Lucas Darger | Music Director
SOUTHWEST SYMPHONY

2026-2027 SWS YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION

There are three parts to this competition: The First Round will be online video submissions. Finalists will be selected from the video submissions to perform in the Finalist Recital, which will also serve as the Second Round of the Competition. The Gold Medal Winner, selected at the Finalist Recital, will perform as a soloist with the Southwest Symphony in concert on Friday, March 5, 2027 and will receive a $3,000 scholarship. The winner of the Youth Category may be invited to perform with the Symphony on an outreach concert. All finalists will receive a $300 cash prize.

AUDITION DETAILS

Round One

1. The First Round will be judged using online video submissions that must be submitted by midnight, November 13, 2026. Contestants should submit a YouTube link to a video of them performing the piece, showing both the contestant and their accompanist. There will be a place to paste your link into your application.
2. The following rules apply to video submissions:
    a. Contestants must perform the entire movement or vocal selection, with cadenza, if appropriate.
    b. Contestants, except pianists, shall perform with an accompanist and must provide their own. Pianists may perform without accompaniment for the first round only.
    c. Solo contestants must perform from memory. Ensembles may use music in auditions but should be prepared to play from memory in the concert if selected and asked to do so.
    d. Your name should not appear in your video.
    e. The camera should focus on you and your accompanist so that your image fills the screen as much as possible.
    f. The picture must remain stationary without any panning, fade-in/fade-out, close-up techniques, or use of multiple cameras.
    g. No modifications should be made to the original solo part.
    h. Contestants should perform just one piece or movement of a concerto, and must audition with the same piece and movement that they would perform in the concert, if selected.
3. At least one finalist from each age category will be selected to continue on to the Final Round, up to a total of six finalists.
4. Age Categories are as follows: College (under graduates); High School (Grades 9-12); and Youth (Grade 8 and Younger).

Round Two

1. The Second Round will be a live recital that will take place on Tuesday, January 12, 2027, at 7:30 PM in the Eccles Concert Hall at Utah Tech University.

2. Contestants will need to submit an electronic biography and professional-quality headshot for use in the program and for publicity purposes within one week of being selected.
3. At the time of check-in, contestants must turn in a solo part or score for each judge – 5 total.
4. Video and audio recording are strictly prohibited in Eccles Fine Arts Center during the competition.

DEADLINES

1. Applications may be submitted online beginning October 16, 2026, and must be received no later than midnight on November 13, 2026. Applications are available at www.swsutah.org.
2. First Round results will be emailed and posted to the Southwest Symphony website by December 1, 2026.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Auditions are open to students in grades 6-12 as well as college students who have not yet completed a Bachelor's degree.
2. Applicants must currently reside in Utah.
3. All applicants must be able to attend rehearsal Wednesday evenings: February 17, February 24, March 3, as well as the Dress Rehearsal Thursday, March 4th, and the Concert Friday, March 5th.
4. Applications and Online Submissions must be received by midnight, November 13, 2026. Each student in an ensemble needs to submit a separate application, but can link to the same video.
5. Student(s) who performed as soloists or in an ensemble for the 2025-2026 Concerto Competition Concert are not eligible to audition for the Concerto Competition in 2026-27. However, students who played in the Finalist Recital ARE eligible to audition again this year.
6. A separate application must be submitted for each piece played in an audition with the following stipulations:
    a. Students may audition with only one solo piece on a single instrument.
    b. Students may audition as a soloist on different instruments.
    c. Students may audition as a soloist and in an ensemble on the same instrument.
    d. Students may audition as a soloist and in an ensemble on different instruments.
7. During their years of eligibility, students may perform up to three times in a Southwest Symphony concert.
    a. Any student who has already soloed three or more times in a Southwest Symphony Concerto Competition concert prior to the current season is no longer eligible to audition.
    b. Performance limits are counted for an individual with no distinctions made for multiple instruments or solo vs. ensemble performances.
    c. A student who performs on different instruments will still count each individual piece as a separate performance.
    d. A student who performs a solo and in an ensemble, on the same or different concerts, will still count each individual piece as a separate performance.
    e. A student who has already met their Solo Competition performance limits may not audition again.

GENERAL RULES

1. Any expenses related to audition or performance are the responsibility of the contestant.
2. The Conductor is solely responsible for determining the number of competitors to be offered an opportunity to perform with Southwest Symphony and the placement of soloists in the concert.
3. Selection of soloists by the audition committee is final. If selected, the auditioned work is to be performed in the concert. No repertoire change is permitted.
4. Any participant submitting false data on any application or information form related to the selection process may be immediately disqualified at the sole discretion of Southwest Symphony.
5. COURTESY AND SPORTSMANSHIP: Southwest Symphony competitions are designed to provide a rewarding educational experience to students whose hard work and dedication has already been proven. Students benefit

greatly by learning to display proper and courteous behavior, even when faced with the stress of competition or the disappointment of not placing. Competitors, parents, and teachers share in the responsibility of upholding these standards. Interfering with contestants or competition procedures, using abusive or offensive language, or making disrespectful remarks concerning contestants, parents, teachers, judges, staff, volunteers, or the Competition, instills in student's values in direct opposition to those intended to be taught by this Competition. Any behavior deemed by Southwest Symphony administration to degrade the high quality of courtesy and musicianship expected of those invited to compete may result in disqualification for the current or future years. This statement applies to students, parents, and teachers before, during, and after the competition.

6. Failure to follow any of the above rules will lead to automatic disqualification from the audition or performance.

Southwest Symphony reserves the right to make binding decisions in unusual or questionable circumstances in regards to audition requirements and regulations, or to their intent, or to any situation not specifically covered by the above. Please contact orchestra@swsutah.org with any further questions or concerns.