

2019 Manhattan Concert Productions
Graduate Student Conducting Competition Application Guidelines
Graciously funded by Manhattan Concert Productions.

The objectives of the ACDA Student Conducting Awards are three-fold:

- (1) To acknowledge and reward outstanding graduate student conductors;
- (2) To encourage score preparation and advancement of conducting and rehearsal skills; and
- (3) To promote student activity at the ACDA National Convention.

These cash prizes are awarded to the winners of the final round of the conducting awards:

First Prize, Graduate Level: \$1000 Second Prize, Graduate Level: \$500

In addition, the eight semi-finalists each receive complimentary registration to attend the 2019 National Conference in Kansas City.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- I have two selections of contrasting style, one from the 17th-, 18th-, or 19th-century and one from the 20th- or 21st-century. (see II. B. 1. a. and b.)
- I am conducting a choral ensemble which is prepared on the music, but which I myself have not prepared ahead of time. (see II. A. 1.-3.)
- I can see my full self, frontal view, in the video. (see II. D. 1.)
- I can clearly hear all of my verbal instructions to the choir.
The sound of the choir is neither too loud not too soft to be heard. (see II. D. 2.)
- I have clearly announced each selection before rehearsing it. (see II. D. 3.)
- My video's total length is between 10 and 12 minutes, with the time equally divided between both rehearsal selections, and is not edited in any way. (see II. F. 1.-4.)
- I have NOT identified myself in the video, nor does my name appear in the video title, nor YouTube channel to which I have uploaded it. (see II. G. 1.-4.)
- I have filled out my application, and have checked my YouTube video's URL for accuracy. (see I. C. 1.-6.) **Please note: Do not paste the entire link** - just copy and paste the text & numbers that appear after the final forward slash (after http://youtu.be/ - https://youtu.be/**vJwEQSOBc7E**). For example, just paste vJwEQSOBc7E into the application platform.
- I have set my YouTube video to "public" or "unlisted" **not** "private". (see. II. G. 4.)
- I have received verification from two non-student Active ACDA Members certifying that I have complied with the written guidelines of the competition. (see II. H. 1.)
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I have submitted my application form and video URL by the deadline as printed in the guidelines. (October 31, 2018)

***Once you have completed ALL of the above, your application is complete.
SELECTION PROCESS GUIDELINES**

I. Eligibility Requirements: *Applicants must...*

- A. Hold valid ACDA student membership. Memberships available at www.acda.org.
- B. At the time of application be (a) a United States citizen and full-time graduate student or (b) a full-time graduate student at a college/university in the United States.
- C. Submit a complete application portfolio including the following materials:
 1. Application form (submitted electronically)
 2. Verification of video validity
 3. Verification by a University official of the student's class standing and fulltime status (letter from Registrar's office, unofficial transcript, etc.)
 4. Audition video recording, uploaded to YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>) *URL for youtube video that DOES NOT include identifying information (please do not include your name in the URL. Please DO NOT include your name in the YouTube channel.) **Please note: Do not paste the entire link** - just copy and paste the text & numbers that appear after the final forward slash (after <http://youtu.be/> - <https://youtu.be/vJwEQSOBc7E>). For example, just paste vJwEQSOBc7E into the application platform.
 5. One to two-page résumé of conducting experience
 6. \$30 entry fee

II. Audition Preparation Guidelines

Applicants will prepare and upload to YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>) a video recording of an audition that meets the following criteria:

- A. Ensemble Preparation
 1. The applicant may select the choir.
 2. The choir is to be fully familiar with the music and should **not be sightreading** during the audition session.
 3. The choir is to be prepared by a conductor **other than the applicant**. The applicant will **not** have first-hand knowledge of the choir's work in rehearsal or performance on the audition literature.
- B. Musical Parameters
 1. Graduate applicants will conduct two compositions for mixed chorus in the video audition, including:
 - a. a sacred or secular 17th, 18th, or 19th-Century work, and
 - b. a 20th- or 21st-Century composition with mixed meters
 2. The compositions should be of contrasting tempi and style.
 3. Selections may be unaccompanied or accompanied.
 4. Excerpts of longer works may be selected.

5. Keyboard reductions may be used for orchestral accompaniments.

C. Video Conducting and Rehearsal

1. The applicant should rehearse the choir in such a way as to focus on gestural communication, rehearsal technique, and the development of the musical product (in much same manner as a guest conductor in a festival setting).
2. The selection panel will place primary value on gestural communication, musicianship/listening, and rehearsal technique.

D. Camera Angle

1. The camera angle will show a full frontal view of the applicant and all conducting movements.
2. The choral sound and comments of the applicant must be clearly audible on the video recording.
3. The applicant will begin each selection by announcing the title and composer of the work to be presented.

E. Personal Identification

1. The applicant will **not** identify him/herself, nor the institution of higher learning in the recorded audition.

F. Audition Format and Duration

1. The video recorded selections will be presented consecutively **without stopping the recording device between selections**
2. The video recording will **not be edited** in any manner
3. The video recording will show the applicant conducting and rehearsing the choir for a **minimum of ten minutes and a maximum of twelve minutes**
4. The time should be divided equally between the two selections

G. Audition Submission

1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to upload the video audition to YouTube
2. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the selection committee with the correct URL for accessing the video. (It is strongly suggested that the applicant cut and paste the URL directly from the browser into the application.)
3. Videos must be anonymous. **A video with the applicant's name in the title or in the YouTube channel name will be disqualified.**
4. Applicants whose video auditions are not accessible to the committee will be disqualified.

H. Verification

1. The video recording will be monitored by two ACTIVE ACDA members (non-students) who will certify on the application form that:
 - a. the applicant has not previously rehearsed the music with the choir nor heard the choir rehearse or perform the music presented in the uploaded audition video, AND
 - b. the applicant meets all of the criteria specified in these guidelines.

- c. It is solely the applicant's responsibility to ensure that s/he complies with the rules and regulations of the competition specified by these guidelines.

DEADLINE: The completed application materials, verifications, all supporting documentation, and video upload to YouTube must be completed no later than midnight on October 31, 2018. All application materials become the property of the American Choral Directors Association.

NOTE: An incomplete or erroneous application will disqualify the applicant.

III. Audition Review Process

- A. The National Student Conducting Competition Committee, hereafter referred to as the "NSCC Committee," will appoint a review panel who will review all submissions with the goal of selecting a maximum of eight graduate students to advance to the semifinal round.
- B. The review panel will place primary emphasis on gestural language, musicianship/listening, and rehearsal technique.
- C. Applicants for the ACDA Student Conducting Competition will be notified by email on or before December 30 of the student conductors selected to advance to the semi-final round at the National Conference.

IV. Convention Session

- A. The semi-final round will be held during the ACDA National Conference for the purpose of selecting a maximum of four graduate students to advance to the final round. The following guidelines will be followed:
 - 1. Choral repertoire for the semifinal and final rounds will be selected by the NSCC Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, and emailed to semi-finalists by January 10, 2019. It is the semifinalists' responsibility to acquire the selected compositions at their own expense.
- C. The competition choir will have prepared the music before the semi-finalists work with them. The semi-finalists should not be affiliated in any way with the competition choir.
- D. The NSCC committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will select judges from the membership. The identity of the judges will not be announced until the end of the round. During the semifinal round, a non-scoring adjudicator will also be provided to offer constructive written comments on each student's conducting. Student conductors will receive these written comments via mail no later than four weeks after the event.
- E. The semi-finalists will meet in a separate room to draw for conducting order and will remain there except when they conduct in the performance room.
- F. Each conductor will be identified before the judges and audience by letter name only (contestant A, etc.)

- G. Each semi-finalist will be given eight minutes to conduct/rehearse the choir. A timekeeper will inform the conductors when four minutes have elapsed and when time has expired.

V. Scoring

- A. Conductors will be evaluated on a numerical scale on items including, but not limited to:
1. Conducting Technique
 - a. Clarity
 - b. Use of both hands
 - c. Cuing
 - d. Releases
 2. Interpretation
 - a. Tempo
 - b. Expression/Style
 - c. Dynamics
 - d. Facial expression
 - e. Body language
 3. Rehearsal Technique
 - a. Eye contact
 - b. Musicianship/listening
 - c. Verbal directions
 - d. Grasp of singing diction
 - e. Confidence
 - f. Effectiveness of verbal directions
 - g. Pacing
 - h. Treatment of rhythmic and tonal acuity
 - i. Ability to cultivate collective sound
- B. After all semi-finalists at each level have finished conducting, the judges, without conferring, will rank the students. Two divisional Repertoire & Standards chairs will tabulate the scores. The four students who are selected by the judges will be announced as the ACDA Conducting Finalists and will advance to the final round.
- C. If required, two or more conductors involved in a numerical tie in the voting will be recalled for an additional five minute period of conducting.
- K. All sessions in the ACDA Student Conducting Competition are open to all registered convention attendees.

VI. Final Round

- A. The final round for graduate students will be held for the purpose of selecting the winners of the ACDA Student Conducting Competition. The format will be similar to the Semi-Final Round, with the following exceptions:
1. Only those selected to advance from the Semi-final round will participate.
 2. The final graduate rounds are typically held on Friday, the third full day of the convention.
 3. Conductors will rehearse the same choir they worked with in the semifinal round.

4. After the graduate finals are completed and votes are tallied, the winners of the ACDA Student Conducting Competition will be announced.

Disclaimer

No member of the NSCC committee, nor any judge, teller, or person connected with the selection of semi-finalists or conducting of the semi-final or final rounds shall be involved with any decision involving that person's student (over the past three years) who has applied or been selected as a participant in the ACDA Conducting Competition. The NSCC Committee is under no obligation to award semi-final, final, or winner status if satisfactory candidates cannot be identified. All decisions made by the judges are final.