the Pittsburgh Philharmonic

is pleased to announce the return of its

Young Composer Contest

The Pittsburgh Philharmonic invites applications from residents of the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

Please read the attached information for details and further restrictions.

The Contest Winner
will have their piece performed at
The Pittsburgh Philharmonic's
May 2027 Concert
and will receive a $300.00 prize.

Rules and Policies of
The Pittsburgh Philharmonic Young Composer Contest 2027

Eligibility:

1. Applicants must be no older than 35 at time of submission.
2. Applicants must be residents of the Greater Pittsburgh area, including Allegheny, Butler, Beaver, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.
3. The Pittsburgh Philharmonic reserves the right to determine eligibility.

Application Rules and Requirements:

1. Applicants must submit the following to pghphilstudentprograms@gmail.com by January 31, 2027
   - PDF score
   - PDF of a first violin part of their work
   - Recording or audio rendering in MP3 or WAV format (MIDI realizations must also be in MP3 or WAV format)
2. There is no application fee.
3. The competition winner will be notified by March 15, 2027. All decisions will be final.
4. The winner must provide a full set of parts with sufficient string count (8-8-6-6-2) by the date requested by the Pittsburgh Philharmonic. Parts are acceptable on letter-sized paper. Staff sized for parts is between 7 and 8.5mm
5. The Pittsburgh Philharmonic may declare no winner if no entries meet criteria for performance by the orchestra.

Piece Rules and Requirements:

1. Duration of work should be no longer than 12 minutes.
2. Entire piece must be completed at time of submission. No alterations to the composition will be allowed once the rehearsal process has started unless approved by the Pittsburgh Philharmonic Music Director
3. Piece may not be extreme or virtuosic in demands. For instance, No difficult harmonics (natural or artificial) for strings; avoid writing in thumb position for cello; avoid overly difficult key signatures.

4. Text (spoken or sung) cannot be included.
5. No concerto will be considered.
6. Scores must be on legal or tabloid sized paper in portrait orientation only.
7. Parts are acceptable on letter-sized paper. Staff sized for parts is between 7 and 8.5 mm.
8. Previously performed works are acceptable.
9. Orchestration will not exceed the following:

- 2 flutes, one may double piccolo
- 2 oboes, one may double English Horn
- 2 Bb/A clarinets, one may double Bass
- 2 bassoons
- 4 F horns
- 2 Bb or C trumpets
- 2 trombones
- 1 bass trombone
- 1 tuba
- 1 timpani
- percussion (Snare drum, triangle, bass drum, glockenspiel and cymbals). Winner may be asked to provide any percussion instruments not on this list at performance and rehearsal.
- Strings 8-8-6-6-2 with only up to 2-part divisi in string parts

Competition Winner Information:

1. The Winner will receive a $300.00 prize.
2. Winner will be provided with a professionally performed recording of their piece from the concert.
3. The competition winner will provide a short biography and publicity photo for use in the program and media outlets.
4. The competition winner will be available for rehearsals with the orchestra on one or more of the following rehearsal dates: April 12, 19, 26; May 3, 2026 at 7:15 at PYCO or Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center.
5. Performance will be held at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center on May 9, 2026.

The Pittsburgh Philharmonic
Young Composer Contest 2027

Applicant Information

Name:
Date of Birth:
Address:
City: County:
State: Zip Code:

Email:
Phone Number:

For applicants under 18
Parent's Names:
Address (if different):
Email:
Phone Number:

Education Information

Current School (if applicable):
Year/Grade:

Principal Instructor:
Email:

Instructor's Institution:

Years of Private Study:

Awards, Competitions, Workshops, and Summer Programs:

Submission Information

Title:

Recording type:

Duration (mins.):

Instrumentation (shorthand):

Performance history:

I certify all the information provided on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge (initials):

I have read the Rules and Policies of The Pittsburgh Philharmonic Young Composer Competition (initials):

I understand all decisions regarding the competition winner will be final (initials):

Applicant Electronic Signature:

Parent Electronic Signature (if under 18):

Send this completed application, an audio recording or rendering in MP3 or WAV format, and a PDF score and a first violin part that meets the specifications above to: pghphilstudentprograms@gmail.com

Entries must be received by January 31, 2027.
All entries will receive a confirmation email.
Questions? Contact pghphilstudentprograms@gmail.com