

The Paul Ben-Haim Competition
Young Performers of Israeli Art Music
February – March 2026
All Instruments * Voice * Chamber Ensembles

1 We hereby announce the **Paul Ben-Haim Competition 2026 – Young Performers of Israeli Art Music**.

This competition is dedicated to the memory of its founder, the late **Ami Maayani**, former Chairperson of the Israel Composers' League.

The competition is produced and managed by the **Youth and music Israel**.

Purpose of the competition: To encourage young musicians to perform Israeli art music.

Application deadline: January 25, 2026, at 19:00 (Israel Standard Time).

2 The competition's organization and the appointment of the jury are the responsibility of the Association's board, whose members include musicians and public figures.

The Chair of the Jury is **Prof. Moshe Zorman**.

The competition's professional committee will approve the repertoire proposed by each candidate and reserves the right to formally reject works or parts thereof.

3 The competition is open to performers on all instruments, to singers, and to traditional/unique chamber ensembles (subject to prior repertoire approval), with a maximum of six players.

In all three stages of the competition, the following shall be performed:

- **Instrumental performances:** Israeli art music only
- **Vocal performances:** Original art songs for voice and piano

The level of performance should be equivalent to at least six years of study, or to the standard of a matriculation recital on the given instrument/voice

4 The final stage of the competition will be divided into two separate parts

Part I: Vocal competition candidates

Part II: Instrumental competition candidates

Prizes will be awarded separately for the vocal and instrumental competitions, as detailed in Section 8

The holding of each competition is subject to a minimum of 8 participants per category

5 Age Categories

Instrumental Competition:

Younger Group: Ages 13–18 (on March 10, 2026) candidates must have reached 13 but not yet 19).

Older Group: Ages 19–24 (inclusive), or up to 26 for students enrolled in music academies (on March 10, 2026 – candidates must have reached 19 but not yet 25, or up to 26 if still enrolled in studies).

Vocal Competition:

Younger Group: Ages 16–20 (on March 10, 2026 – candidates must have reached 16 but not yet 21).

Older Group: Ages 21–24 (inclusive), or up to 26 for students enrolled in music academies (on March 10, 2026 – candidates must have reached 21 but not yet 25, or up to 26 if still enrolled in studies).

Age Exception:

A special request for participation in the competition may be submitted if the candidate exceeds the relevant age range by no more than 12 months.

The applicant must provide the following:

- Two recommendation letters
- A detailed program listing all works proposed for the competition
- A home-recorded video performance of a complete Israeli work (not necessarily from the repertoire submitted for the competition)

Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the Competition Committee shall have the authority to approve or reject it.

Requests for an age exception must be submitted by email to:

noar.music.israel@gmail.com

6 The Competition will be held in three stages

Stage I

1. Younger Group – Instrumental Competition

- 1.1 Each competitor shall perform one work, or part of a work, from the approved program, at their choice.
- 1.2 The performance must not be shorter than five (5) minutes.
- 1.3 Exceeding the allotted time is strictly prohibited.

2. Younger Group – Vocal Competition

- 2.1 Each competitor may perform up to two (2) works of their choice.
- 2.2 The total performance time for both works together must not exceed five

(5) minutes.

2.3 Exceeding the allotted time is strictly prohibited.

3. Older Group – Instrumental Competition

3.1 Each competitor shall perform one or more works from the approved program, at their choice.

3.2 The performance must last between ten (10) and fifteen (15) minutes.

3.3 Exceeding the allotted time is strictly prohibited.

4. Older Group – Vocal Competition

4.1 Each competitor shall perform several works of their choice.

4.2 The total performance time must not exceed ten (10) minutes.

4.3 Exceeding the allotted time is strictly prohibited.

Stage II

- **Younger Group: Each competitor shall perform for 10 to 12 minutes, selecting works from the approved program that were not performed in Stage I.**
- **Older Group: Each competitor shall perform for 15 to 20 minutes, selecting works from the approved program that were not performed in Stage I.**

Stage III and Announcement of Winners

Competitors shall perform one or more complete works, or selected parts thereof, as determined solely by the Jury and its Chairperson, chosen from the full program submitted in advance with the application (Stage I repertoire submission).

At the conclusion of Stage III of the Paul Ben-Haim Competition, the winners will be announced.

Total program length (for submission; note – portions of the program will be selected for performance in different stages as outlined in Section 6, Stages I and II):

- Younger Group: 17–20 minutes in total
- Older Group: 25–30 minutes in total

5. Important notice for competitors:

Once a candidate's repertoire has been approved, no changes will be permitted.

The Jury reserves the right to disqualify a candidate at any stage of the competition if the candidate fails to comply with the regulations and/or the Jury's instructions during the competition stages.

In Stage II, candidates must perform works that were not performed in Stage I.

In the Final Stage, competitors may choose either a complete work or a cycle/group of songs.

- *Younger vocalists*: 2–3 songs
- *Older vocalists*: 3–5 songs

6. General Regulations

- a. Competitors are not permitted to perform their own original compositions.
- b. The order of works performed shall be determined by the competitor.
- c. For published works, it is recommended to use the original editions.
- d. Any approach or contact by a competitor, or by their representative, to members of the Jury or to the Chairperson of the Jury, before or during the competition, is strictly prohibited.

Comprehensive lists of Israeli art music can be found at the following sites:

- Israel Music Institute: www.imi.org.il
- Israel Composers' League:
<https://www.israelcomposers.org/Catalog.aspx?lang=Hebrew>
- The National Library of Israel: <http://web.nli.org.il>
- Competition Website: www.youth-music.org.il

7. Scheduling and Availability

Competitors hereby undertake to be available on all the competition dates specified above, without exception.

Scheduling of all competition dates and stages will be determined by **Youth and music Israel – the competition organizers**, in accordance with the decision of the Competition Committee.

The schedule is final and cannot be changed or postponed by the candidate and/or their accompanists (i.e., accompanying performers, if applicable).

Accordingly, it is the full responsibility of the candidate, prior to completing the application, to ensure that any accompanists are available on all competition days and are aware that schedules for each stage will be provided only shortly before that stage, and **will not be subject to changes under any circumstances**.

A performing accompanist may be replaced at any stage of the competition for any reason; however, in such cases the competition organizers must be notified immediately before the relevant stage.

8. Competition Schedule

Stage I – Submission of Recording

- **Deadline for submission of recordings:** February 5, 2026, at 18:00.

Each competitor must submit one recording, in accordance with the guidelines set out in Section 6 of these regulations (subsections 1–4, for both younger and older groups). Recordings submitted after this deadline will not be accepted, and any late application will be automatically disqualified.

A recording may be submitted only after receiving **written confirmation by email from the organizers** that all required documents have been received in full and on time (by January 25, 2026, at 19:00).

Required documents:

- Online application form
- Registration fee
- Letter of recommendation

Upon confirmation, detailed instructions for submitting the recording will be sent by email.

Method of submission:

- By providing a link to YouTube (set to *unlisted*), or
- By sending a file via Google Drive, ensuring that access permissions are granted in advance.

Recordings must be sent to: noar.music.israel@gmail.com

Mandatory Recording Requirements:

At the beginning of the recording, the competitor must introduce themselves verbally and state the following:

- Date of recording
- Competitor's name
- Title(s) of the work(s)
- Composer's name
- The name of the competition: "*Paul Ben-Haim Competition 2026*"

In the case of multiple works, each work must be recorded separately.

Recording content: As specified in Section 6 of the regulations.

Binding instruction: Failure to comply with one or more of the above requirements — including submission deadline, submission format, or recording content — will result in immediate disqualification from the competition.

Stage II

Stage II will be held on **Sunday–Monday, February 22–23, 2026**, in Jerusalem, from afternoon until evening hours.

Stage III and Final Concert

Stage III and the Final Concert will be held on **Tuesday, March 10, 2026**, at the following times:

- 14:00 – Instrumental Competition
- 18:00 – Vocal Competition

Both competitions will take place at the **ANU – Museum of the Jewish People, Tel Aviv**, and will be subject to the directives of the Home Front Command

8. Accompanists

Responsibility for arranging accompanists lies with the competitor, and any related expenses shall be borne by the competitor.

A list of accompanists available and reserved for the competition dates will be posted on the competition website, **for convenience and as a recommendation only**.

The Association, the competition organizers, and/or the Competition Committee bear no responsibility for the absence or unavailability of an accompanist.

Competitors may change their accompanist at any time, even at the last minute, for any reason; however, they must notify the organizers accordingly.

9. Competition Prizes

In the younger age category, separate prizes will be awarded for the **Vocal Competition** and the **Instrumental Competition**:

- **First Prize:** 4,000 NIS
- **Second Prize:** 2,500 NIS
- **Third Prize:** 1,500 NIS

A **Special Performance Prize** of 500 NIS will be awarded for an outstanding performance of a work (or part of a work) composed by an Israeli female composer, in the Final Stage.

In the **older age category**, separate prizes will be awarded for the **Vocal Competition** and the **Instrumental Competition**:

- **First Prize:** 7,000 NIS
- **Second Prize:** 4,000 NIS
- **Third Prize:** 2,000 NIS

Special Performance Prize:

A **Special Performance Prize** of 1,000 NIS will be awarded for an outstanding performance of a work (or part of a work) composed by an Israeli female composer in the Final Stage.

The Jury reserves the right **not to award any prize** if no suitable candidate is found. The Jury may also grant **honorable mentions** to competitors and accompanists

10. Recommendation Requirement

Competitors must submit a recommendation from their educational institution. Private students must submit a recommendation from their teacher. Graduates must submit recommendations from their most recent institution or from their last private teacher.

11. Jury Composition

The Jury will be appointed by the Competition Committee and shall consist of **three to four senior musicians** from various disciplines at each stage.

12. Conflict of Interest

If a Jury member has a **family or teacher-student relationship** with a competitor, that Jury member will **not score that competitor**, and the competitor's score will be calculated as the **average of the remaining Jury scores**.

13. Jury Meetings

Jury meetings are valid only with the **full Jury present** at each stage.

14. Jury Decisions

All Jury decisions are made **by secret ballot and by majority vote**. All scores and decisions will be recorded in the competition protocol. Any Jury member may request that their opinion be recorded in the protocol. Decisions of the Competition Committee and Jury are **final**.

15. Public Access

The competition will be **open to the public only during Stage III (Final Concert)**, subject to Home Front Command directives (March 10, 2026).

16. Recording and Broadcasting Rights

The Competition Committee reserves the right to **record and film** the competition or any part thereof, for broadcast in Israel or abroad.

The Committee also holds the **exclusive right to distribute** any such recordings in any form, commercial or non-commercial, including CDs, tapes, and digital recordings, anywhere, **without payment to participants**, provided the copyrights of composers and publishers are respected.

17. Registration

Registration must be submitted via an **online form**, including personal details and a full list of works for the competition.

- Accurate timing for each work and the full name of the composer must be provided.
- For published works, the title must match the published edition.
- A **recommendation letter** and a **registration fee of 130 NIS** must be attached.

The registration fee is **non-refundable**, even if the candidate decides not to participate or is disqualified. Submission of the program and payment of the fee **does not guarantee acceptance**.

18. Additional Information

Registration forms and additional information will be available on the competition website during the registration period: www.youth-music.org.il

19. Downloadable Forms

Registration forms and additional competition information can be downloaded **only from the competition website**: <https://www.youth-music.org.il/he-paulbenhaim2020>

20. Agreement to Terms

Submitting the online registration form constitutes **unconditional agreement** to all terms of this regulation and a commitment by the competitor to comply.

21. Submission of Registration Forms

All registration forms must be submitted according to the instructions provided in the online form.

21. Submission of Registration Forms

All registration forms must be submitted to the Competition Administration **via the website only**.

Recommendation letters must be sent **by email only** to:
noar.music.israel@gmail.com

The registration fee must be paid **via bank transfer**, including the competitor's name in the remarks section.

Bank details for transfer:

- Account Number: 01142553
- Bank: Bank Leumi (10)
- Branch Number: 865
- IBAN ACOUNT: IL290108650000001142553
- Account Name: Youth and music Israel

Payments by check (registered mail), Bit, or Paybox will **not** be accepted.

Competition Production: Youth and Music Israel

Competition Supported By:

- Ministry of Culture and Sports – Department of Culture, Music Division
- Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality
- Youth and Music Israel
- Private Donors

