

VSA INTERNATIONAL YOUNG SOLOISTS COMPETITION 2015 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Each year, a select number of outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 14-25, from around the world receive the VSA International Young Soloists Award. These emerging musicians win a \$2,500 prize, professional development experiences, and the opportunity to perform at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Started by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith in 1984, the program, open to musicians of any instrument or genre, has provided opportunities for hundreds of emerging young musicians with disabilities.

Applications for the 2015 VSA International Young Soloists Competition will be accepted online. For more information on the competition and for the online application, visit <http://www.kennedy-center.org/IYS>. **The application deadline is Monday, March 16, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time.**

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to enter the VSA International Young Soloists Competition you must meet all four of the following criteria:

1. **Be a musician with a disability.** As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating; additionally major life activities include the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.
2. **Be age 14-25.** Applicants must not be younger than 14 or older than 25 at the time of the application deadline. All members of an ensemble must meet the age requirement in order to be eligible.
3. **Have never won the VSA International Young Soloists Competition.** Applicants are welcome to re-apply until they win or age out of the competition.
4. **Be present for the VSA International Young Soloists Professional Development Weekend from May 20-22, 2015 and the performance on May 22 at 6 p.m.** If selected, winners must be present to accept the award.

The VSA International Young Soloists Competition is open to:

- Soloists (instrumental or vocal)
- Ensembles* (instrumental or vocal) of two (2) to five (5) members, such as rock bands, chamber ensembles, and choral groups.
- Musicians of all genres, including—but not limited to-- classical, jazz, hip-hop/rap, rock/alt rock, pop, indie, bluegrass, folk, country, R&B/blues, Latin, and World.
- Domestic Applicants: U.S. citizens and legal residents of the U.S.; and International Applicants: non-U.S. citizens, including citizens of other countries living in the U.S. such as those on student visas.

**For ensembles to be eligible, at least one musician must have a disability, and all members must be between the ages of 14-25.*

ADDITIONAL COMPETITION INFORMATION

Performance and Attendance Requirement

The VSA International Young Soloists performance will take place on Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 6 p.m. on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage. **Winners of the competition must be present for the entire event from Wednesday, May 20 – Friday, May 22, 2015 and the performance on May 22, 2015 at 6 p.m. to accept the award.**

Selection Process and Adjudication Criteria

An advisory panel comprised of distinguished international music professionals and educators will assist with the three-tiered selection process.

VSA Affiliates and State Level Young Soloists Competitions

Many VSA affiliate organizations across the United States implement their own Young Soloists Competition programs at the state level. These are run independently and do not preclude applicants from applying or competing at both the state and national level. ***If you want to compete at the national level you MUST submit your application directly through this, the national site (www.kennedy-center.org/IYS).***

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- **Read our Frequently Asked Questions** at www.kennedy-center.org/IYS .
- **Complete the online application form** at www.kennedy-center.org/IYS .
 - **NOTE:** to request application materials in a different format, email vsainfo@kennedy-center.org.
- **Provide a narrative statement (up to 250 words)** in the provided text box or as an audio or video clip. The narrative should include biographical information (i.e. educational background, past solo or ensemble experience, musical goals) and the reasons you feel you or your ensemble should be selected as a VSA International Young Soloist winner.
- **Attach media files of three (3) musical selections** (audio or video).
 - **NOTE:** If you have difficulty uploading your media files, email vsainfo@kennedy-center.org.

Please read the following media file submission guidelines carefully:

- **Before uploading your files, please re-name them** in the following format:
 - IYS Submission 1
 - IYS Submission 2
 - IYS Submission 3
- Where indicated on the application form, please list the title and composer of each submission.
- Video files are suggested, but not required.
- Please note that while the quality of your media submissions should be high, it is not necessary to have your audio or video professionally recorded.
- Each uploaded file should be a recording of one piece only (multiple movements for a piece are fine).
- Each recording should be 10 minutes or less in length.
- Please upload your most proficient piece into Selection #1.
- Selected pieces should represent your current musicianship and repertoire. Therefore recordings should be relatively recent (no more than 1-2 years old).

- If chosen, winners will not be permitted to use recorded music in their performance. Therefore, if you will be using accompaniment on your recordings it must be live accompaniment.
- Applicants may only apply on one instrument. Even if you are talented on multiple instruments, please pick the one on which you feel you are most proficient and send us recordings showcasing that instrument only.
- The application accepts files in the following formats: Audio (*MP3, MP4*) and Video (*WMV*)
- **Application materials should be submitted no later than *March 16, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time*.** We will receive your files the day that you submit them, and you will receive a confirmation email within 24 hours of submitting your online application; please check your junk mail folder for this email. If you have not received a confirmation email after 24 hours, please contact us directly at vsainfo@kennedy-center.org or 202-416-8898.