



MODUS *International Music Contest*

is an international online competition dedicated to creating new opportunities for artists and researchers by embracing diverse musical traditions, performance practices, innovative ideas, and contemporary forms of artistic expression.

REGULATIONS

MODUS INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CONTEST 2026

§ 1 General Provisions

1. The **MODUS INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CONTEST 2026** (hereinafter referred to as the “Competition”) is organized by the *Life and Art Foundation*, with its registered office in Kraków, Poland.
2. The Competition is held online. All information concerning the Competition is available on the Organizer’s website, www.lifeandart.eu in the Competitions section.

§ 2 Competition Structure

1. Participants shall present a programme prepared by them in one of the following sections: **Classical Music, Early Music, Ethnic Music, Jazz Music, Musicology.**
2. Each participant may enter a solo category and may also participate as a member of one or more chamber ensembles, provided that a separate entry fee is paid for each entry.
3. The same programme may not be submitted in different sections (Classical Music, Early Music and Ethnic Music).
4. The same programme may not be submitted both by a solo performer and as part of a chamber ensemble.
5. Performances using a backing track or pre-recorded audio instead of live accompaniment are not permitted.

CLASSICAL MUSIC SECTION

a) **Solo Performers** divided by age category and instrument: piano, violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba, euphonium, percussion, accordion, guitar and harp.

- **Mini Modus** – participants born in 2018 or later: free-choice programme of up to 5 minutes.
- **Midi Modus** – participants born in 2016 or 2017: free-choice programme of up to 8 minutes.
- **Maxi Modus** – participants born in 2014 or 2015: free-choice programme of up to 8 minutes.
- **Young Artist** – participants born between 2010 and 2013: a programme of up to 10 minutes, consisting of at least two works (or movements) contrasting in style, character or tempo.
- **Emerging Artist** – participants born between 2007 and 2009: a programme of up to 12 minutes, consisting of at least two works (or movements) contrasting in style, character or tempo.
- **Advanced Artist** – participants born between 2002 and 2006: a programme of up to 15 minutes, consisting of at least two works (or movements) contrasting in style, character or tempo.
- **Professional Artist** – participants born before 2002: a programme of up to 15 minutes, consisting of at least two works (or movements) contrasting in style, character or tempo.

b) **Chamber Ensembles:**

- **Debut Ensemble** – average age of the ensemble below 13: free-choice programme of up to 8 minutes.
- **Young Ensemble** – average age of the ensemble from 13 to below 20: free-choice programme of up to 10 minutes.
- **Advanced Ensemble** – average age of the ensemble from 20 to 26 inclusive: free-choice programme of up to 12 minutes.
- **Professional Ensemble** – average age of the ensemble above 26: free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes.

- **Ensemble Plus** – at least two students performing with an accompanist. The accompanist is not considered a member of the ensemble and his age is not taken into account when determining the ensemble composition; free-choice programme of up to 12 minutes.

The chamber ensemble category shall be determined on the basis of the average age of its members as at 1 January 2026. The average age shall be calculated by adding together the ages of all ensemble members, determined according to their year of birth, and dividing the total by the number of ensemble members. The result shall be rounded to two decimal places.

EARLY MUSIC SECTION

The Competition is open to instrumentalists performing on historical instruments (period instruments or replicas of wind instruments; in the case of string instruments, replicas or original instruments fitted with historical accessories, including, at a minimum, gut strings and historical bows), as well as to ensembles performing on modern or mixed instrumentation, i.e. a combination of modern and historical instruments.

The programme shall consist of works by composers born and/or active in the 17th and/or 18th centuries, or earlier.

Participants shall submit a copy of the sheet music for the repertoire presented together with their application.

a) Early Music – Solo Performers

- ⇒ **Category A – Keyboard Instruments**
- ⇒ **Category B – String and Plucked Instruments**
- ⇒ **Category C – Wind Instruments**

Age Categories (*applicable to Categories A–C*):

- **MODUS YOUNG** – participants born in 2008 or later, free-choice programme of up to 10 minutes;
- **MODUS ADVANCED** – participants born in 2007 or earlier, free-choice programme of up to 12 minutes.

b) Early Music – Chamber Ensembles

- ⇒ **Duo** – free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes
- ⇒ **Trio** – free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes
- ⇒ **Quartet** – free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes
- ⇒ **Quintet and larger ensembles** – free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes

ETHNIC MUSIC SECTION

a) Ethnic Music – Solo Performers, free-choice programme of up to 12 minutes

Performed on traditional instruments characteristic of a particular culture.

b) Ethnic Music – Chamber Ensembles, free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes

Performed on traditional instruments characteristic of a particular culture.

JAZZ MUSIC SECTION

This section is intended for solo performers and ensembles performing jazz repertoire.

a) Solo Performers

Categories:

MODUS Ellington – participants born in 2008 or later, free-choice programme of up to 10 minutes, including at least two contrasting works.

MODUS Coltrane – participants born in 2007 or earlier, free-choice programme of up to 12 minutes, including at least two contrasting works.

b) Ensembles

Categories:

MODUS Hancock – ensembles with an average age of up to 18 years, free-choice programme of up to 10 minutes, including at least two contrasting works.

MODUS Davis – ensembles with an average age of members above 18 years, free-choice programme of up to 15 minutes, including at least two contrasting works.

For ensembles, the category is determined by the average age of all ensemble members.

MUSICOLOGY

This section is intended for musicologists, researchers, music educators, performers, and all those interested in scholarly reflection on music.

a) Research Paper – a presentation (up to 10 minutes)

b) Lecture-Recital – a musical performance accompanied by academic commentary (up to 15 minutes)

Categories

MODUS Scientia – participants born between 1996 and 2006 (inclusive).

MODUS Academia – participants born in 1995 or earlier.

The participant's age is determined as of 1 January 2026.

Thematic Areas: The proposed thematic areas are intended as a guide and are not mutually exclusive. Presentations may address one or combine several of the following areas:

Performance Practice: Exploring artistic interpretation, historical and contemporary performance practices, and performance-related research.

Teaching & Learning: Sharing research, ideas, and innovative approaches to music education and pedagogy.

Innovation in Music: Exploring creativity, new technologies, interdisciplinary approaches, and innovative developments in music.

Music & Wellbeing: Exploring the impact of music on mental, emotional, physical, and social wellbeing, including therapeutic, educational, and community contexts.

Participants shall submit an abstract (200–400 words plus 5 keywords) of their planned presentation, together with an audio-video recording appropriate to their category. English is the official language of the competition, and all abstracts and presentations shall be prepared in English. The recording shall be uploaded to YouTube as an unlisted (non-public) video, and the abstract shall be attached to the application.

§ 3 Conditions of Participation

1. Participation in the Competition is voluntary.
2. To enter the Competition, participants must submit one (1) YouTube link to an audio-video recording (not a playlist). The duration of the recording must comply with the limit applicable to the participant's category. The YouTube video title must follow this format: **MODUS International Music Contest 2026 – Participant's Full Name**. The video description must include: *MODUS International Music Contest 2026*,

Participant's full name, Category, Instrument, Programme. It is recommended that the YouTube video be set to "Public" visibility (applicable to instrumentalists).

3. The audio-video recording must be of high quality and show the performer's full body or, in the case of a chamber ensemble, the entire ensemble, from a distance that allows the participant(s) to be identified. Each work must be recorded using a single camera, without cuts or editing during the performance. In the case of works with various movements or a programme consisting of several independent compositions, individual movements or works may be recorded separately and combined into a single video.
4. Participants shall pay a non-refundable entry fee in the following amount:
 - a) EUR 50 for solo performers and musicologists;
 - b) EUR 30 per ensemble member for chamber ensembles.

All bank transfer charges shall be borne by the payer. Payment shall be made to:

Life and Art Foundation

Bank: Nest Bank

Account number/IBAN: PL04 2530 0008 2062 1040 9490 0001

SWIFT/BIC: NESBPLPW

Payment reference:

MODUS International Music Contest 2026 – Participant's Full Name

5. The entry fee is non-refundable in the event of a participant's withdrawal, submission of an incomplete application, submission of an invalid or inaccessible link, or disqualification due to a breach of these Regulations. If the Competition is cancelled by the Organizer, the entry fee shall be refunded in full.
6. To enter the Competition, participants must complete the online application form available on the Competition website and upload the recording link and proof of payment in the relevant fields. Submission of the application form constitutes acceptance of these Competition Regulations and submission of the required declarations and consents included in the application form. The application form will be available from 10 August to 10 November 2026.
7. A chamber ensemble shall submit **only one** joint application form. If ensemble members make separate payments, the payment confirmations must be combined and uploaded as a single file. Any questions should be sent to: modusfestival@gmail.com

§ 4 Awards and Results

1. In the **Classical, Early Music, Ethnic Music, and Jazz** sections, members of the Jury shall evaluate soloists and chamber ensembles in each age category using a scale from 0 to 100 points, considering the following criteria:

a) Classical Music: sound quality, intonation (for pianists: accuracy of performance), articulation, rhythmic accuracy, technical proficiency, interpretation and musicality, and the level of difficulty of the repertoire. The final score shall be the average of the points awarded by the Jury members.

b) Early Music: technical proficiency, quality of sound, application of historically informed performance practices appropriate to the style of the work, artistic merit of the performance, repertoire selection, stage presentation, and, in the case of chamber ensembles, ensemble cohesion and diversity of instrumentation.

c) Ethnic Music: technical proficiency, quality of sound, artistic merit of the performance, repertoire selection, stage presentation, and, in the case of chamber ensembles, ensemble cohesion and diversity of instrumentation.

d) Jazz: technical proficiency, sound quality, sense of rhythm and groove, creativity and improvisational skills, interpretation and musicality, musical communication, and, in the case of ensembles, interaction and ensemble cohesion, as well as repertoire selection and stage presentation.

Grand Prix	100 points
First Prize	95 – 99 points
Second Prize	90 – 94 points
Third Prize	85 – 89 points
Honourable Mention	80 – 84 points

Participation Diploma	below 80 points
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2. In the Mini Modus solo age category, participants shall receive a Gold, Silver or Bronze Diploma according to the number of points awarded. The diploma shall be sent by e-mail to the address provided in the application. Each Jury member shall evaluate the performance on a scale of 0 to 100 points, considering the following criteria: quality of sound, intonation (accuracy of performance in the case of pianists), articulation, rhythmic accuracy, technical proficiency, interpretation and musicality, level of difficulty of the programme. The final score shall be the average of the points awarded by the Jury members.

Gold Diploma	95 – 100 points
Silver Diploma	85 – 94 points
Bronze Diploma	70 – 84 points

3. In the **musicology**, the Jury shall evaluate: academic value, originality of the topic, quality of presentation, clarity of communication, scholarly merit. The Jury shall award First, Second and Third Prizes and Honourable Mentions. Laureates will be invited to present their paper during the MODUS Hybrid Festival, to be held in 2027 (the exact dates will be announced by the end of 2026).
4. Grand Prix winners shall receive a cash prize of PLN 1,000.
5. First, Second and Third Prize winners, as well as recipients of Honourable Mentions in each category, shall receive the appropriate diplomas, sent electronically to the e-mail address provided in the application. The Jury reserves the right not to award a prize or to award prizes ex aequo.
6. The Jury may award special prizes at its discretion.
7. Prizes may be monetary or non-monetary, including participation in instrumental masterclasses, concert performances, invitations to masterclasses, shopping vouchers, musical instrument accessories and sheet music.

8. The Jury shall review and evaluate the entire audio-video recording, up to the maximum duration specified for the relevant category.
9. The international Jury shall consist of distinguished artists.
10. The names of the Competition winners shall be published on the Competition website on 11th December 2026. Each participant shall receive a brief individual written evaluation from the Jury by e-mail.
11. Diplomas for the winners shall be issued exclusively in electronic form.
12. The decisions of the Jury are final and not subject to appeal.

§ 5 Final Provisions

The Organizer reserves the right to amend these Regulations, provided that the amendments do not adversely affect the conditions of participation in the Competition. This applies in particular to changes to the dates of individual Competition activities. The amended Regulations shall take effect on the date of their publication on www.lifeandart.eu