

7th Competition

ISAC International Popular & Media Music Composition Competition

Competition Rules · English version

Version 1.6 | revised 3 September 2026



“To give as many composers as possible the opportunity to submit their work and receive an evaluation.”

An international competition open to outstanding popular and media music from around the world. Eligible forms include pop, songs, 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

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

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Eligibility

ELIGIBILITY

- There are no restrictions on nationality or age.
- Only original works in which the applicant participated as a composer are eligible. For a collaborative work, the consent of all co-composers must be obtained and their names entered in the form.
- The applicant composer must enter their legal full name in the application form. Prize recipients may be asked to provide identification or other documents to verify their identity and its connection to the name used in the public results and on the certificate.
- A composer may submit more than one work, but each work requires a separate application and separate fee.

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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://www.iseshimaart.com/international-composition-competition>). For purely electronic or sound-art works, applicants are also encouraged to consider the Aion Digital Art Prize (<https://www.aionlabo.com/blank-2>).
- Covers, simple arrangements or remixes of existing works, and other works for which the applicant is not a principal author of the composition are not eligible. The applicant warrants that no copyright or other third-party right is infringed.
- 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 link to an audio or video recording is required. A score or description of the work may be submitted optionally if it assists understanding.

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 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 name and content of the PDF correspond to the composer's name and 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 shown by SoundCloud, YouTube and other platforms may not reflect the jury's actual listening because of platform counting methods, embedded playback or repeated listening to the same passage. The organizer does not use those public figures as proof of adjudication and separately records the review of each application. A public count indicates neither that a work has been assessed nor its quality.

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 score or description 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.

06**Application and fees** APPLICATION & FEES

- A separate form must be submitted for each work. If submitting multiple works, complete one application for each work.
- An application is valid only when both the form submission and online payment are completed by the end of the applicable fee period and, in all cases, by the application deadline. An unpaid form or an incomplete payment is not treated as an official application.
- 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 standard fee applies only when both the form submission 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. In all cases, both must be completed by 31 January 2027, 23:59 GMT. If the form remains open while the fee period changes, reload the page before submitting.

The applicable fee is determined by the time the form is submitted and the amount shown on the payment page. If the form remains open while the fee period changes, 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 if the applicant composer named in Section 1 is also one of the lyricists. If the Section 1 applicant composer is not one of the lyricists, 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), original language, lyrics, any optional Japanese or English translation, and acceptance of the Lyric Competition Rules.
- If either the Section 1 applicant composer or any co-lyricist needs to declare a teacher-student, family, or other direct or personal relationship with a member of the organizer or the Chair of the Jury, use the dedicated Lyric Competition form. The combined form has no relationship-disclosure fields.

Main information required in the form

- Applicant composer's legal full name; all composer names to appear in the public results and on the certificate, including co-composers; Country/Region to appear in the public results; legal full name of the person who will actually receive the certificate; Country/Region for certificate delivery; complete delivery address, including the postal code (enter "N/A" if the delivery country or region does not use postal codes); contact email address entered twice.
- Work title, duration, external link to the audio or video recording, and any optional PDF score or work description.
- 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), original language, lyrics, any optional Japanese or English translation, acceptance of the Lyric Competition Rules, and the JPY 2,000 add-on.
- An application may be declared invalid, excluded from adjudication, disqualified or deprived of an award if required information or payment is missing, false information is provided, rights are infringed, the applicant does not cooperate with identity verification, or there are serious errors in the name or delivery address. The competition office does not guarantee that it will request a correction. Make sure that messages from info@iseshimaart.com can be received. If an application is invalid, excluded from adjudication or disqualified for a reason attributable to the applicant, no consolidated jury feedback will be provided and no amount paid, including the entry fee, feedback fee and Lyric Competition add-on, will be refunded.

Changes and refunds after submission

After payment, cancellation for reasons attributable to the applicant, replacement of the work or recording, and refunds are not accepted. The relevant amount is refunded only in the event of duplicate payment, cancellation of the competition by the organizer, or inability attributable to the organizer to provide consolidated jury feedback. If an application is invalid, excluded or disqualified for a reason attributable to the applicant, no feedback is provided and all fees are non-refundable.

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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 announcement of the results. Applicants may select its delivery language. The jurors' original comments are written in Japanese or English, and applicants may not select the language of those originals. If the selected delivery language differs from the original language, a translated report will be provided. Individual jurors' original comments are not 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.
- It is not a score sheet, ranking or reconsideration and does not change the competition result. It does not include follow-up questions, reassessment or continuing 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.

- For the Popular & Media Music Composition Competition, applicants are not required to make a relationship disclosure. To ensure fairness, each juror must proactively disclose to the organizer, before scoring, any teacher-student, family, or other direct or private relationship with an applicant. That juror must take no part in scoring, preparing feedback on, or jury deliberations concerning the 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, an award may be withheld and the number of Special Prizes may vary slightly from approximately 35. No more than two works may receive the Grand Prize; if two are selected, the total prize fund of JPY 100,000 is 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 composer name(s) entered in the designated field will be used in the public results and on the certificate; pseudonyms and stage names are permitted. The applicant composer's legal full name entered in the form will be used for identity verification. Country/Region for the public results and Country/Region for certificate delivery are separate fields; enter each in its designated field. For postal delivery, enter the legal full name of the person who will actually receive the certificate and a complete delivery address, including Country/Region for certificate delivery and postal code. Enter "N/A" in the postal-code field if the delivery country or region does not use postal codes. Use an address where the certificate can reliably be received after the results are announced; do not use temporary accommodation. Certificates are normally prepared and dispatched within one month after the results. Delivery may be delayed or replaced by an electronic version because of postal, security or regional delivery conditions.
- 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 in the submitted work remains with the composer; submission does not transfer any rights to the competition.
- The composer name(s) entered for the public results and certificate, Country/Region entered for the public results, and work title are normally published on the official website, social media and other media for the announcement of results, presentation of recipients and works, and promotion of 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 co-composers, lyricists, performers, phonogram producers, publishers, labels, collective management organizations and other rights holders all permissions necessary for the uses described above. Submit only works and materials that the organizer may publish online without charge.
- Personal data is used to administer applications, verify payments, conduct adjudication, verify identity, communicate results, pay prizes, dispatch certificates, provide feedback and comply with legal obligations.

Chair of the jury (planned)

Sumio Kobayashi	ja.sumiokobayashi.com
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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 at Nihon University College of Art, where he teaches composition, harmony and musicology. His distinctions in Japan and abroad include the Japan Music Competition, second prize in the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award, and first prizes in the Busan MARU International Music Festival and Wrocław European Capital of Culture composition competitions. 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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General provisions 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
www.iseshimaart.com	Office of the 7th ISAC International Popular & Media Music Composition Competition