

## **BUDAPEST INTERNATIONAL CELLO COMPETITION 2025**

### **COMPETITION RULES**

The Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. (hereinafter: Organizer) announces the 2025 Budapest International Cello Competition within the framework of the Budapest International Music Competitions, to be held at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music.

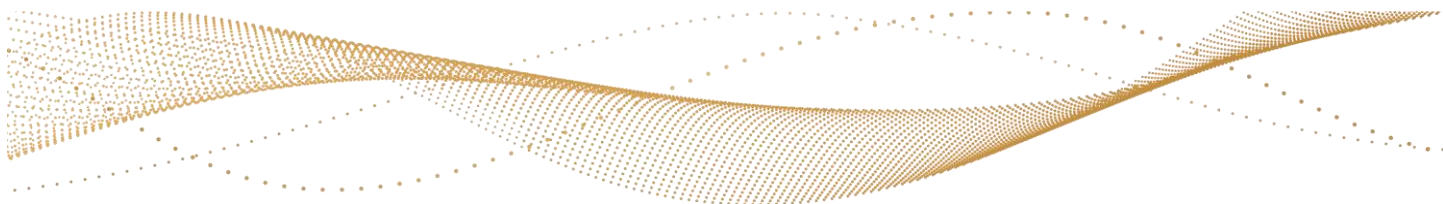
#### Competition Schedule:

APPLICATION DEADLINE:	April 15, 2025
FIRST ROUND: PRELIMINARY ROUND:	April 15–30, 2025
SECOND ROUND: SEMI-FINAL:	September 8–9, 2025
THIRD ROUND: SEMI-FINAL:	September 11, 2025
FOURTH ROUND: FINAL:	September 13, 2025
GALA CONCERT:	September 14, 2025

The pre-selection requirement includes optional works from a compulsory list and the possibility to present a work of your own free choice. In the second and third rounds, the playing time is fixed per person and the requirements include works of their own choice from the compulsory lists, so that the contestant can show the jury their skills and favourite pieces, according to the possibilities of the call for entries, by putting together their own programme.

In the Preliminary and Second Round, the contestants may play the pieces from sheet music, but during the rest of the competition, in the Third Round and the Fourth Round: Final, the use of sheet music is not allowed during the performance!

Artistic Director of the Budapest International Cello Competition is István Várdai.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETITION

### I. PRELIMINARY ROUND

#### 1. Repertoire of the round:

- J.S. Bach: Cello Suites - video recordings of three optional movements.
- A video recording of one of the optional pieces from Second Round, List II. or a freely chosen movement or movements of a solo cello piece written after 1940, of a total length of 5-10 minutes

List II of the Second Round:

- Kodály: Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8 (one freely chosen movement)
- Ligeti: Sonata for Solo Cello
- Dutilleux: Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher
- S. Veress: Sonata for Cello Solo

#### 2. Pieces performed in the Preliminary round may be repeated in the Second Round.

#### 3. The jury will select up to 15 candidates for the Second Round based on the submitted materials.

#### 4. Applicants will be notified of the results by April 30, 2025, via email, and the list of selected candidates will be published on the competition's website.

#### 5. **A maximum of 15 candidates will be admitted to the second round.**

By submitting an application, candidates acknowledge that recordings may be made of the competition rounds. No financial claims can be made against Filharmónia Magyarország Nonprofit Ltd. regarding these recordings.

### II. SECOND ROUND: SEMI-FINAL

*September 8–9, 2025 (Draw and Opening Ceremony on September 7)*

*Solti Hall, Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.)*

Performance Time: 55 minutes per contestant

#### **Requirements for the round:**

One work of your choice from List I. below:

- Beethoven: Cello Sonata, No. 3 Op. 69
- Beethoven: Cello Sonata, No. 4 Op. 102
- Beethoven: Cello Sonata, No. 5 Op. 102
- Brahms: Cello Sonata in E minor, No. 1
- Brahms: Cello Sonata in F major, No. 2

A freely selected composition from List II. below:

- Kodály: Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8 (one freely chosen movement)
- Ligeti: Sonata for Solo Cello
- Dutilleux: Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher
- S. Veress: Sonata for Cello Solo
- A freely chosen movement or movements of a solo cello piece written after 1940, of a total length of 5-10 minutes

Internationally recognized pianists will accompany the semi-finalists.

Piano rehearsals will take place on September 7–8 in designated practice rooms at the Liszt Academy.

1. The order of the performances will be decided by draw. On 7 September, in the presence of the assembled contestants, the competition secretary will draw a letter to determine the first contestant to play, in alphabetical order of the contestants' surnames. **The established order will be maintained until the end of the competition.**
2. After the results of the round have been calculated, the list of the contestants who have progressed to the third round will be published by the Competition in alphabetical order by midnight on the final day of the second round of the competition.
3. **A maximum of 6 competitors will advance to the third round.**

### III. THIRD ROUND: SEMI-FINAL

September 11, 2025

Solti Hall, Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music

Performance Time: 55 minutes per contestant

#### Requirements for the round:

One piece chosen from List I:

- C.P.E. Bach: Cello Concerto in A major
- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto in C major
- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto in D major

One piece chosen from List II:

- Schumann: Cello Concerto (string orchestra version)
- Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme
- M. Weinberg: Cello Concerto Op. 43 bis (1948)

The semi-final will feature the Liszt Ferenc Chamber Orchestra.

1. The competition secretariat will publish the names of the finalists in alphabetical order by midnight on the day of the third round.
2. Contestants will nominate one of their finalists' works when confirming their intention to participate in the competition by e-mail.

**3. A maximum of 6 competitors will advance to the Fourth Round: Final**

**IV. FOURTH ROUND: FINAL**

*September 13, 2025*

*Grand Hall, Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.)*

**Requirements for the round:**

The contestant should nominate one (1) from the specified competition pieces.

- Shostakovich: Cello Concerto, No. 1
- Prokofiev: Sinfonia Concertante, Op. 125
- Dvorak: Cello Concerto, Op. 104

The final will feature the **National Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **György Vashegyi**

- The Concerto must be followed by an optional movement from Bach's cello suites.

In the final, the pieces must be played by heart, without sheet music.

- 1. After the results of the round have been calculated, the organisers will publish the list of winners in reverse order of the places obtained.**

**V. GALA CONCERT**

*September 14, 2025*

*Grand Hall, Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (1061 Budapest, Liszt Ferenc tér 8.)*

The three prize winners will perform pieces selected by the jury from their competition repertoire.

Participation in the Gala Concert is mandatory for all prize winners, including special prize recipients, without additional remuneration.

## **VI. PRIZES**

First prize: 18.000 EUR  
Second prize: 12.000 EUR  
Third prize: 6.000 EUR

Audience prize: 2.000 EUR  
Prize for the best performance of the Kodály composition: 1.000 EUR

Special prize: the opportunity to perform on a concert tour in Hungary.  
All finalists will receive a certificate.  
The winners will receive high-quality recordings made with a large orchestra for their free use.

Special offer:

Of the contestants who do not qualify from the Preliminary round to the Second round, the jury will select 4 candidates who can participate in a 1 hour cello course with István Várdai or another jury member on 10 or 12 September 2025 in Budapest. The selected candidates will be offered accommodation by the Organiser for the day of the course.

In addition to these prizes, many foreign and Hungarian institutions - festivals, concert promoters - offer special prizes and contracts to the winning artists.

The jury has no right to award shared places or to refuse to award any of the prizes.

## **VII. JURY**

1. The Jury of the Budapest International Cello Competition is responsible for listening to the artists participating in the competition, evaluating their performances from an artistic point of view and deciding on their qualification for the 2nd, 3rd semi-finals and finals.
2. The contestants and the jury acknowledge that, while a contestant is in competition, they may not communicate directly with each other, either orally or in writing, outside of the competition, at the initiative of either party. Any breach of this rule may result in disqualification from the competition.
3. A designated member of staff will act as secretary of the jury. The Jury Secretary shall attend meetings and discussions, without voting rights, and shall be at the disposal of the Jury members to help them resolve any questions relating to the competition.

4. Composition of the international jury:

The international jury comprises seven members: **Anne Gastinel, András Keller, Jens Peter Maintz, Frans Helmerson, Gwen Starker, Santiago Cañón Valencia, and István Várdai.**

**Chairman of the jury is Frans Helmerson**

5. The jury will convene after each round to discuss and evaluate performances.
6. The jury will evaluate the competitors in each round after the Preliminary round on a scale of 40 points according to the following criteria: (maximum 10 points per criteria):
- Technical proficiency
  - Musical expression
  - Interpretation and performing the works in a competent way
  - Artistic individuality

The maximum score is 40 points, the minimum is 0 points. The judges will also make notes on the score sheet for each competitor.

In addition, the members of the jury must individually mark each competitor with a YES - NO vote for each competitor to be recommended to go on to the next round.

On this basis, the jury secretary will draw up the order of the participants of the next round and the order of the winners after the final.

Evaluation sheets will be submitted immediately after each performance and placed in a sealed ballot box.

7. Completed evaluation sheets will be handed in immediately after the last contestant in the round has left the stage. The evaluation sheets will be signed by the jury members, who will write the score given to the contestant on them, and then place them in a sealed box, which will be passed around by the Jury Secretary at the end of the rounds.
8. Once the evaluation sheets have been placed in the box, the members of the jury are not allowed to change them before the counting of scores begins.
9. At the judges' meeting after the round, the Jury Secretary and the Competition Secretary will present to the Jury the aggregated average scores and the order of the YES - NO votes received for the next round. The jury will then begin its meeting, and the Jury Secretary will write up the minutes, which will be signed by the jury members at the end of the meeting.
10. A simple majority of the YES - NO votes given to the contestants will determine who advances to the next round, and the total average scores will determine the order of the contestants. In the event of a tie between contestants due to a tie average score the Chairman of the Jury will decide on the runner-up.



11. Competitors and jury members acknowledge that if and to the extent that there is a relationship of kinship and/or legal academic relation at the time of the competition between a competitor and a jury member, that jury member may not vote for that competitor or evaluate or score that competitor's performance.

In such a situation, in the case of a YES - NO vote, the Chairman of the jury's vote counts double.

If the Chairman of the jury is affected in relation to a contestant, the vote of the Artistic Director of the Competition counts double.

In the event of a deadlock in a conflict of interest situation between competitors due to the same average score, the Jury members entitled to score and vote will re-evaluate the competitors on the basis of their score sheets and notes and cast another YES - NO vote and, if necessary, re-score the respective competitors.

12. The scores are strictly confidential, but once the competition is over, participants of the rounds may request access to the aggregated scores.
13. There is no possibility to appeal against the jury's decision. However, if the disqualification, omission or non-scoring of a competitor is based on a manifest administrative error, the Organiser is entitled to apply a correction at his own discretion or in consultation with the Jury, before the announcement of the results of the round in question, in order to preserve the fairness of the competition.

## VIII. APPLICATION

1. Deadline for application: 15 April 2025, 23:59 CET
2. Age limit: the Competition is open to cellists born after 1 September 1995, of any nationality.
3. Applications can only be submitted by completing the online application form and sending an e-mail with all the required attachments to [competition@filharmonia.hu](mailto:competition@filharmonia.hu)
4. Documents to be attached to the email:
  - a photocopy of the receipt for the entry fee
  - a photocopy of the **identity card** (EU citizens only) or **passport** (EU and non-EU citizens)
  - **Artistic and professional CV**
  - and a recent **photograph** of the applicant of at least 2-3 MB in size

Also to be attached three unedited video files as a shared link:

- 1. An introduction of the applicant in a maximum duration of 60 seconds.
- 2. A video recording of J.S. Bach: Cello Suites - three optional movements, all 3 movements played uncut in one recording

- 3. A video recording of one of the optional works selected from Second Round List II. or a freely chosen movement or movements of a solo cello piece written after 1940, of a total length of 5-10 minutes

Contestants are expected to send their recordings via a shared YouTube link as follows:

- Video recording not older than 6 months from submitting the registration
- Hands and whole body need to be clearly visible all the time
- Individual parts of the repertoire must be recorded in one video not separately, thus we expect three (3) videos.
- Upload it as non-public (unlisted) video on YouTube

The application will be complete and final when the contestant has filled in the online application form and sent all the requested attachments in full, together with the 3 video links, by e-mail to [competition@filharmonia.hu](mailto:competition@filharmonia.hu).

5. The Organiser will provide accommodation for the contestants for the duration of the semi-finals and the final. Contestants acknowledge that they participate in the Budapest International Cello Competition at their own expense, except accommodation costs, and therefore have no legal or financial claims of any kind against Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd.
6. By submitting the requested personal data upon application, contestants voluntarily and without external influence consent to being contacted by Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. via the provided email address regarding the competition. Filharmonia Hungary Nonprofit Ltd. will manage all data received in accordance with applicable data protection laws and its internal privacy policy, which can be found in the footer of the company's website.

## **IX. ENTRY FEE**

**Entry fee: 80 EUR**

Application deadline: 15 April 2025

Deadline for sending the application: **15 April 2025 23:59 CET**

The entry fee is non-refundable in case of unsuccessful qualification.

By submitting an application, the competitor agrees that the entry fee will not be refunded for any reason, including administrative errors, withdrawal or failure to qualify.

Notification deadline: **30 April 2025**

Please transfer the entry fee to the bank account of the organiser as follows:



IBAN: HU69 10004885-10002010-00223335

BIC (SWIFT) code: HUSTHUHB

Hungarian State Treasury, HU1139 Budapest, Vaci ut 71.

In the communication, please indicate the name of the competitor and the name of the competition as follows:

Surname Firstname – BICC

## **X. AUDIENCE VOTE**

1. Among the contestants of the Third Round, the audience will have the opportunity to vote for one contestant to receive the Audience Prize.
2. Voting will be open from the beginning of the Third Round until one hour after the final contestant's performance.
3. On-site audience members may cast their vote by placing their ballot in a sealed box located in the designated public area. Each attendee is entitled to one vote, which must be cast using the official ballot provided at entry. A vote is valid if marked with a single "X" or "+" next to the chosen contestant's name.
4. Online viewers may also participate in the vote. Voting will be open via the official streaming platform during the broadcast and for one hour after. Instructions and voting links will be available on the competition's official website. Each individual may submit one vote, and the voting system will log email addresses for verification purposes.

## **XI. COPYRIGHT**

1. The competition is a media event. The Organizer or a designated media provider may record and broadcast any part of the event.
2. Contestants authorize the Organizer to use their name and image in all promotional and printed materials related to the competition (e.g., posters, brochures, programs, flyers, press publications), and to publish such materials online in accordance with standard professional practice.
3. Contestants consent to being photographed, recorded on video and/or audio in connection with the competition. These materials may be published and distributed via newspapers, magazines, online media, the Organizer's website and intranet, social media pages, YouTube, Vimeo, and in other media promoting the competition. The use of the recordings is not limited in time, but is exclusively for the promotion, documentation and professional presentation of the competition.
4. At the same time as registering for the competition, the contestant waives the right to use any photos and video recordings of him/her. The contestant shall have no financial claims or demands against Organizer in this respect, either directly or indirectly, on any legal grounds

whatsoever. After the end of the competition, the contestant may request the deletion of the recordings made of him/her from the social media sites of Filharmonia Hungary and from its own website, provided that this does not affect the documentary and professional purposes of the competition.

5. From the beginning to the end of the competition, contestants agree to provide interviews, participate in photo sessions, or take part in other media-related activities upon request by the Organizer, free of charge.
6. In case of legal disputes, the Hungarian-language version of the competition rules shall prevail. In the event of any dispute between the Contestant and the Organiser, the parties agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Hungarian courts and to the application of Hungarian law.
7. In order to resolve any disputes that may arise, or to change the prizes in relation to the original announcement, the jury shall consult the Managing Director of the Filharmonia Hungary Concert and Festival Organising Non-profit Ltd. and the decision shall be taken by the President/Chairman of the Jury in each round. In the event of administrative errors, incorrect disqualifications or other technical problems, the organiser reserves the right to make corrections and will inform the person concerned in writing.
8. The Organizer reserves the right to make changes to the announced cast.

Budapest International Cello Competition is open to the public.

**Participation in the Competition constitutes acceptance of these Competition Rules.**