

# **THE AZRIELI MUSIC PRIZES**

## 2028 Call for Applications

**Focus:** Chamber Music (Up to 15 musicians)

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**Launch Date:** February 4, 2026

**Application Deadline:** May 6, 2026

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### **Applications accepted online via Muvac:**

**Canadian Music:**

[muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-canadian-commission](https://muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-canadian-commission)

**International Music:**

[muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-international-commission](https://muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-international-commission)

**Jewish Music:**

[muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-jewish-commission](https://muvac.com/competition/the-azrieli-foundation-jewish-commission)

Created in 2014 by Sharon Azrieli CQ for the Azrieli Foundation, the Azrieli Music Prizes (AMP) offer opportunities for the discovery, creation, performance and celebration of excellence in music composition.

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## The Azrieli Music Prizes

The Azrieli Music Prizes comprise three thematic commissioning prizes.

### The three Prizes are:

#### **The Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music**

Awarded to a composer who engages critically and creatively with the complexities of composing music in Canada today.

#### **The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music**

Awarded to a composer who engages critically and creatively with the question "What is Jewish Music?".

#### **The Azrieli Commission for International Music**

Awarded to a composer who engages deeply in exploring cultural expression that has a meaningful connection to their lived experience.

The Prizes are awarded on a competitive basis **to an individual composer whose application proposes a response to the selected Prize theme that displays the utmost creativity, artistry, technical mastery and professional expertise.** Applications, as described below, include samples of the composer's past work, a written essay (the Proposal) and other supporting documents. Each prize winner (Laureate) is then commissioned to write a *new* work for chamber ensemble (3-15 players), to be delivered in summer 2028.

The musical works resulting from each of the three Prizes will be:

- awarded a cash prize of \$50,000 CAD;
- given a premiere at the AMP Gala Concert in Montreal in Fall 2028;
- given two subsequent international performances; and
- professionally recorded for a future commercial release.

AMP Laureates attend the rehearsals, performances and recordings of their Prize-winning works.

Altogether, the prize package for each Azrieli Music Prize is valued at over \$250,000 CAD.

For more information on the theme of each Prize, please see [section 5](#).

## 2. Eligibility

- Composers of all faiths, backgrounds, genders, ages and levels of experience may apply to all three Prizes.
- Composers of all nationalities may apply to the Jewish Music and International Music Prizes. The Canadian Music Prize is open only to Canadian citizens and to Canadian residents. Canadians living abroad may also apply.
- For all Prizes, the Proposed Musical Work must fulfil all criteria described in the “Guidelines for the Proposed Musical Work (Commission)” in [section 3.1](#) below.
- The Proposed Musical Work must align with the thematic definitions outlined by the Azrieli Foundation, found in [section 5](#).
- All application documents and supporting materials must be submitted electronically via the Muvac portal between February 4 and May 6, 2026. Applications received after May 6 at 11:59 PM ET will be disqualified.
- **\*new\*** Applicants are eligible to apply for one Prize per competition cycle. For clarity, this means that applicants may apply to the Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music **OR** the Azrieli Commission for International Music **OR** the Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music. Only one application per composer per Prize category will be accepted.

## 3. The Application Package

The application package is the combination of all documents and information submitted through the Muvac platform. The application must include:

- **A current curriculum vitae (CV)** highlighting relevant training, experience, performances and awards.
- **A one-page works list** detailing a key selection of the composer’s original and completed musical works, their premiere dates and recordings, where applicable.
- **A written Proposal** for a new musical work not to exceed 1,500 words. Proposal specifications are provided in [section 3.2](#).
- **Two work samples**, each with a score and recording:
  - One sample should be the composer’s best composition (regardless of instrumentation)
  - One sample should be the composer’s best composition that is closest to the instrumentation required for the commission.
  - The work samples can be approximately 10-20 minutes in duration, each. If they are substantially longer, the composer may provide an excerpt that they would like the Jury to consult.
  - MIDI realizations or piano reduction recordings may be submitted where live audio recordings are unavailable.

- **Two reference letters** from past commissioners, producers, presenters, performers or other artistic partners.
  - The purpose of these letters is to demonstrate the composer's capacity to deliver on their Proposal. Additionally, if they are selected as an AMP Laureate, their ability to serve well as such. This includes such attributes as professionalism, time management, public speaking and communication skills and the ability to work collaboratively.
- All documents must be uploaded as PDFs.

Please consider:

A successful application demonstrates a clear balance between musical work samples and the written Proposal. Strong musical samples must be supported by a well-researched, thoughtful Proposal. The strength of one will not compensate for weakness in the other. Also, the clarity and quality of submitted scores and recordings are essential to the Jury's evaluation; materials should be legible, complete and presented in clear, undistorted audio. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Guidelines for the Proposed Musical Work and the Guidelines for Writing the Proposal, as well as the Adjudication Criteria in Appendix 2, which outlines the assessment metrics used in adjudication.

## Questions & Technical Support

For questions regarding the substance of the application, please contact [music@azrielifoundation.org](mailto:music@azrielifoundation.org). For technical assistance, please log in and visit Muvac's support page, or email [support@muvac.com](mailto:support@muvac.com).

### 3.1. Guidelines for the Proposed Musical Work

#### Basic Criteria:

- **Theme:** The Proposed Musical Work ("The Work") must align with one of the three Prize Themes, as defined by the Foundation. (See [section 5](#))
- **Every Proposal must be for a new work yet-to-be-written.** The Work must not be completed at the time of submission. For clarity, composers should not "write on spec" or compose the Work and submit it as part of their application package. The preference is for works that are entirely new.
- **Instrumentation:** The Work must be scored for a chamber ensemble, numbering from 3 to 15 musicians (see [Appendix 1](#) for exact instrumentation details). For example, piano trio, string quartet, mixed septet or ensemble of 15 instruments would all be eligible.

- In addition, Works can optionally include:
  - up to a total of two (2) additional soloists (vocal and/or instrumental); and
  - digital media and live electronic (see [Appendix 1](#))
- **Duration:** The Work must be a minimum of twelve (12) minutes and a maximum of eighteen (18) minutes in duration when performed.

### Other Considerations:

- Proposals to create a section of a larger work (e.g. movement) are permitted, provided the proposed section is musically and thematically coherent as a standalone piece. In other words, the Prize Package will be given to the winning composer only for the performance & recording of the 12–18 minute section that has been proposed.
- Proposed Works must be for concert format (i.e. unstaged).
- Extra-musical elements that are common in the concert format, including video projections or simple lighting may be proposed. Extra-musical elements including, but not limited to, stage direction, choreography, costume, makeup, adornments, set, props, dancers, actors and additional artistic personnel such as directors, dramaturgs and designers will not be considered. Proposals including such elements will be disqualified.
- If the composer is using a text in their Work, they must have the rights to use it (see [Appendix 1](#)).

## 3.2 Guidelines for Writing the Written Proposal

- **Contents of the Proposal:** The Written Proposal (“The Proposal”) should be prepared as an essay that describes in detail the composer’s Work including, but not limited to, its:
  - Instrumentation
  - Duration
  - Description/Rationale
  - Relevance to the Prize Theme
  - Musical and Technical Details (e.g. musical influences and idioms, styles, structure, etc.)
- **Relevance to the Prize Theme:** Composers must carefully consider the provided information in [section 5](#) regarding the Azrieli Foundation’s definition of each Prize Theme when addressing the thematic area of the Work.

- A successful Proposal will suggest an interesting, appropriate yet compelling response to one of the three Prize Themes in the shape of a Work. We are calling on composers to display their creativity, curiosity and thoughtfulness in expressing their response. We are also calling for a deeper, purposeful and conscious consideration of cultural values and experiences that extend beyond simple representations. We are seeking Works that are authentic to the composer, original, honest and convincing. For the purposes of adjudication, "authentic" refers to work that is internally coherent, well-grounded and convincingly articulated, rather than to questions of identity or origin.
- **Capacity to deliver:** The composer must demonstrate within their Proposal their capacity to write the Work.
- A successful Proposal will be technically, artistically and thematically coherent. It need not be the most ambitious in scale or length. The feasibility of the Work and the composer's proven capacity to deliver on its specifications are taken into consideration by the Jury.

## 4. Acceptable Uses of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

To ensure fairness and clarity, the following rules apply to any use of AI tools in preparing the application:

### Permitted Uses of AI

AI tools may be used **only** to support language, communication and presentation, including:

- translation of application materials;
- proofreading and correction of grammar or clarity; and/or
- organizing or phrasing written materials such as the Proposal, CV or works list.

AI tools may also be used to generate electronic audio demos (e.g., MIDI mockups) when a live performance recording is not available.

### Prohibited Uses of AI

AI tools **may not** be used to create, develop or influence musical content of any kind. This includes, but is not limited to:

- brainstorming ideas for the Proposed Musical Work;
- developing musical concepts or themes;
- generating structural, harmonic, melodic or rhythmic ideas;
- orchestrating or arranging musical material; and/or
- any form of compositional decision-making.

For clarity: **AI may not be used in the creation of music or musical scores in any shape or form.**

Any musical sample scores that are fully or partially created with AI assistance will result in automatic disqualification.

### **Disclosure Requirement**

**Applicants must disclose any use of AI** in preparing any portion of their application, whether it be in their Proposal, work samples or supporting materials.

Disclosure will not negatively affect adjudication. Its purpose is simply to ensure transparency and fairness for all applicants.

## **5. The Prize Themes**

The Azrieli Music Prizes are comprised of three Prizes, each of which focuses on a specific theme: Jewish Music, Canadian Music and International Music. Composers may apply to only one Prize per competition cycle.

**A Proposed Musical Work that does not demonstrate a strong thematic link to a Prize Theme will not advance.** A winning Work must both respond to the Prize Theme and be artistically excellent. For exact thematic eligibility criteria for each Prize, please see [Appendix 2](#).

### **5.1 Cultural Materials & Inspiration**

The Prize does not restrict cultural engagement by identity, heritage or nationality. While Works that explore cultural material, musical styles, themes, stories, languages or idioms outside of the composer's primary cultural background are eligible, they should be supported by any combination of the following: lived experience, sustained study, long-term collaboration or other forms of meaningful immersion, to avoid (mis)appropriation. No single pathway is presumed or required. This consideration applies across all three Prizes where relevant.

AMP is open to all composers. We welcome and encourage people from all nationalities, faiths, backgrounds, genders and ages to apply their artistry, creativity and musicality in response to the Prize Themes. One of the Foundation's hopes is that AMP will contribute to thoughtful intercultural understanding through careful consideration of what cultural expression through music is and can be.

## 5.2. Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music

The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music is open to composers worldwide. This Prize prompts composers to **creatively and critically engage with the question 'What is Jewish Music?' through the proposal of a new musical work.**

AMP defines 'Jewish music' as broadly as possible, taking into account the rich and diverse history of Jewish musical traditions, as well as music composed by Jews and non-Jews that may be said to incorporate a Jewish thematic and Jewish musical influence. Jewish themes may vary broadly and can include biblical, historical, liturgical, secular and/or folk elements.

Fundamentally, AMP encourages an understanding of Jewish music as deeply rooted in history and tradition, yet forward moving and dynamic. As such, it encourages themes and content drawn from contemporary Jewish life and experience.

Jewish music can\*:

- be based purposefully and consciously on musical materials traditionally perceived as belonging to a specifically "Jewish melos" – sacred or secular;
- incorporate actual liturgical melodies or secular folk tunes from any one of numerous distinct geographic or cultural Jewish traditions;
- be based on Jewish historical or biblical subjects, events or characters, or Jewish legends or literary themes;
- include or be founded upon Jewish texts or Jewish literature (prose, poetry or drama);
- incorporate specifically Jewish languages such as Hebrew, Yiddish or Ladino;
- depict in musical terms, with or without sung or spoken text, visual images of Jewish connection (landscapes in the land of Israel, for example) or scenes of Jewish religious or folk life (a Hassidic gathering, a Yemenite Jewish wedding or daily life of Jews in an eastern European market town, or shtetl, to cite three examples);
- express moods of Jewish life-cycle events or holy days;
- give voice to Judaic ideas or concepts; and/or
- have been composed expressly for a Jewish commemoration, celebration, ceremony or other occasion—conceived in some way to represent the nature of that occasion.

\*Excerpted from Dr. Neil W. Levin, *The Milken Archive of Jewish Music*

## 5.3 Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music

The Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music is open to composers who are Canadian citizens or Residents. This Prize prompts composers to **engage critically and creatively with the complexities of composing music in Canada today through the proposal of a new musical work.**

AMP does not require a fixed national, cultural, or personal identification to define “Canadian Music”. Instead, it refers to music that engages meaningfully with experiences, communities, histories and/or cultural expressions – whether past, present or future – within the geographic, social and/or cultural contexts of Canada, or in relation to it. This includes Indigenous, settler, immigrant, diasporic and transnational perspectives, provided the Work clearly situates its thematic and cultural engagement in relation to Canada or within its borders. What matters is not how “Canadian” a composer identifies, but how clearly, thoughtfully and authentically the Work engages with its subject matter.

That is to say, AMP treats the term ‘Canadian music’ as broadly as possible, taking into account the rich multicultural fabric of this country, which is woven together by a diversity of languages, religions, social traditions, histories, geographies and their cultural expression, including all of the music that has found its home within the nation’s borders.

Canadian music can:

- incorporate sacred or secular musical materials from one or more traditions;
- engage with historical subjects, events, figures, legends or themes connected to places or communities within Canada;
- critically engage with histories, current events, social conditions or concepts relevant to life in Canada;
- explore multicultural or intercultural experiences of life in Canada, if approached with specificity and contextual grounding;
- incorporate ritual, religious or cultural practices, traditions, texts or symbols as they are practiced, remembered or reinterpreted within Canada;
- include or be founded upon cultural texts or literature (e.g., prose, poetry or dramatic writing) by authors connected to Canada, or texts embedded in regional or widely recognized cultural life within Canada;
- draw on Indigenous, Métis or Inuit languages; English; French; or dialects specific to regions or communities within Canada, with appropriate cultural and linguistic responsibility (see [section 5.1](#));
- depict in musical terms visual or experiential images of cultural connection, such as landscapes, built environments, community spaces or scenes of everyday life;
- give voice to culturally specific ideas or concepts grounded in lived, inherited or community-based experience connected to Canada;
- explore relationships to Canada from outside its borders, including diasporic, migratory, transnational or return experiences, where Canada remains a meaningful point of reference; and
- have been composed expressly for a commemoration, celebration, ceremony or occasion of cultural, historical or social significance within Canada.

## 5.4 The Azrieli Commission for International Music

The Azrieli Commission for International Music is open to composers worldwide. This Prize prompts composers to **engage deeply in exploring cultural expression(s) that have a meaningful connection to the composer's lived experience through the proposal for a new musical work.**

For AMP, a "meaningful connection to lived experience" refers to the depth of engagement, understanding and sustained relationship a composer has with a particular culture, rather than to identity, origin or cultural affiliation. For more information, please read [section. 5.1](#). For clarity, what matters is not how much a composer identifies with a particular identity, but how clearly, thoughtfully and authentically the Work engages with its cultural expression(s).

AMP understands International Music as encompassing the full range of humanity's cultural expressions, including historical and contemporary practices; sacred and secular traditions; and indigenous, popular, folk and art music contexts. International music is understood as both deeply rooted in specific histories, rituals and traditions, and as dynamic, evolving and responsive to contemporary life and future aspirations.

International music can:

- be based purposefully and consciously on musical materials traditionally perceived as belonging to a specific community, region, nation or culture;
- incorporate sacred or secular musical materials from numerous traditions;
- be based on historical subjects, events, characters, legends or themes;
- incorporate ritual, religious or cultural practices, traditions, texts or symbols;
- draw on languages and/or dialects;
- include or be founded upon cultural texts and literature (e.g. prose, poetry or dramatic writings);
- depict in musical terms visual images of cultural connection, such as landscapes, built environments, community spaces or scenes of everyday life;
- give voice to culturally specific ideas or concepts grounded in lived, inherited or community-based experiences; have been composed expressly for a commemoration, celebration, ceremony or other occasion – conceived in some way to represent the nature or significance of that occasion; and/or
- Explore an interplay of cultures that is unique to the composer's lived experience, approached with depth, specificity and contextual grounding.

This Prize is not intended for works that assemble or reference multiple cultures as a survey, collage or pastiche, nor for projects grounded in generalized universalism. Instead, it supports focused, meaningful and deeply contextual engagement with cultural expression, where the Work demonstrates a clear and thoughtful connection to the composer's lived experience.

## 6. How Applications Will Be Evaluated (Overview)

The Azrieli Music Prizes (AMP) adjudication process includes four steps. This section summarizes how each application will be evaluated and what the Jury is looking for at each stage. For complete details of the adjudication process, including evaluation criteria for each round, please see [Appendix 2](#).

### Step 1 – Completeness Check

AMP staff confirm that all required application materials have been included, correctly formatted and are complete. Only complete applications move forward in the competition.

### Step 2 – Eligibility Check

A small team reviews the Proposal to ensure it meets the basic requirements of the selected Prize. This includes instrumentation (3–15 chamber musicians), duration (12–18 minutes) and the thematic requirements for the Jewish, Canadian or International Prizes. These are assessed via the checklists found in [Appendix 2](#). Proposals that meet both general and thematic eligibility advance in the competition.

### Step 3 – Musical & Technical Merit Adjudication

A panel of composers, musicologists, music practitioners (such as conductors, artistic directors or musicians), review the composer's sample works. They assess artistic creativity, technical craft and quality of musical writing. They also assess whether the composer demonstrates the experience and capacity to complete the Proposal at a high level. The strongest applications (i.e. the top 30 in each Prize) move forward to the Final Jury.

### Step 4 – Final Jury

The Final Jury evaluates finalists using the following two criteria:

1. **Artistic Excellence** – the strength, originality and expressive depth of the composer's musical vision, supported by refined technique and idiomatic writing for chamber music, demonstrated through their musical samples.
2. **Thematic Alignment** – how meaningfully, thoughtfully and creatively the Work engages in the specific theme of the Prize.

To be selected for the commission, an application package must achieve the highest ranking within both criteria.

### Notification of Results

Composers will receive a confirmation via Muvac when their application is submitted. All applicants are notified of results via Muvac; winners will be contacted directly.

Due to the volume of applications, AMP cannot respond to emails requesting updates or confirmations that their application has been received.

## 7. Prize-Winner (Laureate) Responsibilities

The composer who wins an Azrieli Music Prize agrees to:

- adhere to the Prize Guidelines published by AMP, including but not limited to duration and instrumentation for the commissioned work;
- engage in the composition of their Proposed Musical Work during the time allotted between their selection as the Prize Laureate and the deadline for submitting the score (summer 2028);
- update the Specialist, Azrieli Music Prizes and other AMP representatives (as required) according to a pre-approved schedule, including such details as progress made towards completing the commissioned work and/or identifying any major deviations from the original proposal;
- ensure that all copyrighted materials used in the commissioned work have been disclosed to the Specialist, Azrieli Music Prizes, and that all rights have been granted in writing (if applicable);
- work closely with their commissioned author, in the event that a composer commissions a new text, to ensure all guidelines and timelines are met (if applicable);
- work with a copyist or editor to prepare the final score and performance set for delivery;
- have their work premiered as part of the AMP Gala Concert; performed as part of two additional international concerts; audiovisually captured, livestreamed and distributed via one or more digital platform(s); and professionally audio recorded, mixed and mastered for future commercial release;
- make themselves available (either physically or virtually, as conditions dictate) for the rehearsals and performances of their Prize-winning work (at AMP's expense);
- grant the Azrieli Foundation the right to serve as sole commissioner, thereby retaining performance rights for the premiere, international performances and audiovisual capture, recording and distribution rights;
- provide any information required by AMP representatives relating to their score, its performance, or other information which might be useful from a marketing, public relations or social media perspective; and
- participate in outreach events (workshops, press conferences, media interviews and other such promotion and education activities) as they relate to the Azrieli Music Prizes and its objective to educate the public about the enduring appeal and artistic importance of the works that result from engaging with the Prize Themes.

## Appendix 1: Instrumentation & Text

The Proposed Musical Work for chamber group and optional soloists must respect the following maximum instrumentation as listed below.

All instrumentations are eligible, provided:

1. It is scored for between 3 and 15 players  
and
2. It is made up from the list of instruments below, in any configuration.

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
Bass  
Flute  
Oboe  
Clarinet 1  
Clarinet 2  
Bassoon  
French Horn  
Trumpet  
Trombone  
Piano  
Percussion

For clarity, the work could be for all 15 players, or could be for a smaller ensemble such as wind quintet, string quartet, piano quintet, brass trio, mixed septet, etc. All combinations are **equally eligible**.

### Soloist (Optional)

Soloists are optional. If the composer chooses to include soloists, they may employ up to a total of two (2). Soloists are *in addition* to the number of chamber ensemble players above. Soloists may be any combination of singer(s) or instrument(s). Instruments do not need to be from the list above and may include non-standard and non-western instruments.

## Digital Media and Live Electronics (Optional)

Digital media and live electronics are optional. Composers may incorporate pre-recorded digital media (audio and/or video) and/or limited live electronics, subject to the following conditions:

- All digital/electronic elements must be realizable within the standard technical capabilities of a professional concert hall and employable within a standard concert presentation format.
- No additional artistic or technical personnel (e.g., directors, designers, dramaturgs, technologists, external sound engineers) will be provided.
- If live electronics are used, they must be performable by a single designated performer, or by an existing musician, who must be included within the maximum of fifteen (15) performers permitted under the Prize guidelines.
- The work must remain viable for recording and for future performances by professional ensembles without any additional, specialized or non-standard infrastructure.

Composers must clearly describe the nature, format and technical requirements of any digital media or live electronics in their Proposal.

Laureates will be responsible for bearing all costs associated with creating new material and/or securing rights for copyrighted material embedded in any digital media or live electronics employed in their prize-winning work (if applicable).

## Use of Text or Other Pre-Existing Cultural Materials

If using text or other existing cultural material (e.g. electronic sound or video) as part of the Proposed Musical Work, the composer must provide the following information, depending on the type of material that is intended. The information should either appear in the Proposal proper or in an additional document.

**Please note:** The composer is responsible for all costs associated with commissioning new text/material and/or securing rights for copyrighted text/material (if applicable).

### **THE COMPOSER'S OWN PREVIOUSLY WRITTEN TEXTS/MATERIALS:**

- Please include these with the application.

### **ORIGINAL SOURCE TEXTS/MATERIALS:** *(i.e., someone else has already created these materials)*

- The title, language, author (if known) and copyright status of the texts/materials.

### **TRANSLATED/ADAPTED TEXTS/ MATERIALS:**

- The title, language, author and copyright status *of the original texts/materials*.
- The title, language, translator, and copyright status *of the translated/adapted texts/materials*.

**ADDITIONAL STEP FOR TEXTS/MATERIALS UNDER COPYRIGHT:**

- If *any* text/material is under copyright, the composer must provide proof of permission to use the text from the original author, estate, and/or publisher. Licensing of the copyrighted text can be conditional on the composer being awarded the Prize.

**ADDITIONAL STEPS FOR COMMISSIONED TEXTS/MATERIALS:** *(i.e., The composer will ask someone to create new materials if awarded the Prize)*

- If *any* text/material is being commissioned by the composer, the intended author must provide proof of their willingness to participate in the form of a signed letter. The text/material commissioning agreement can be conditional upon being awarded the Prize.
- Please include a biography of the intended author demonstrating their aptitude for creating the commissioned text/material.

**ADDITIONAL STEPS FOR TEXTS WRITTEN BY THE COMPOSER:** *(i.e., The composer wishes to create their own materials, but has not yet done so)*

- If a substantial part (more than 50%) of the text is to be written by the composer, it is strongly encouraged that they provide proof of experience writing the same style of text and experience writing in the same language. Proof can be in the form of previous musical works or samples of libretto/poetry attached to the application as additional documents; or as entries in the composer's CV that outline accolades, published works, commissions and/or recordings that include the composer's written texts.

## Appendix 2: Adjudication Process and Criteria

The Azrieli Music Prizes is committed to transparency in its adjudication process. Below are the complete adjudication guide and checklists used by the Jury. **We encourage applicants to review the process to ensure that their application is deemed eligible.** The adjudication process is in 4 steps, outlined below.

### Step 1 (Completeness)

Once received through the Muvac platform, submissions are first registered and screened by AMP staff for completeness. If all the required application documents are present and complete, the application will advance to Step 2: Eligibility. Applicants will receive confirmation of application receipt through Muvac.

### Step 2 (Eligibility)

A small team of AMP staff and external experts will evaluate all complete applications using the following checklists. All applications that meet the checklist's basic requirements are automatically advanced to Step 3: Musical/Technical Screening.

continued on next page

## GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

All of the below statements must be true for the application to be advanced to the next step.

### **Instrumentation**

- The Proposed Musical Work ("The Work") adheres to the instrumentation outlined in Appendix 1.
- The Work has no less than 3 and no more than 15 instruments, not counting soloists.

### **Duration/Minutage**

- The Proposal states explicitly the duration of the Work, which must be between 12-18 minutes in performance.

### **Soloist (optional)**

- The Work may include between 0 and 2 soloists (NB. This can be in addition to the number and type of musicians outlined in Appendix 1).

### **Text/Cultural Material (optional)**

- If the application includes text and/or cultural material, then the application includes the necessary disclosures and permissions based on the requirements outlined in Appendix 1.

## THEMATIC ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

Each Prize is for a commission on a particular theme: The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music, the Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music or the Azrieli Commission for International Music.

### **IMPORTANT:**

**In the eligibility round, evaluation is purely objective. If the Proposal meets the required threshold as defined in the checklists below, then it is deemed eligible and moves to the next step: Musical/ Technical Screening. For clarity: the quality, depth, relevance and integration of the Prize Theme are not assessed during the Eligibility step. These criteria are applied holistically in Step 4: Selection.** That is to say, during the Eligibility step, reviewers confirm the presence of qualifying elements, not their overall quality, depth, integration, or effectiveness within the Proposal.

For a better understanding of AMP's stance on the use of Cultural Materials & Inspiration, please refer to [section 5.1](#). AMP does not restrict cultural engagement by identity, heritage or nationality.

## **Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music – Thematic Eligibility Checklist**

All Proposals should contain at least **1 element from Section A**, and **1 element from Section B** to meet AMP's eligibility criteria for "Jewish Music".

### **SECTION A**

#### **The Proposal:**

1. Purposefully and consciously engages with musical modes, instrument combinations, styles or elements traditionally perceived as belonging to the "Jewish melos" or Jewish musical practice, sacred or secular. Such engagement must be demonstrated through identifiable musical elements, which must be named and contextualized in the Proposal. Where relevant, applicants are encouraged to identify specific sources or traditions by name (for example, a particular *nusach*, cantillation system or named folk or liturgical melody), rather than referring to Jewish music in general terms.
2. Incorporates specific sacred or secular musical materials from one or more traditions.
3. Includes or is founded upon Jewish texts or Jewish literature (prose, poetry or drama), contemporary or historical, with an indication of why the text or literary source should be considered Jewish.
4. Incorporate specifically Jewish languages such as Hebrew, Yiddish or Ladino.

### **SECTION B**

#### **The Proposal:**

5. Depicts, in musical terms, visual images of Jewish connection (landscapes in the land of Israel, for example) or scenes of Jewish religious or folk life (a Hassidic gathering, a Yemenite Jewish wedding or daily life of Jews in an eastern European market town, or shtetl, to cite three examples).
6. Is based on Jewish historical or biblical subjects, events, or characters, or Jewish legends or literary themes.
7. Describes how it will express moods of Jewish life-cycle events or holy days (for example, Shabbat, the High Holy Days, or Passover);
8. Gives voice to Judaic ideas or concepts, with an explanation of how the idea or concept is relevant to Judaism.
9. Will be composed expressly for a Jewish commemoration, celebration, ceremony, or other occasion—conceived in some way to represent the nature of that occasion.

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**A few considerations:**

- Both Jewish and non-Jewish composers are welcome to apply. Being of Jewish origin does not, on its own, make a Proposal eligible on thematic grounds.
- For the purposes of this competition, generalized musical features (e.g., "Phrygian," "minor with augmented second," or "modal") do not, on their own, qualify as Jewish musical material without further contextualization.

## **Azrieli Commission for Canadian Music – Thematic Eligibility Checklist**

All Proposals should contain **at least 1 element from Section A**, and **1 element from Section B** to meet AMP's eligibility criteria for "Canadian Music".

For the purposes of the Azrieli Music Prizes, "Canadian Music" does not require a fixed national, cultural or personal identification. Instead, it refers to music that engages meaningfully with experiences, communities, histories or cultural expressions within the geographic, social or cultural context of Canada, or in relation to it. This includes Indigenous, settler, immigrant, diasporic and transnational perspectives, provided the Proposed Musical Work clearly situates its thematic and cultural engagement in relation to Canada or within its borders.

### **SECTION A**

#### **The Proposal:**

1. Engages purposefully and consciously with musical materials traditionally perceived as belonging to a specific community, region, nation or culture, as experienced, remembered or situated within Canada.
2. Incorporates sacred or secular musical materials from one or more traditions.
3. incorporates ritual/religious practices, traditions, texts and/or symbols as they are practiced, remembered or reinterpreted within Canada.
4. Include or be founded upon cultural texts or literature (e.g., prose, poetry or dramatic writing) by authors connected to Canada, or texts embedded in regional or widely recognized cultural life within Canada.
5. Draw on Indigenous, Métis or Inuit languages; English; French; or dialects specific to regions or communities within Canada (see [section 5.1](#) regarding Cultural Materials & Inspirations).

### **SECTION B**

#### **The Proposal:**

6. Is based on historical subjects, events, figures, legends or themes connected to places or communities within Canada.
7. Critically engages with histories, current events, social conditions or concepts **relevant to Canada**.

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8. Explore multicultural or intercultural experiences of life in Canada, approached with specificity.
9. Explore relationships to Canada from outside its borders, including diasporic, migratory, transnational, or return experiences, where Canada remains a meaningful point of reference.
10. Depict, in musical terms, visual or experiential images of cultural connection, such as landscapes, built environments, community spaces, or scenes of everyday life.
11. Give voice to culturally specific ideas or concepts grounded in lived, inherited or community-based experience connected to Canada.
12. Will be composed expressly for a commemoration, celebration, ceremony or occasion of cultural, historical or social significance within Canada.

## **Azrieli Commission for International Music – Thematic Eligibility Checklist**

All Proposals should contain at least **2 elements from the checklist below, in any combination** to meet AMP's eligibility criteria for "International Music".

### **The Proposal:**

1. Engages purposefully and consciously with musical materials traditionally perceived as belonging to a specific community, region, nation or culture.
2. Incorporate sacred or secular musical materials from one or more traditions.
3. Is based on historical subjects, events, figures, legends, or themes.
4. Incorporates ritual, religious or cultural practices, traditions, texts or symbols.
5. Draw on languages and/or dialects.
6. Includes or is founded upon cultural texts or literature (e.g., prose, poetry or dramatic writing).
7. Depicts, in musical terms, visual or experiential images of cultural connection, such as landscapes, built environments, community spaces or scenes of everyday life.
8. Gives voice to culturally specific ideas or concepts grounded in lived, inherited or community-based experience.
9. Will be composed expressly for a commemoration, celebration, ceremony or occasion conceived to reflect the nature or significance of that event.
10. Explores an interplay of cultures that is unique to the composer's lived experience, approached with depth, specificity and contextual grounding rather than breadth, survey or juxtaposition.

### **Please consider:**

- A "meaningful connection to the composer's lived experience" refers to depth of engagement and understanding, not to identity, origin or cultural affiliation.
- This Prize is not intended for works that assemble or reference multiple cultures as a survey, collage or pastiche, nor for projects grounded in generalized universalism. Instead, it supports focused, meaningful and deeply contextual engagement with cultural expression, where the Work demonstrates a clear and thoughtful connection to the composer's lived experience.

## Step 3 (Musical/Technical Screening)

All applications that successfully pass Steps 1 and 2 are delivered to a Jury of composers, arts practitioners and musicologists for further evaluations. This Jury will assess all applications based on their musical and technical merit using the two equally weighted criteria below. The Jury's objective is identifying the top 30 applications in each Prize to advance to a final adjudication.

The criteria employed at this step are:

### Artistic Merit (50%)

Artistic Merit reflects the composer's demonstrated ability to create original, compelling music for chamber ensemble. The Jury will assess the artistic depth, individuality and communicative power of the sample works provided by the composer in their application.

The Jury will determine:

#### Creativity & Conceptual Strength

- How imaginative and engaging the works are from musical, structural and conceptual perspectives.
- Whether the artistic intent and vision for the work are clear and compelling.

#### Sustained Musical Interest

- The ability of the sample works to hold a listener's attention across its full duration through pacing, contrast, development and emotional trajectory.

#### Authenticity & Artistic Voice

Note: For the purposes of adjudication, "authentic" refers to work that is internally coherent, well-grounded and convincingly articulated, rather than to questions of identity or origin.

- The distinctiveness of the composer's musical language.
- Evidence of a personal, identifiable artistic voice rather than generic or derivative writing.

#### Effectiveness Within Ensemble Forces

- How convincingly the composer writes for chamber ensembles, demonstrating sensitivity to vocal and/or instrumental capabilities.
- Whether the submitted samples show an understanding of balance, blend and expressive potential within similar forces to those required in the competition.
- *If applicable*: effectiveness of text setting (prosody, clarity, pacing and meaningful treatment of text).

## **Technical Merit (50%)**

Technical Merit reflects the composer's command of the fundamental elements of composition and their ability to apply these elements with clarity and intention.

The Jury will evaluate:

### **Structural & Formal Control**

- Strength and clarity of form.
- Logical pacing, proportion and development of material.

### **Sustained Musical Interest**

- Effective and intentional use of rhythm, melody and harmony.
- Coherence, inventiveness and fluency in core compositional techniques.

### **Timbre, Texture & Orchestration**

- Sensitive and idiomatic use of instrumental and/or vocal colours.
- Clarity, balance and practicality in scoring for the chosen ensemble.
- Effective interaction between voices, lines and ensemble sections.

### **Use of Dynamics, Articulation & Expressive Detail**

- Specificity and clarity of expressive markings.
- How these details shape phrasing, contrast and overall impact.

### **Alignment of Technique with Artistic Intention**

- The degree to which the technical choices support, reinforce or elevate the composer's intended artistic purpose.
- Whether technique is used deliberately and cohesively rather than decoratively or inconsistently.

### **Notation Quality & Accuracy**

- Clarity, legibility and completeness of the score.
- Professional-quality materials appropriate for rehearsal and performance.

## **CAPACITY CHECKLIST (YES/NO)**

The Jury must answer the questions below in the affirmative, based on the information provided in the application as a whole:

### **1. Professional Experience**

Has the composer demonstrated a sufficient level of professional experience—through commissions, awards, performances, recordings, employment, publication, significant study or equivalent achievements—to undertake the commission?

### **2. Relevant Instrumentation Experience**

Has this composer written for a similar instrumentation in the recent past?

*("Recent" will take life circumstances such as health, family, parental leave or limited access to opportunities in under-resourced regions into account.)*

### **3. Cultural and Linguistic Responsibility**

If the thematic area or language is outside the composer's lived experience or primary training, does the composer demonstrate a responsible, knowledgeable and respectful approach to the chosen cultural or linguistic materials? (See [section 5.1](#))

### **4. Collaborative Capacity**

Does the composer demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and professionally—such as through evidence of delivering commissions, participating in rehearsals, recordings, talks, workshops or similar activities?

### **5. Musical and Logistical Feasibility**

Is the composer's Work feasible musically and logistically, given the parameters of the Prize?

### **6. Clarity of Planning & Communication**

Does the Proposal demonstrate the composer's ability to plan and communicate their intended work effectively?

*(For example, does the Proposal include duration, instrumentation, title, thematic content, musical influences, language and indications of structure or musical content.)*

### **7. Deliverability & Timeliness**

Does the composer's past work history indicate the ability to deliver completed scores on time and to a professional standard?

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**IF APPLICABLE:**

**Soloists**

If the Work calls for soloists, does the composer demonstrate experience writing for the proposed solo instrument/voice?

**Electronics**

If the Work calls for electronics, does the composer demonstrate experience writing for them, and can they articulate the technical requirements and considerations for performing the Work in a concert hall?

**Composer-Authored Text**

If the composer intends to write their own text, do they provide previous examples where they have done this (either in the CV or as an additional document)?

**Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music**

Does the composer demonstrate experience composing music that has been recognized as "Jewish music" in the past? (*This may appear in work titles, subject matter, prizes, awards, commissions, jobs, educational achievements, affiliations, etc.*)

## **Step 4 (Final Jury)**

The Final Jury evaluates applications that reach this step using two key criteria, in which Artistic Excellence and Thematic Alignment carry the same weight. At this stage, all Proposals have already demonstrated eligibility, feasibility, and baseline artistic competence. The role of the Final Jury is therefore to identify the application that most powerfully unites outstanding musical imagination with a deep, resonant, and thoughtfully articulated engagement with the Prize's theme. An application that excels in only one pillar cannot advance: the Prize-winning Work must demonstrate both artistic distinction and a compelling, substantive alignment with the Prize Theme.

## **Artistic Excellence (50%)**

Artistic Excellence evaluates the expressive depth, conceptual strength and creative vitality demonstrated in the Proposal and sample works, with emphasis on chamber-music writing. The jury will be looking for:

### **Conceptual and Creative Vision**

- Originality, sophistication and expressive power of the core artistic concept.
- Clarity, ambition and coherence of the Work's artistic vision.
- The degree to which the concept promises a compelling musical experience for small ensemble forces.

### **Musical Imagination, Form, and Cohesion**

- Inventiveness and quality of musical ideas and effectiveness of their development.
- Structural clarity, pacing, contrast and the ability to sustain artistic interest.
- Cohesive musical thinking appropriate for chamber textures.

### **Distinctive Artistic Voice**

- Presence of a recognizable, authentic artistic voice. For the purposes of adjudication, "authentic" refers to work that is internally coherent, well-grounded and convincingly articulated, rather than to questions of identity or origin.
- Individuality rather than reliance on derivative or generic idioms.

### **Chamber-Music Sensitivity and Craft**

- Insightful use of the expressive, technical and colouristic possibilities of chamber instruments.
- Balance, clarity and interplay between parts; creative use of timbre and ensemble texture.
- *If applicable*: vocal writing that demonstrates effective text setting, prosody, pacing and expressive clarity.

### **Artistic Promise of the Proposed Musical Work**

- How compelling, meaningful and artistically impactful the Work is likely to be.
- The potential for the finished composition to make a significant contribution to the chamber repertoire and to the Azrieli Music Prizes.

## **Thematic Alignment (50%)**

Thematic Alignment carries similar weight and importance as Artistic Excellence. The Jury assesses the depth, creativity and integrity with which the Proposal engages with the Prize Theme.

The Jury evaluates:

- The thoughtfulness, originality and insightfulness of the composer’s thematic approach.
- How effectively thematic ideas are integrated into the Work, its form, structure and artistic intent.
- The level of sensitivity, authenticity and contextual awareness the composer displays when drawing on cultural, historical, linguistic or thematic sources.
- Whether the Proposal offers a distinctive perspective that genuinely advances or deepens engagement with the Prize Theme.
- The degree to which the theme feels essential—not merely referenced but meaningfully embedded in the Work.

## **Laureate Selection**

The Final Jury will select a winner (“Laureate”), and three runners-up in case the winner is not able to accept the Prize. The Laureate will be contacted directly via phone or email.