

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTING COMPETITION 2027

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

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INTERNATIONAL
CONDUCTING
COMPETITION
2027

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WORLD FEDERATION
OF INTERNATIONAL
MUSIC COMPETITIONS

Member of the World Federation of International Music Competitions

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1 OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The Tokyo International Conducting Competition invites the wide participation of capable musicians with the aim of unearthing and nurturing outstanding talent. In addition to providing robust support to such musicians around the world and their musical activities, the Competition promotes international cultural exchange and contributes to the development of musical culture.

Dates	**October 4 (Mon) – October 10 (Sun), 2027**
Venue	**Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall**
Organizer	Min-On Concert Association
In cooperation with	Association of Japanese Symphony Orchestras
	Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

HISTORY

Organized by the Min-On Concert Association, the Competition began in 1967 as the "Min-On Competition." It was renamed the "Tokyo International Music Competition" in 1988 and the "Tokyo International Conducting Competition" in 2024.

2 ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

The organization structure comprises the Executive Committee, the Panel of Judges, and the Competition Office.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson	Yasuharu Ito	(Vice Prisident, Min-On Concert Association)
Vice Chairperson	Mitsuaki Tsunoda	(Executive Director, Planning Division, Min-On Concert Association)
Members	Junichi Hirokami	(Music Director, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra; Artistic Leader, Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa; Friend of JPO, Artistic Advisor at Japan Philharmonic Orchestra; Friendship Conductor, Sapporo Symphony Orchestra; Music and Artistic Advisor, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra; Professor, Department of Conducting, Tokyo College of Music)
	Hiroshi Kuwabara	(Advisor, The Association of Japanese Symphony Orchestras)
	Tadaaki Otaka	(Permanent Conductor, NHK Symphony Orchestra; Music Director, Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra; Professor Emeritus, Tokyo University of the Arts; Member, Japan Art Academy)
	Tatsuya Shimono	(Permanent Conductor, NHK Symphony Orchestra; Music Director, Chiba Prefectural Youth Orchestra; Conductor Laureate, Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra; Music Director,Hiroshima Wind Orchestra; Principal Guest Conductor, Sapporo Symphony Orchestra; Visiting Professor, Senzoku Gakuen College of Music; Visiting Professor, Department of Conducting, Tokyo University of the Arts; Specially Appointed Professor, Wind Ensemble Academy, Tokyo College of Music)
	Ken Takaseki	(Principal Conductor, Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra; Chief Conductor, Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra; Chief Conductor, Mt. Fuji Philharmonic Orchestra; Professor Emeritus, Tokyo University of the Arts)

PANEL OF JUDGES

Chairperson	Tadaaki Otaka	(same as above)
Judges	Jeff Alexander	(USA; President, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association)
	Mike George	(UK; Former Senior Producer, BBC Philharmonic)
	Junichi Hirokami	(same as above)
	Rainer Honeck	(Austria; Concertmaster, Vienna Philharmonic; Conductor Emeritus, Kioi Hall Chamber Orchestra)
	Okko Kamu	(Finland; Former Principal Conductor, Lahti Symphony Orchestra)
	Kazushi Ono	(Artistic Director of Opera, New National Theatre, Tokyo; Music Director, Brussels Philharmonic; Artistic Advisor, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra)
	Tatsuya Shimono	(same as above)
	Hubert Soudant	(Netherlands; Conductor Laureate, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra)
	Ken Takaseki	(same as above)

COMPETITION OFFICE

Director of the Competition Office	Daijo Matsushima	(Vice Executive Director, Division of Planning and Coordination, Min-On Concert Association)

3 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be 38 years of age or younger at the time of the final round.
Former 1st Prize winners of this competition are not eligible to compete again.

APPLICATION PERIOD

Applications must be submitted between 00:00 on Monday, February 8, 2027, and 23:59 on Thursday, May 13, 2027 (Japan Standard Time).

HOW TO APPLY

Enter the following information on the application website (https://www.conductingtokyo.org).

Curriculum Vitae	Briefly enter your educational background, teachers, musical activities, awards, etc., in the specified format.
Photograph	Attach a photograph taken within the last six months.
Proof of Date of Birth	Attach a copy of your passport or other valid document.
Pieces of Choice for the Final Round (3 pieces)	Enter your first through third choices. The pieces must not overlap with the assigned pieces. For each piece, clearly state the composer's name, opus/catalogue number, and edition in both the original language and English. *For details, see "Final Round" under "4 Judging."
Screening Video	Upload the video to the internet and enter the URL. *For details, see "Selection Based on Documents and Video Footage" under "4 Judging."
Note	Providing false information will result in disqualification.

PARTICIPATION FEE

Participants in the First Preliminary Round (those who pass the Selection Based on Documents and Video Footage) must pay a participation fee of 50,000 yen (cash, JPY only) at the time of registration and orientation.

INQUIRIES

Tokyo International Conducting Competition Office, c/o Min-On Concert Association
8 Shinanomachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-8588
https://www.conductingtokyo.org

4 JUDGING

JUDGING GUIDELINES

Following selection based on documents and video footage, the Competition will be held in three stages: the First Preliminary Round, the Second Preliminary Round and the Final Round.
The order of appearance in the preliminary and final rounds will be determined by lottery, and the judging sessions will be open to the public (admission tickets required).
The Final Round will be held in concert format.

SELECTION BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND VIDEO FOOTAGE

Submit a screening video via the application form.

Assigned piece: Select and perform any one piece from the following works.

- L. v. Beethoven: Overture to Egmont, Op. 84 (any edition)
- L. v. Beethoven: Overture to Fidelio, Op. 72 (any edition)

Filming Guidelines

The video must have been recorded on or after January 1, 2022, and must show the applicant conducting and the performers playing simultaneously.
The formation may be an orchestra, chamber ensemble, ensemble, or two or more pianos.
If using a video sharing site, set the video to "Private" or similar and do not make it public.
Applicants must obtain prior permission for any copyrights and portrait rights related to the performance.
The Document and Video Footage Selection Committee will select the participants for the First Preliminary Round. Results will be announced on the application website by August 11, 2027.



Framing Example

ASSIGNED PIECES

First Preliminary Round

F. J. Haydn: Symphony No. 99 in E-flat Major, Hob. I:99 (Bärenreiter edition)
In addition to the above, contestants must perform one piece on the day of the competition selected randomly from the following:
W. A. Mozart: Opera The Marriage of Figaro (Le nozze di Figaro), K. 492 (Bärenreiter edition)
- Act III, Recitative and Aria: "Hai già vinta la causa!... Vedrò, mentr'io sospiro"
- Act III, Recitative and Aria: "E Susanna non vien!... Dove sono i bei momenti"

Second Preliminary Round

I. Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements (Schott edition)
C. Franck: Symphony in D Minor, M. 48 (Breitkopf edition)
E. Elgar: Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85 (Bärenreiter edition)

Final Round

J. Strauss II: Overture to Die Fledermaus (Breitkopf edition)

PIECE CHOSEN FOR FINAL ROUND

The Executive Committee will decide on the piece to be conducted by each contestant from among the three pieces of choice submitted at the time of application, and will notify finalists of their decision after the Second Preliminary Round.

Notes on Formation

Symphonies or orchestral works with standard triple winds and no more than six percussion players (including timpani), without instrumental solos, vocal solos or choruses.
Up to one saxophone and up to two harps are permitted.

EVENT SCHEDULE

	Dates	Venue	Notes
Registration and Orientation	October 3 (Sun)	Min-On Culture Center	—
First Preliminary Round	October 4 (Mon) and 5 (Tue)	Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall	Orchestra: Japan Philharmonic Orchestra
Second Preliminary Round	October 6 (Wed) and 7 (Thu)		
Final Round Rehearsals	October 8 (Fri) and 9 (Sat)		Orchestra: Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra
Final Round	October 10 (Sun)		
Award Ceremony	October 10 (Sun)		—
Press Conference	October 11 (Mon; national holiday) *tentative	Min-On Culture Center	—

5 AWARDS

1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes will be awarded to the winners; all other finalists will receive honorable mentions.
If two or more contestants tie for the same prize, each winner will receive the full cash award.
(If there aren't any eligible winners, the prize will not be awarded.)

1st Prize	**2,000,000 yen**
2nd Prize	**1,000,000 yen**
3rd Prize	**500,000 yen**

Special Award (Hideo Saito Award) **500,000 yen**

The Executive Committee will review the contestants from the preliminary and final rounds and select recipients accordingly. There may be cases where no candidates are selected.
The Hideo Saito Award is a special award established to honor the tremendous contributions made to the Competition from its inception by Hideo Saito (1902–1974), a conductor, cellist and educator who trained many world-class musicians, including Seiji Ozawa, and who served as the first chairperson of the Panel of Judges, and to encourage the next generation of talent.
The prize money for this award is funded by donations from Hideo Saito's family.

Encouragement Award	**150,000 yen** (awarded to honorable mention recipients)
Audience Award	**100,000 yen** (selected by audience vote from among the finalists)
Orchestra Award	**Those selected will be offered the opportunity to perform in a concert presented by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra during their 2029 season.** (selected among the finalists by vote of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, which performs on the day of the Final Round)

DEBUT CONCERT FOR PRIZE WINNERS

In order to introduce the winners to the wider public, a Debut Concert for Prize Winners will be held on the following dates.
Winners are required to perform at the Debut Concert for Prize Winners, and performers will be paid specified travel, accommodation and transportation expenses.

July 2028

Venue	Suntory Hall (tentative)
Orchestra	NHK Symphony Orchestra

2028–2029 ***Highest-ranked prize winner only**

Venue	Lithuanian National Philharmonic Concert Hall (tentative)
Orchestra	Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra

6 SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Participants in the First Preliminary Round who reside outside Japan will receive the following assistance.

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

International airfare subsidy: 50,000 yen for participants from Asia; 100,000 yen for participants from regions outside Asia.
Accommodation: Lodging will be provided during the judging period. However, lodging other than that designated by the organizer will not be covered.

ENTRY PROCEDURES

In principle, participants are responsible for completing entry procedures themselves. If an invitation letter or similar document is required, please notify the Competition Office.

7 TERMS AND CONDITIONS / DISCLAIMER

RIGHTS

The organizer holds the rights to record, film, stream, sell and otherwise use materials from the Competition.

DISCLAIMER

The organizer shall not be liable for any accidents or damages that occur during participation.

OTHER

Decisions made by the various committees regarding the administration of the Competition, selection and judging are final, and participants may not raise objections.
The Executive Committee reserves the right to add, delete or amend provisions even after the announcement of these Guidelines. Matters not specified in these Guidelines shall be subject to the instructions and decisions of the Executive Committee.
Any litigation arising from the Competition shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of Japan.
These Guidelines will be prepared in English, French and Japanese, with the Japanese version held to be the original text.

(As of September 2026)

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