RULES OF PROCEDURE AND ORGANISATION

23rd Petr Eben International Organ Competition, Opava 2026

I. COMPETITION PROCEEDINGS

1. The competition is open to candidates of all nationalities who are aged 30 or under on the opening day of the competition. The competition consists of three rounds, held on the organs in the hall of the Petr Bezruč Library in Opava (1st Round), the Church of St John the Baptist in Hlučín (2nd Round), and the Church of St Vojtěch in Opava (3rd Round). The improvisation competition takes place at the Co-Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Opava.
2. The programme submitted with each candidate's application is binding and cannot be changed after the application deadline. The organising committee may ask candidates to clarify any ambiguities in their programmes.
3. The order of performance is determined by a draw at a meeting of the organising committee after the application deadline (21 August 2026). Candidates will receive written notification of their position in the draw and their practice times on the competition organ. Before each subsequent round, a draw will determine which candidate performs first; the remaining candidates will follow in the relative order established by the original draw. Each candidate will be allocated adequate preparation time on the competition organ.
4. Candidates will be notified of their scheduled warm-up sessions in advance. Candidates who fail to attend at the scheduled time are not entitled to a replacement session.
5. Candidates must arrive at the competition venue half an hour before their scheduled performance and report to the organiser in charge.
6. Candidates who, for a serious reason, cannot perform at their scheduled time may perform only with the jury's permission and only at the end of the round.
7. Only registrars may be present during preparation (setting registrations) and during competition performances in both the interpretation and improvisation categories. The candidate's teacher may not be present.
8. The jury may stop a candidate's performance if the time limit is exceeded.

II. THE JURY

1. The jury consists of distinguished Czech and international organists and teachers appointed by the organising committee. Jury members must familiarise themselves with these Rules of Procedure and Organisation and the competition conditions, and comply with them.
2. The jury's proceedings are led by the chair, nominated by the organising committee. The chair also sets the agenda for jury meetings, establishes working procedures, and oversees the conduct of the competition in accordance with the competition conditions and daily schedule. The chair announces all decisions on behalf of the jury, presents prizes and diplomas, and makes public statements concerning the jury's proceedings.
3. At its inaugural meeting, held on the evening before the competition opens, the jury also elects a vice-chair from among its members.
4. All jury meetings are closed to the public. Minutes are taken by the jury secretary, who is appointed by the organising committee and also coordinates the work of the jury and the competition secretariat.
5. The jury may adopt resolutions only at its meetings. A quorum consists of more than half of its members, including the chair or vice-chair, provided that all members have been duly notified of the meeting. All matters are decided by a simple majority vote. In disputed cases, the chair has the final say. Representatives of the bodies holding the competition and members of the organising committee may attend jury meetings but have no voting rights.
6. The names of the chair and jury members will be announced to participants no later than the day before the competition opens.
7. Participants may not challenge the composition of the jury or object to any individual member.
8. The jury's task is to hear, assess, and score the performances of all candidates. Each jury member must assess the entire competition round and arrive at the venue half an hour before it begins. The jury determines the final rankings and decides whether prizes are to be combined, shared, or withheld. It may also award honourable mentions without a monetary award. The jury alone decides the recipients of prizes offered by other institutions. Only a designated jury member may provide information to the media about the jury's work.

III. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

1. The assessment should reflect the jury's collective judgement. Each jury member must first score every performance independently, to the best of their knowledge and judgement and without outside influence. The jury then discusses the individual performances and determines the rankings on the basis of the scores and their averages. The chair is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is followed.
2. Jury members may not assess or score a performance they have not heard in full. In such cases, they must submit a signed score sheet stating the reason for not awarding a score (e.g. "absent"). Jury members must also refrain from scoring candidates whom they currently teach or whose competition performance they have helped prepare. They must submit a signed score sheet stating the reason (e.g. "my student").
3. The highest and lowest scores will not be discarded.
4. In the interpretation category, each candidate is awarded between 0 and 25 points, with 25 being the highest score.

Jury members should use the following scale:

0–5 points: unsatisfactory performance
6–10 points: satisfactory performance
11–15 points: good performance
16–20 points: very good performance
21–25 points: outstanding performance

Performances will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Fidelity to the score
2. Technical proficiency
3. Musical expression
4. Understanding of style and musical structure
5. Adaptation to the instrument and the acoustics of the venue

Only whole points may be awarded; fractions and decimals are not permitted. Scores must not be erased. An incorrect score may be crossed out and replaced with a new score marked "corrected". Any correction must be made before the score sheet is submitted.

5. The qualifying score and the number of candidates advancing to the next round will be determined at a jury meeting. After each round, the jury meets to decide which candidates will advance. Candidates must achieve the qualifying score set by the jury, and the number advancing will be determined by the jury in consultation with the organisers. Qualification is based on the ranking established by the candidates' average scores. A maximum of 12 candidates may advance to the 2nd round. In the event of a tie, fewer than 12 may advance, but this number must never be exceeded. A maximum of four candidates may advance to the 3rd round. The names of candidates advancing to the next round will be announced in the order established by the draw.
6. Jury members must submit their completed score sheets to the jury secretary immediately after each part of a competition round. Score sheets submitted late are invalid.
7. After each round, the secretary compiles the scores and calculates the averages used to establish the rankings. Disputed cases may be discussed by the jury.
8. The final ranking is determined by adding together each candidate's average scores from the 2nd and 3rd rounds.
9. The jury's scores will be published after each round of the interpretation competition.
10. In the improvisation category, the jury assesses the candidates' performances, determines the final ranking, and names the winner.
11. The jury is not obliged to award all prizes and may withhold all prizes if the performances do not meet the required standard. It may combine prizes or divide them into equal shares, except for first prizes, the improvisation prize, and the special prize awarded by the Czech Music Foundation. Any such decision must remain within the allocated prize budget. The jury may also award honourable mentions. Its decisions are final. Prizes are awarded by a simple majority vote.
12. Prizewinners will receive diplomas and monetary prizes of the 23rd Petr Eben International Organ Competition, Opava 2026.
13. Prizes will be formally presented at the closing concert by a representative of the bodies holding the competition, the jury chair, or the vice-chair, with all jury members present.
14. Prizewinners must perform at the winners' concert. They are not entitled to a fee for performing the repertoire selected by the jury or for the audio recording of their performances.

IV. FINAL PROVISIONS

1. At their final meetings, the jury and the organising committee will review the competition as a whole.
2. These Rules of Procedure and Organisation are issued in Czech and English. In the event of a dispute, the Czech version is authoritative.
3. Any disputes concerning the interpretation of these rules will be resolved by the organising committee.
4. These Rules of Procedure and Organisation were drawn up by the organising committee and are binding for the 23rd Petr Eben International Organ Competition, Opava 2026.