



# 2025 Classical Commissioning Program

Application Deadline:

March 6, 2025

11:59 PM, E.T.

Notification: July 2025

Grant period: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027

# About *Classical Commissioning*

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Chamber Music America's *Classical Commissioning Program* provides grants to professional U.S.-based presenters and ensembles whose programming includes Western European and/or non-Western classical and contemporary music.

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Grants are provided for the commissioning and performance of new works by American composers. The program supports works scored for 2–10 musicians performing one per part, composed in any of the musical styles associated with contemporary classical music.

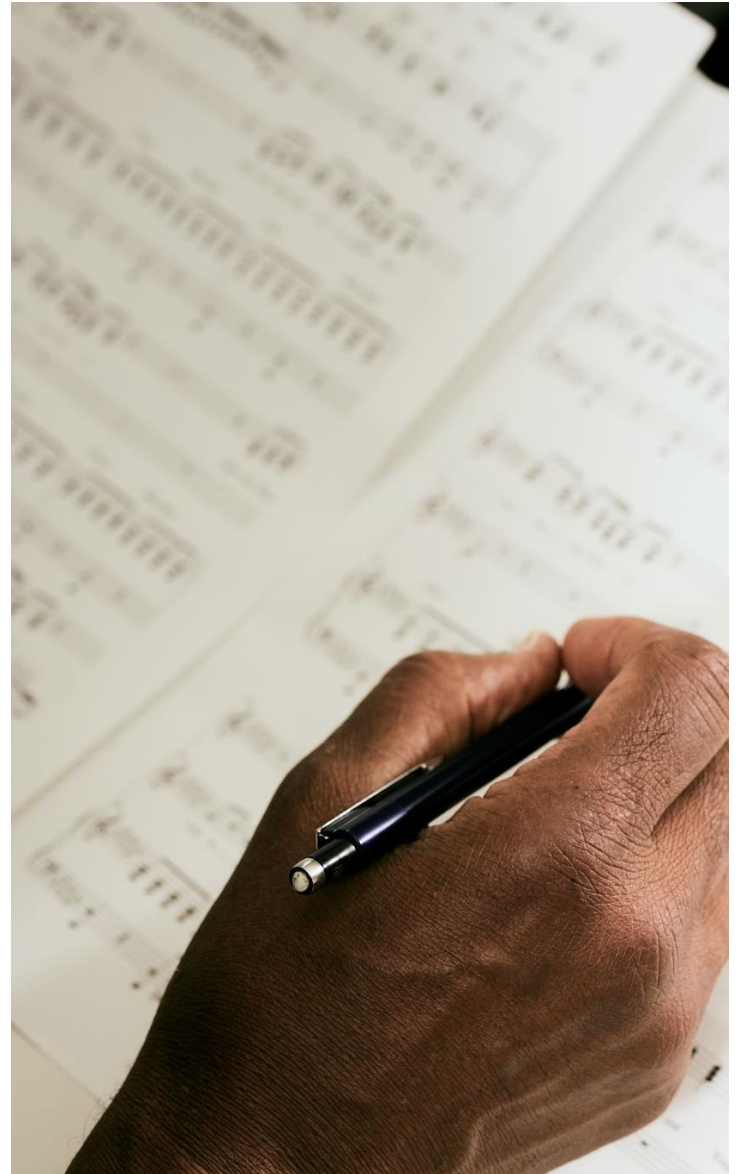
# About *Classical Commissioning* (cont.)

- Chamber Music America encourages commissions by emerging and mid-career composers.
- A total of 3 to 5 grants will be awarded for this grant period.
- The Classical Commissioning program is funded by Chamber Music America. Additional program support has been provided by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the Amphion Foundation, the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, and the CMA Endowment Fund.

# The Commissioned Work

The proposed new work:

- must be a new concert-music piece written for 2–10 musicians and scored for one musician per part
- if a conductor is used for the performance of the work, they are not considered one of the paid musicians in the ensemble
- must be in the form of a notated score (the composer retains all rights)
- must be at least 10-minutes in length





# The Commissioned Work (cont.)

- must be finished and one digital copy of the score submitted to CMA by September 30, 2026
  - must be booked for its premiere by February 1, 2027 (does not need to be premiered by this date)
  - must be premiered exclusively by the commissioned ensemble (including guest artists) in a venue accessible by the general public by June 30, 2027 (end of grant period)
  - may not include a greater number of guest artists than there are musicians in the applicant ensemble
  - If the work is to be written as part of a collaborative project involving other artistic disciplines, it must also be a stand-alone work for concert performance.
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# Project Requirements

All projects must

- Take place during the grant period in the U.S. or its territories
- Be performed by the applicant ensemble (including guest artists or conductor)

# Ensemble Eligibility

An ensemble is eligible if:

- it is a professional group with a commitment to Western European or non-Western contemporary classical music (as demonstrated on a submitted work sample)
- it consists of fixed personnel and instrumentation or is part of a flexible roster or a collective that performs in varying configurations of no more than 10 musicians
- in the case of a duo, performs as equal partners, rather than as soloist and accompanist, and consistently publicizes itself as a duo
- the leader/primary member of the ensemble is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident (non-profit status is not required of ensembles)

# Presenter Eligibility

A presenter is eligible if it

- is a 501(c)(3) organization or otherwise eligible for charitable contributions for federal income, estate and gift-tax purposes
- presents classical, contemporary, other music genres, and/or multi-disciplinary performing arts programs
- applies with a group that meets the Ensemble Eligibility criteria



# Ensembles and Presenters must:

- be based in the U.S. or its territories
- be CMA members, membership must be current through June 2025
- have no overdue reports or financial obligations to CMA
- agree to acknowledge CMA, grant funders in all programs and press materials related to the funded project
- have completed any previous CMA commissioning project before re-applying
- show proof of 501(c)3 status, or is otherwise eligible for charitable contributions for federal income, estate and gift-tax purposes (fiscal sponsorship is not eligible)

# Composer Eligibility

- must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- may not have outstanding commitments to this commissioning program or to another active CMA commissioning project or grant
- may be a member of the applicant's ensemble
- is an individual, not a group

# Eligibility – Current Grantees

- Applicants that have received Classical Commissioning funding in the past three grant years (since 2022) are not eligible for 2025 funding.
- Current Artistic Projects, Classical Commissioning, or New Jazz Works grantee ensembles or presenters cannot apply

# Ineligible Requests

- previously written works or arrangements of previously written works or works-in-progress
- portions of works (such as individual movements or variations)
- compositions that are soloistic in nature (such as concertos or works for soloist and accompaniment)
- consortium commissions
- music for dramatic works (staged or unstaged)
- opera or choral works
- incidental music for other media
- fees for non-musician participants in the proposed work (such as a narrator) or for student musicians

# Grant Components and Funding

## **Commission Support Payment (\$7,500)**

- The commission support payment is \$7,500.

## **Rehearsal Support Payment (up to \$7,500)**

- This includes \$750 per musician, including any guest artists.
- The support payment represents:
  - Payment toward rehearsal and performance of the new work.
    - If the composer is a member of the ensemble and will perform or the work, they are eligible for a rehearsal payment.
    - The total number of musicians may not exceed 10.

# Grant Components and Funding (cont.)

## **Performance Support Payment (\$1,000)**

- Supporting costs of transportation, lodging, and per diem basic programming costs and services or production costs.

## **Administration/Copying Costs Support Payment (\$500)**

- \$500 to support copying costs.

# For example, if you are a quartet

- \$7,500 composer fee
- \$3,000 ensemble fee
- \$1,000 performance support
- \$500 administration/copying support

Your Grant Request = \$12,000



# Grant Payments

CMA contracts with and makes grant payments to the applicant entity—either the ensemble or presenter.

It is the grantee's responsibility to compensate the composer and, if the grantee is a presenter, the ensemble. CMA does not make payments to fiscal sponsors.

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# Grant Payments (cont.)

- If a grantee ensemble has 501(c)(3) status, payment is made to the organization. If not, all grant payments are made to the designated ensemble member serving as grant contact, who must provide government-approved documentation showing their U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status.
  - A composer must provide proof of citizenship or resident status
  - A presenter grantee must provide proof of non-profit status.
  - Grant funds are taxable; grantees must comply with all applicable city, state, and federal laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations affecting the project.
  - The designated ensemble member or presenter grantee is responsible for managing the project and disbursement and reporting grant income.
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# Grant Payments – Schedule

If awarded, payment of the grant funds will be made as follows:

- An initial payment consisting of \$3,750 for the composer
- A second payment consisting of
  - \$3,750 for the composer
  - \$500 for administrative/copying costs
  - \$750 for each ensemble member takes place after receipt of the interim report. The interim report includes the commission score and booking confirmation of the work's premiere.

All contractual obligations including the completed score, booking confirmation for the premiere, and the performance of the premiere must be completed by June 30, 2027, in order to remain in good standing with CMA and maintain eligibility for potential future applications and funding.

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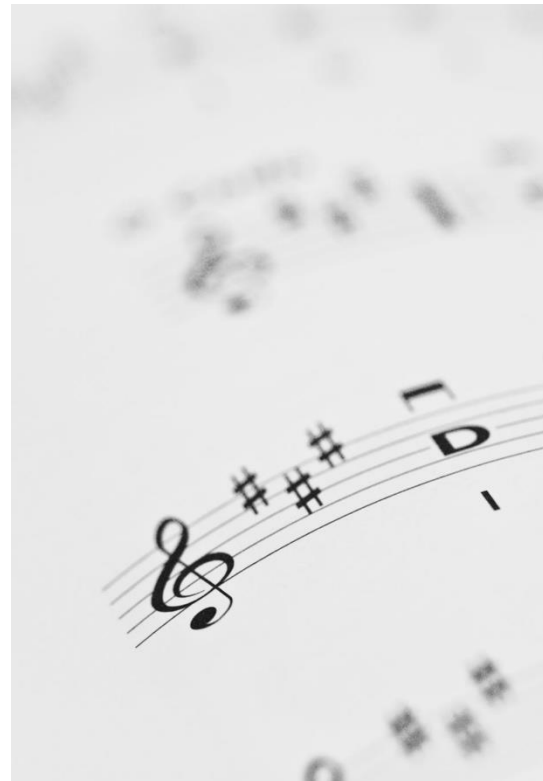
# The Application

CMA uses an online application through [Submittable](https://cma.submittable.com). Create a free Submittable account if you do not already have one. Only online applications will be accepted.

- Go to <https://cma.submittable.com> and Select *Classical Commissioning*
- Complete the online form directly or draft your responses in an offline document as a backup, then copy and paste your information into the online application.
- To save the work you have done on your application, you must click SAVE DRAFT at the bottom of the form before exiting.
- You can return to your saved application to continue working on it by following the log-in instructions.
- The application will close promptly at 11:59 PM ET on Thursday, March 6, 2025. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications at least 24 hours before the deadline to avoid last-minute complications.

# Application Written Responses

- Composer and ensemble contact
- Composer identification
- Ensemble size, personnel, and instrumentation
- The Commission
  - Approx. Length, number of musicians, instrumentation
  - Composer's idea for commissioned work
- Grant Request Amounts



# Audio Uploads

Audio files must be uploaded to the online application. Submissions are reviewed from the beginning, unless cue times are indicated; therefore, editing of each audio file is recommended. MIDI files are not accepted.

# Composer Audio

- should provide high quality performances.
- two selections, preferably chamber music, consisting of up to 5 minutes of a single work, or excerpt from a work on each file (the panel will listen to 2 minutes of each sample, see Panel Review Procedure below)
- must include work[s] written within the past 25 years.
- may be re-recorded from a commercially released studio recording.
- Additionally, if a work includes narration, the compositional element must be strong enough for panelists to adjudicate the composer's artistry and technique)
- Only mp3 and/or m4a file types are accepted.

# Ensemble Audio

- small ensemble works (2-10 musicians), consisting of up to 5 minutes of a single work or an excerpt from a work on each file (NOTE: the panel will listen to 2 minutes of each sample, see Panel Review Process above.)
- should show the group's ability to perform contemporary music at a high level.
- two selections (contrasting works are recommended)
- must include at least one work written within the past 25 years (Audio File 1 or 2)
- must include at least one unedited audio recording from a live concert or from an online performance (either Audio File 1 or 2); the remaining sample may be from a commercially released or studio recording.
- Only mp3 and/or m4a file types are accepted.

# Ensemble Audio (cont.)

The files may not contain works:

- performed by soloists or that contain extensive solo passages
- that prominently feature guests/soloists not involved in the proposed commission
- with orchestra
- that are scored for more than 10 musicians
- that are performed by more than one musician per part



# Ensemble Audio - Personnel

- If the ensemble is a subset of a larger collective or roster, at least 50 percent of the musicians that will perform the commissioned work must appear on each work sample. Include, if possible, at least one work with the same (or similar) instrumentation and size as the work to be commissioned.
- The number of musicians on the ensemble files, however, should not exceed the commissioned instrumentation by greater than 50 percent.
- If a duo, both ensemble members must be included in the application and audio samples.
- If the new work is for a small group, such as a duo or trio, do not include audio performed by a larger ensemble.

# Score Uploads

- One Composer Score Sample and one Ensemble Score Sample must be accompanied by a relevant section of the printed score or graphic notation. Score Samples must be uploaded to the online application.
- Please remove or delete any identifying information about the composer or work title in each upload. Acceptable file type: pdf only.

# Uploads

Label Audio and Score Files:

- **Ensemble Files:** E1 – Applicant Name; E2 – Applicant Name
- **Composer Files:** C1 – Applicant Name – Composer Name; C2 – Applicant Name – Composer Name
- **Score Samples:** Label Score Sample pdfs as “C1 Score” or “C2 Score” and “E1 Score” or “E2 Score”
- **Memorandum(s) of Understanding** from the Composer and, if a Presenter applicant, between the Ensemble and Presenter
- **Composer’s bio** or résumé

# Completing the application



## Prepare

Prepare your attachments and title each file using CMA's labeling instructions



## Upload

Upload all required files



## Click

When application is complete, click SUBMIT



## Confirm

CMA will confirm receipt via email

# Panel Review Process

Classical Commissioning applications are reviewed by an independent panel of chamber music professionals versed in current compositional trends and performance practices. The panel does not include members of the CMA staff or board. ([Representative list of panelists](#))

# Panel Review Process (cont.)

- Applicants may submit samples of up to 5 minutes
- Panelists listen to 2 minutes of each Audio Sample
- Applicants may indicate cue times to target the panelists' audio review in the application
- Unless otherwise indicated with cue times, the panel will listen from the beginning of the audio sample
- Submissions are reviewed anonymously (without identifying information) in all panel rounds

# Panel Review Process (cont.)

- Composer audio samples are evaluated for compositional technique/skill, understanding of the instrumentation
- Ensemble audio samples are evaluated for their performance of the selected repertoire, clear artistic vision, ensemble cohesiveness in executing the selections

# Scoring, Notes, & Feedback

- The panel uses a scoring system of 10 (excellent), 7 (good), 4 (average), 1 (non-competitive)
- Panelists also write notes on their review sheets
- Panel feedback—scores and notes are provided to applicants after notifications are made (by appointment)



# CMA Resources

- [Program Information \(FAQs\)](#)
- **Technical Support:** [Submittable Help – For Submitters | Submittable](#)
- [Grant & Award Recipients](#)
- [Press Room](#)
- [Membership](#)



# Thank you!

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