

Surrey Hills Young Composer Competition 2026

(the Competition) promoted by Surrey Hills International Music Festival (SHIMF)

Terms & Conditions

1 Eligibility - The Competition is open to those aged 18 or under and living in or attending school/college in the historic county of Surrey at the closing date of Friday 16 January 2026.

Committee members, Trustees, employees of SHIMF and their close family members are not eligible to enter. Proof of age, identity and eligibility may be requested.

Entrants who have won the Competition in previous years are not permitted to enter again.

A parent or guardian must provide consent and agreement to these Terms & Conditions on your behalf if you are under 18 at the time of entry to the Competition by signing the entry form (see 4 for information on submission methods). The term Entrants includes you and the parent or guardian signing the entry form on your behalf.

2 Key dates - All entries must be received by 5pm on Friday 16 January 2026. Any entries received after this date or without a signed application form will not be accepted.

The winners will be announced by 5pm on Friday 27 February 2026 on SHIMF's website and social media. The winners will also be contacted directly by email, phone, or post.

If after reasonable attempts to contact a winner, the communication has not been acknowledged, SHIMF reserves the right to offer their prize to another entrant.

3 Submission criteria & formats – Submitted works can be for one or any combination of the following instruments: piano, violin, viola, cello, string quartet, clarinet, oboe. (e.g. piano solo or violin and piano, string trio, or any appropriate chamber ensemble). Submitted works should be between 2-5 minutes long, can be in any style and format and do not have to be fully notated.

Submitted works must be all your own original work and must not have been composed with the aid of an Artificial Intelligence tool. They can be specially composed for the competition or previously written for other competitions or for coursework - otherwise known as non-examined assessment (NEA). If written for NEA, the submitted work must not be 'live' but from an examination that has already been completed and for which the final mark has already been awarded. Submitted works must not have been selected as a **winning** entry (either 1st, 2nd or 3rd prize) in this or any other previous composition competitions; must not infringe any UK laws, copyright, or other third-party rights. By submitting your work, the Entrant guarantees that they or the content they have submitted will not bring SHIMF/the Competition into disrepute. SHIMF accepts no liability if an Entrant breaches any of these provisions, and each Entrant agrees to fully indemnify SHIMF against any claims by any third party arising from any such breach.

Entries should ideally be submitted as a printable PDF, including the full score (see clause 4 below) and may be accompanied by an audio recording. If you have a query about submitting your entry in an alternative format, please get in touch with tracy@shimf.co.uk.

Do not include your name in your file name or on the printable score/parts – please include only the name of the work and your initials.

Only one entry per Entrant will be accepted. **PLEASE NOTE:** If an Entrant should submit more than one entry, only the first entry registered will be judged and any subsequent entries will be disregarded.

If you wish to submit an audio recording of your piece, please email henry@shimf.co.uk for information about how to upload it and note that:

- there is a maximum total upload limit (inclusive of all files submitted) of 1GB and the following file types are accepted: .wav, .mp3 and .wma. Do not include your name on your file name. Please include the name of your piece and your initials.
- you can submit either an audio recording of a live performance of the work or a version taken from notation software packages or sequencing software. If it is derived from software, it must be a playable recording in audio format .wav, .mp3 or .wam, rather than a software specific file.

Entrants may also include a programme note or short description to accompany their piece if they wish. Please do not include your name on your file name or anywhere on the document itself. Please only include the name of your piece and your initials.

4 Submission methods - Entries can be submitted online at <https://shimf.co.uk/surrey-hills-young-composer-competition-2026/> by uploading the required files.

Entries can also be submitted in hard copy by post to Surrey Hills International Music Festival, The Lodge, Upper Street, Shere, Surrey GU5 9JA, or by email to tracy@shimf.co.uk.

All entries must be accompanied by a completed application form (signed by the Entrant or their parent or guardian if under 18 at the time of entry to the Competition). The application form can be downloaded [here](#).

SHIMF does not accept responsibility for any technical failure, malfunction or any other problem with any server, internet access system, programme software or otherwise which may result in any entry being late or not properly submitted. Proof of submission is not proof of receipt.

5 Judging process & criteria – a shortlist of up to 6 entrants will be chosen by SHIMF Artistic Director Wu Qian, and these works will then be considered by the full jury, which will also include:

Stephen Goss - composer and Head of Composition at the University of Surrey. SHIMF reserves the right to make changes to the jury if necessary.

The judging process will be anonymous. The jury's decision is final, and it will not be possible for feedback to be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

The jury will select first, second and third prize winners.

First prize:

World premiere performance (the World premiere performance) of your work as part of SHIMF's 2026 season, provisionally at 6.15pm on Saturday 16 May at The Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon. Attend the rehearsal and meet the performers, plus four complimentary tickets to the concert. £400 cash prize to be awarded at the concert.

Second prize:

Two complimentary tickets to the World premiere performance.

Meet the performers.

£200 cash prize to be awarded at the concert.

Possible performance of the work as part of SHIMF's 2026 season, as above for the first prize, although this is not guaranteed and will depend on the availability/capacity of the performers.

Third prize:

Two complimentary tickets to the World premiere performance.

Meet the performers.

£100 cash prize to be awarded at the concert.

Possible performance of the work as part of SHIMF's 2026 season, as above for the first prize, although this is not guaranteed and will depend on the availability/capacity of the performers.

Plus up to 3 runners-up prizes of £50 each to promising entrants.

Any Entrant under the age of 18 who attends a concert or other event organised by SHIMF must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

6 Permissions & Rights - By submitting an entry, Entrants agree to grant SHIMF (its successors, licensees and assigns) a non-exclusive licence free of charge worldwide in perpetuity to reproduce and use your work in all media for the purposes of SHIMF/the competition in perpetuity, including without limitation to:

- arrange the World premiere performance, if it should be selected as the first prize winner, by performers and on a date/venue to be specified by SHIMF as part of SHIMF's 2026 season.
- record the World premiere performance and prior rehearsals and to use that recorded material (audio or video, in full or edited form) in all media for general publicity purposes, including but not limited to SHIMF's website, social media, and YouTube channel.
- make copies of your work or of the recording if required.
- retain a copy of your work in the SHIMF archives.

Entrants must not publish or make available or arrange other performances of their work before the winners have been announced and, in the case of the first prize winner, until after the World premiere performance has taken place.

Subject to SHIMF's rights referred to in these Terms and Conditions, you will retain the copyright in your composition and will be able to use the material in any way you wish and grant others permission to use the material.

7 Promotion & Publicity - By entering the competition, you grant SHIMF permission to use your details (including name, photograph, and details of composition) in publicity campaigns and materials during and after the Competition in connection with SHIMF and this or future competitions. You also agree to assist SHIMF in raising awareness of SHIMF/the Competition, e.g., by attending interviews or other publicity appearances if required.

8 Changes to the competition - SHIMF reserves the right to cancel or adapt the Competition; amend the prizes; disqualify any Entrant who breaches these Terms & Conditions or who commits fraud, at any stage, if in SHIMF's opinion, it is deemed necessary or if circumstances arise outside its control.

9 Terms & Conditions - these Terms & Conditions are governed by the laws of England and Wales.

10 Acceptance of Terms & Conditions - Entrants will be deemed to have accepted these Terms & Conditions and agreed to be bound by them by entering the Competition and/or by completing the application form. Any Entrant who does not comply with the Terms & Conditions will be disqualified. When an entry is submitted by a third party on behalf of an Entrant, the party submitting the entry shall be responsible for the Entrant's compliance with the rules.

11 Liability - To the extent permitted by law, SHIMF will not be liable for any loss or damages (whether any such loss or damages were foreseen, unforeseen, known or otherwise) including financial, reputational loss or disappointment.

Privacy notice

Each Entrant agrees to SHIMF collecting and processing the personal data each has provided to it in relation to the Competition. SHIMF will use such personal data to administer the Competition, obtain the relevant permissions, communicate with you/your child on matters relating to the Competition, and, if your submission wins a prize, publish information about you/your child and your/their music on SHIMF's website/social media/other publicity materials.

You also agree to SHIMF contacting you occasionally in future in connection with the Competition and other festival events.

Please refer to SHIMF's Privacy Policy for further information about how SHIMF will process and store your data, including your rights under data protection law – www.shimf.co.uk/privacy-policy.