



National Competition
for Canadian Amateur Choirs
Concours national pour
chœurs amateurs canadiens

A project of

in collaboration with



Canada Council Conseil des arts
for the Arts du Canada



2019 NATIONAL COMPETITION GUIDELINES

SECTION 1: Eligibility and Rules

1. The competition is open to all Canadian amateur choirs who submit the entry materials outlined in SECTION 4: Competition Entry Procedures.
2. An amateur choir is defined as being one that rehearses regularly, and whose individual members do not receive a professional fee. An amateur choir may pay a small portion of singers a token honorarium for their work (for example, soloists and/or section leads.) The conductor of the choir may receive a professional fee or salary.
3. All singers on the submitted recording must be permanent members of the choir. Collegiate choirs in Category 5 may include singers from the preceding semester.
4. Choirs entering the competition must be Affiliate Members of Choral Canada. This type of membership is acquired via the choir's membership with their **provincial** choral organization, *not* acquired directly through Choral Canada. In provinces or territories where there is no choral organization, choirs must be a member of the nearest or most appropriate provincial choral organization
5. The conductor(s) of the entering choir must be a current *individual* member(s) of Choral Canada. Individual membership is acquired only and directly through Choral Canada (www.choralcanada.org/membership) and *not* through a provincial choral organization.
6. No choir having placed first in the 2017 National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs may enter in the same category in the 2019 competition.
7. The adjudication panel reserves the right to disqualify any choir failing to comply with the intent of the competition guidelines.

8. Choirs meeting the appropriate Category Eligibility Details (see SECTION 2) are permitted to enter in more than one category. Choirs entering more than one category must submit separate online/mailed entry forms and entry fees for each category being entered.
9. By entering the Competition, each choir agrees to allow the free broadcast of its performance by Choral Canada and/or other Choral Canada-designated partner(s) and/or co-presenter(s).
10. By entering the competition, each choir acknowledges that the competition rules are binding and that the decision of the jury is final.

SECTION 2: Competition Categories and Repertoire Requirements

Category Number and Name	Category Eligibility Details
1. Children's Choirs	Unchanged voices, singers not older than 16 years*, may be community-based or school-based
2. Upper-Voice Youth Choirs	Equal-voice S/A choirs, singers not older than 23 years*, may be community-based or school-based; must not qualify for category 5
3. Lower-Voice Youth Choirs	Equal-voice T/B choirs, singers not older than 23 years*, may be community-based or school-based; must not qualify for category 5
4. Mixed-Voice Youth Choirs	Mixed-voice youth choirs, singers not older than 23 years*, may be community-based or school-based; must not qualify for category 5
5. Collegiate Choirs	University or college choirs of mixed- or equal-voice adults with a minimum of 17 singers; must not qualify for category 4
6. Mixed-Voice Adult Choirs	Adult mixed-voice choirs with a minimum of 29 singers; must not qualify for category 5.
7. Mixed-Voice Adult Chamber Choirs	Adult mixed-voice choirs with a minimum of 17 and a maximum of 28 singers; must not qualify for category 5.
8. Equal-Voice Men's Choirs	Adult, equal-voice men's choirs with a minimum of 17 singers
9. Equal-Voice Women's Choirs	Adult, equal-voice women's choirs with a minimum of 17 singers
10. Pan-Cultural / Traditional Folk Music (formerly known as Pan-cultural Traditions)	Open to choirs with a minimum of 17 singers who perform music within a specific cultural tradition (world music, ethnic, First Nation, national folk music — does not include vocal jazz and barbershop).
11. Contemporary Music	Open to choirs with a minimum of 17 singers that comply with Category 11 repertoire requirements (see below). Choirs entering this category may not repeat repertoire submitted in previous categories.

**Age limits are effective as of the Competition Entry Deadline on April 1, 2019.*

Repertoire Requirements:

1. For all categories:

- a. All selections must be unaccompanied (un-pitched percussion instruments are acceptable). Failure to observe this rule will result in disqualification
- b. Translations in English or French should be provided for any selection performed in a language other than English or French.
- c. Recorded material must be **no more than 12 months old** at the time of submission. Date of recordings is required on the entry form.

2. For Categories 1 to 9:

- d. Each recording must include FOUR (4) separate and contrasting works whose total time **must not exceed 18 minutes**.
- e. The repertoire in these categories should cover as wide a range of period, style and mood as possible, while reflecting the special qualities of the category entered.
- f. The FOUR (4) individual works must include at least ONE (1) **original** work by a Canadian composer (in any language). Arrangements of pre-existing tunes or melodies are considered derivative works, *not* original.
- g. The FOUR (4) individual works must include at least ONE (1) selection in French and ONE (1) selection in English. (The original Canadian work may also fulfill this requirement.)

3. For Category 10:

- a. Each recording must include FOUR (4) selections whose total time **must not exceed 18 minutes**.
- b. The repertoire in this category must reflect the specific cultural tradition of the choir.
- c. The selections may be sung in any language(s) and should be as contrasting in mood as is possible within the cultural tradition.
- d. Inclusion of an original Canadian work as one of the FOUR (4) individual selections is not mandatory. However, Category 10 Entrants who do include at least ONE (1) **original** work by a Canadian composer (in any language) can be considered for the Prize for Best Performance of a Canadian Work and the Best Performance of a French Canadian Work.

4. For Category 11:

- a. Each recording must include TWO (2) contemporary works, one of which must be an **original** work by a Canadian composer, and one of which must have been written in the last ten years.
- b. The TWO (2) selections must not exceed a total time of 18 minutes.
- c. The selections should be contrasting works in a contemporary musical idiom, reflecting 21st-century compositional techniques. The year of composition for each selection must be indicated on the entry form.
- d. Choirs who enter **only** category 11 are not eligible for the Healey Willan Grand Award, due to the difficulty of judging a choir's overall performance in musicianship, technique, and program with the submission of only two pieces. They do, however, remain eligible for both the Prize for Best Performance of a Canadian Work and Prize for Best Performance of a French Canadian Work.

SECTION 3: Adjudication Procedure

- Entrants will be judged on the recordings submitted to the competition on or before April 1, 2019.
- A National Jury of prominent Canadian choral specialists will be convened to adjudicate all entries.
- The National Jury may name up to three (3) choirs per category as National Finalists. National Finalists will be informed electronically by June 15, 2019.
- All National Finalists will receive a Certificate of Merit for their performance(s) and constructive comments from the jury following the completion of the competition.
- Entrants not selected as National Finalists will receive constructive comments from the jury following the completion of the competition.
- Choral Canada may request other recorded material from Finalists and/or Winners to feature them in broadcasts.
- The National Jury will select Winners from among the National Finalists. Winners will be awarded the following Prizes*:
 - **First Place** winners in each category will receive a prize of \$1000, payable by cheque from Choral Canada to the winning choir.
 - **Second Place** winners in each category will receive a prize of \$500, payable by cheque from Choral Canada to the winning choir.
 - The choir with the **Best Performance of a Canadian Work in Any Category** will receive a prize of \$1000, payable by cheque from Choral Canada to the winning choir.
 - The choir with the **Best Performance of a French-Canadian Work in Any Category** will receive a prize of \$500, payable by cheque from Choral Canada to the winning choir. This prize is sponsored by the Centre d'excellence artistique de l'Ontario.

- **The Canada Council for the Arts Healey Willan Grand Prize** of \$5,000 may be awarded to the choir who, in the opinion of the National Jury, gives the most convincing overall performance in musicianship, technique and program. This prize will be payable by cheque to the winning choir, directly from the Canada Council for the Arts.

**The National Jury reserves the right to withhold any prize if standards are not met.*

- The National Jury will also select winners from among all entrants for accolades. Winners will be chosen for the following accolades:
 - Promising New Adult Ensemble – First time entering the Competition
 - Promising New Youth Ensemble (age 23 & under) – First time entering the Competition
 - Promising New Children’s Ensemble (age 16 and under) – First time entering the Competition
 - Best Faith-Based Community Choir– excludes educational institutions
 - Jury Acknowledgement Award
 - Honourable Mention: Atlantic Region Choir (NL, NS, PEI, NB)
 - Honourable Mention: Eastern Region Choir (QC, ON)
 - Honourable Mention: Prairie Region Choir (MB, SK)
 - Honourable Mention: Western Region Choir (AB, BC)
 - Honourable Mention: Territories Region Choir (YK, NWT, NU)

SECTION 4: Competition Entry Procedures

The DEADLINE for Receipt of Entries is April 1, 2019. Mailed scores (and forms and cheques, if applicable) must be POSTMARKED on or before the deadline (April 1, 2019).

This document *does not* contain Full Competition Entry Procedures. Full Competition Entry Procedures (including recording format specifications, required forms and mail/online entry destination addresses) are posted on the Choral Canada website.

To help you prepare your application, please note that you will be required to submit the following:

- Complete the application and waiver form (online) available on the Choral Canada website.
- Entry fee for each application is \$110 (\$97.35 + HST 13%). It is payable online by Paypal, e-money transfer to info@choralcanada.org, or mailed cheque made out to Choral Canada.
- A Dropbox or GoogleDrive folder link containing a digital **mp3** recording of **EACH** work (NOT one long track containing all pieces) and a **photo of your choir** sent by email OR a mailed USB flash drive/stick included in mailing with original scores.
 - Each digital track must be titled “Track # – Name of Piece – Last Name of Composer”. For example: “Track 1 – Rise Up My Love – Willan”. Ensure that the track properties or anywhere else on the digital file does not contain any identifying information of the entering
- **UPDATED DEC. 2018:** A link to your choir’s SoundCloud page(soundcloud.com), that feature your competition entry recordings, choir bio and choir photo.

- Each track posting should include in the description box the name of the composer(s)/arranger(s), the publisher and publishing catalogue number, and text source.
- In this new age of sharing music online, the appropriate steps are for the choir to contact the copyright owner of each piece (publisher and/or composer) and ask for permission to make available for streaming (not downloading) online, noting there is no monetary gain for your choir or Choral Canada. In the unlikely case that the copyright owner will not allow you to upload the track, please let Choral Canada know. If you do not receive an answer from the copyright owner, you can upload the track. It is then the responsibility of the copyright owner to request it is removed if that is their wish.
- This Account must be completed **only between June 1 and June 10, 2019**, *after* the jury has met and chosen winners (May 2019) to ensure all entries remain anonymous during the jury's selection process. An email confirmation with your SoundCloud Page link must be emailed to programs@choralcanada.org by **latest June 10, 2019**. Failure to do so will result in disqualification. Your SoundCloud Page will then be used to promote and share your music with the choral community and the general public. Instructions on how to set up your SoundCloud page can be found on the Choral Canada website.
- SIX (6) **original** choral scores for the repertoire included on your recording **mailed** to the Choral Canada office. Illegal photocopies are **prohibited** and if submitted, will result in disqualification. If you send legally-authorized photocopies, a letter of permission from the copyright holder (publisher or composer) to photocopy is required. For repertoire from the Choral Public Domain Library, photocopies or emailed PDFs are accepted.
 - Scores must be free of marks.
 - Scores cannot contain any identifying information of the entering choir. Please adequately cover stamps and/or remove labels, etc.
 - Scores must be organized into six piles, each pile containing one original score of each piece, in the order that they appear on the choir's entry form.
 - Scores will be returned.
- English or French translations for any piece performed in a language other than English or French.

SECTION 5: Recording Regulations and Guidelines

- Musical editing within a selection is **STRICTLY FORBIDDEN**, as is the use of artificial reverb or the employment of special electronic techniques. **Use of the aforementioned techniques will result in disqualification.**
- **Recording Guidelines Recommended by CBC (updated by Ron Yachimec and Corey Habersock - 2016)**
 - **Acoustics:** Avoid dry halls or lifeless acoustics. The recording is best done in a church or hall with reverberation time of 2-4 seconds. Look for lots of wood

and/or plaster for good sound quality. If a place is excessively reverberant, work out of one corner (to minimize early reflections). It should be a place that your choir is comfortable singing in.

- **Balance:** Get your own choral blend and balance first; don't expect the recording to do it. Be judicious in the placement of both individual voices and the sections of the choir in relation to the distance from the microphone.
- **Microphones:** If you don't have access to really professional equipment and a recording engineer, keep it simple! Use as few microphones as possible. In a decent hall, one stereo pair, placed behind and high above the conductor's head, should be enough to obtain the best balance of the group. Try to use low impedance microphones. They permit longer cable runs (up to 150-200 feet) with less chance of noise and hum pick-up.
- **Recording:** If you use only two microphones, you may record directly into a machine, Using one stereo microphone pair for the recording. If you must add spot microphones closer to the choir, do so with great care. You will now need a mixing unit (mixer) of some kind, and a pan pot so that you can place the spot microphone image to the correct position in your "sound picture" with respect to the main stereo microphone. Avoid a setup consisting of two microphones widely nit.

A highest quality all-in-one recorder with built in condenser microphones (see list below) could also be used (in the same position behind and above the conductor's head), but test recordings would have to be made and checked before recording competition takes to ensure that levels and balance are suitable. Separate microphones and recorder are preferred for this reason, as they allow real time monitoring of levels and sound during the recording.

- **Possible recorders** could include Zoom H4N, H5 or H6. Tascam DR-44, Sony PCM-D100. Avoid dictation recorders, on recorders with microphones flush mounted on the recorder.
- Please remember that while the following devices are practical they are not a replacement for the experienced recording engineer. We have a vocation for capturing the beautiful sounds that you as Choir directors work so hard to create. On location stereo recordings are not necessarily understood by recording engineers who mostly work in recording studios in a controlled environment.

You are also evaluated on the quality of your recording.

It is an integral part of your application.