate professor in the Department of Music, College of Art, Nihon University, where he teaches composition, harmony, and musicology. His distinctions in Japan and abroad include selection in the Music Competition of Japan, second prize in the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award, and first prizes in the Busan MARU International Music Festival Composition Competition and the Wrocław European Capital of Culture International Composition Competition. He has been invited to the Takefu and Tongyeong international music festivals and received the Mie Prefecture Cultural Newcomer Award in 2022.

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Changes, system issues, and contact GENERAL

- The deadline or schedule may be changed because of a problem with the organizer's systems, force majeure, adjudication requirements or other unavoidable circumstances. Material changes will be announced on the official website.
- Problems involving the applicant's connection, device, browser, payment method or external service do not normally entitle the applicant to an extension.
- The decision of the jury is final, and no re-evaluation will be conducted after the announcement of the results.
- If there is any discrepancy between language versions of these rules, the Japanese version prevails.
- By submitting an application, the applicant accepts these rules and the conditions shown in the form.

Organizer	Contact
ISE-SHIMA ART COMPANY Co., Ltd.	info@iseshimaart.com
en.iseshimaart.com	Office of the 7th ISAC International Popular & Media Music Composition Competition