



Bach Society of Dayton's 2026 Young Composers Competition

This year's competition invites composers to create and submit new choral works that celebrate the holiday season in December. We welcome compositions that capture the spirit of both religious and non-religious holidays, including but not limited to Christmas, Hanukkah, and Yule (Winter Solstice). The focus is on highlighting the atmosphere of the season.

Prizes

Two Prizes totaling \$4,500 may be awarded. Bach Society of Dayton, Inc. (BSD) reserves the right to award two prizes, one prize, or no prize, at its discretion, upon review of submissions.

- First Prize: US\$3,000
- Second Prize: US\$1,500
- Winning compositions that will be performed at **“Sweet Sounds of the Holidays” concert by the Bach Society of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio on December 6, 2026.**
- If prize winners are available, BSD will provide travel and lodging expenses including round-trip domestic airfare (or rental car and fuel if traveling by car) to Dayton, as well as lodging on Friday and Saturday night to attend the premiere performance. Please note that travel and lodging expenses are covered for prize winners only, and not for spouses or additional guests. Winners and their guests will also receive complimentary tickets to the performance and are invited to attend an honorary dinner on Saturday evening (December 5) following the dress rehearsal with the competition judges and members of the board of directors.
- BSD will professionally record and livestream the premiere performance of the prize-winning compositions and provide a copy of the recording to the winning composers.

Criteria

Level: The winning composition must be at a technical level that makes performance of all parts and movements possible by a volunteer adult choir of 65 voices.

Form: Only original compositions are accepted (no arrangements of existing works). Submissions must be written in standard Western tonal style using conventional musical notation.

Voicing:

- Maximum of 8 parts (SATB with divisi)
- No solos, duets, or small ensembles
- Moderate vocal ranges and harmonic language for all parts

Text: The text of the choral composition may be either religious or non-religious, if it is in the public domain or newly written by the composer or a collaborating lyricist. The text should convey the spirit of the winter holiday season. Please note that references to alcohol consumption are not permitted, as they may conflict with certain religious sensitivities.

Accompaniment: A cappella or piano accompaniment only. No bells or children's choir.

Audio File: Each applicant is required to submit an audio file of the composition in MIDI, mp3, or WAV format.

Length: Total of 4-6 minutes

Eligibility

- We encourage all young composers younger than age 30 as of August 31, 2026, to participate, including international students. Previous winners are not eligible to apply.

Submission

Entry Deadline: Each submission must be received by August 31, 2026.

- Compositions need not be newly created for this competition; however, all submissions must have not been previously performed in public. BSD will make the world premiere performance of the winning entry.
- Maximum of two entries per composer.
- Submit electronically a PDF of score and an audio file (MIDI, mp3, or WAV) as attachments emailed to BSDYCC@gmail.com with Subject: "2026 BSD Choral Composition."
- Choral/vocal scores must be in American letter-size (8.5 x 11 inches), portrait format.
- Each score must be submitted without the composer's name printed on it. Judging will be conducted anonymously.
- Scores must use standard music printing notation and must be clear and ready for duplication and performance. Later, sheet music for each winning composition will be printed with the composer's name and a note about the prize it won.
- A completed copy of the Entry Form must accompany each submission.
- The names of all applicants and judges will be held in confidence, and only the winners will be announced publicly.
- All costs of preparing and submitting a score for entry will be borne solely by applicant. Bach Society of Dayton will not be liable for any costs incurred in association with any entry.

Evaluation

A panel comprising BSD's Music Director, Accompanist, and three guest judges will review all submissions without knowing the composers and will select no more than two winning compositions. This evaluation will take into consideration the quality of each piece and its suitability for a successful performance by BSD. The decisions of the judging panel will be final. Winning pieces and composers will be announced by mid-September 2026.

Copyrights

BSD shall retain unlimited performance and mechanical rights to performances and recordings made by BSD. The composer shall retain all other copy, performance, and mechanical rights to their works.

For further inquiries, please feel free to contact us at BSDYCC@gmail.com



Entry Form
2026 Young Composers Competition
sponsored by
Bach Society of Dayton, Inc.

Submit a PDF of the score attached to an email with the Subject: “2026 Young Composers Composition,” along with this Entry Form, sent to: BSDYCC@gmail.com

Please attach a photo of a government-issued ID which shows the applicant will be younger than age 30 on August 31, 2026

Note: if submitting more than one composition, please complete and submit a separate application form for each.

- 1. Date of submission:**
- 2. Applicant’s name:**
- 3. Applicant’s email address:**
- 4. Applicant’s phone number:**
- 5. Applicant’s physical address:**
- 6. Application’s educational background (names of schools):**
- 7. Author and title of the text in this musical composition:**
- 8. Please tell us where you heard about this competition:**