

COMPOSITION COMPETITION

All entrants receive detailed written feedback from an industry expert; First Prize winners also receive an individual mentoring session.

Submission Deadline: 1st December 2026

ENTRY FEES FOR THE COMPOSITION COMPETITION

Class C1: £7.70

Class C2: £9.10

Eligibility

- This is a competition for amateur composers only. C2 entrants may earn income from other musical work such as teaching or directing, but must not have earned any significant income from composition, nor have had their work commercially published.
- Competitors entering classes with an age restriction must be within the given age limit on the submission deadline (1st December 2026).
- Entrants must reside either in Leicestershire or in any of the following surrounding counties: Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Staffordshire, Lincolnshire.

COMPOSITION CLASSES

- Adjudication will take into account both creative and technical elements, and the technical feasibility of performance by the instruments chosen. This competition aims to encourage the composition of new, useable music which is realistically performable by live musicians in a range of contexts.
- Compositions may be divided into more than one section or movement (see below for time limits).
- Competitors may compose for any combination of instruments (and/or voices).
- Modified instruments are not allowed, e.g. prepared piano, voice changer etc.
- Submitted compositions must have been composed within the 12 months preceding the submission deadline, and must not have been commercially published or commissioned for a fee. However, compositions which have been submitted for GCSE, A-Level or other exam syllabuses can be entered.
- Competitors may enter both classes if eligible, but may not enter the same piece in both classes.
- Submissions must be easily legible, and may be handwritten or written using notation software.
- Submissions must include an audio file (mp3 or link to audio). The audio can be a computer recording or a live recording.

- You must also provide **one** of the following supporting files:
 - A score in conventional staff notation (typeset in e.g. Sibelius, MuseScore, Noteflight, or handwritten) exported as PDF.
 - Leadsheet (i.e. topline/melody with a recognised chord notation) exported as PDF
 - A screen recording of your DAW (e.g. Logic, GarageBand, Ableton) with a complete live playback of your composition.
- The outcome of the adjudication will be announced several weeks before the Festival, and all competitors will receive written feedback from an expert adjudicator. The winners of each class will be invited to attend the Gala Concert on Sunday 14th February 2027, to receive their awards in person.
- The audio file of the First Place winning compositions will be promoted on our website and social media, and will be available for visitors to experience via a listening station at the festival. First Place winners will also receive a one-to-one Zoom mentoring session with one of our composition adjudicators, an opportunity to receive further personalised feedback and professional tips for taking their composition further.

Class C1 – COMPOSITION COMPETITION (JUNIOR)

One piece, maximum 7 minutes (see further criteria above).

Competitors must be aged 18 or under on 1st December 2026.

Class C2 – COMPOSITION COMPETITION (OPEN)

One piece, maximum 7 minutes (see further criteria above).

No age restrictions.