

### About the Competition

Melbourne Recital Centre's *Great Romantics Competition* is a national competition that provides a platform for young musicians passionate about the Romantic repertoire by composers such as Brahms, Liszt and Schumann to perform at a professional level.

### General Conditions

The *Great Romantics Competition* is aimed at early-career musicians who are currently attending university or have recently graduated. The competition provides a platform for finalists to perform and compete in the Elisabeth Murdoch Hall for the prestigious *Great Romantics Prize*, which includes a combination of cash plus, professional development and media opportunities.

Competition repertoire submitted must consist of any work/s composed and/or published strictly between 1810-1900 (with no exceptions) and not exceed 20 minutes in total duration.

### Eligibility

The *Great Romantics Competition* is open to:

- soloists, duos or small ensembles (5 competitors or less)
- any instrument/s or solo voice
- university music students and recent graduates
- musicians between 18 – 25 years of age (at 1 January 2026)
- permanent residents or citizens of Australia (or New Zealand citizens who are residents in Australia)

The competition is not open to established professional musicians, regardless of meeting the other eligibility conditions. The short-listing panel may deem an applicant professional at their discretion.

### Key Dates

Key dates for the *Great Romantics Competition* are:

- Wednesday 29 July 2026 at midnight (AEST) - applications closing date. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Monday 17 August 2026 – Announcement of finalists
- Saturday 12 September 2026 – Performance Final

The Performance Final will be held in the Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, Melbourne Recital Centre at 3.00pm. The competition winner will be announced, and their prize awarded at the conclusion of the Performance Final.

### Prizes

#### *Elisabeth Murdoch Prize*

- Elisabeth Murdoch Prize: \$8,000
- Pre-recorded interview on 3MBS Melbourne, made directly after the competition finishes.
- A Melbourne Recital Centre set of double passes to three concerts selected in liaison with Melbourne Recital Centre
- An invitation to join the MRC professional development *Artist Assembly* program

#### *Encouragement Awards*

- Anne Kantor Encouragement Award: \$2,000
- Milan Kantor Encouragement Award: \$2,000

The Jury reserves the right not to award any prize.

## **Applications**

- Applicants must complete the online application form available on the Melbourne Recital Centre website.
- Only one application is permitted per competitor (i.e. competitors may not submit under multiple ensembles).
- No competitor/s will be allowed to compete under any name other than that specified on the registration.
- Previous winners of the Elisabeth Murdoch Prize are ineligible for entry.
- Complete registrations must be received by Melbourne Recital Centre no later than **midnight of Wednesday 29 July 2026**.
- Posted, emailed, hand delivered, or faxed entries will not be accepted.

## **Application Items**

The following five items are required:

- Audio-visual footage of the musical submission (see below for detail)
- A copy of the score of piece/s in PDF format
- 100-150 word biography for each application to include training, awards, qualifications and concert appearances (ensembles are required to include a 100-150 word biography about the ensemble and 50-100 word biography for each member of the ensemble)
- Image of the performer or ensemble in JPEG format (professional photograph not required)

## **Recordings**

- The audio-visual recording must not exceed 20 minutes in total duration
- Acceptable format is YouTube or Vimeo link only. Please provide any necessary passwords.
- No editing of the footage is permitted. The camera may be paused between movements or different works.
- The recording may not be older than 1 year

## **Travel Assistance Fund**

- A travel assistance fund is available for eligible finalists, made possible through a generous donation by Mrs Margaret S Ross AM & Dr Ian C Ross
- Entrants may apply for assistance with travel and accommodation costs if they live more than 250kms from Melbourne CBD. Please complete the online registration questions if you wish to be considered for travel assistance.

## **Proof of age**

- All applicants for the competition must be between 18 – 25 years of age (at 1 January 2026)
- The Jury reserves the right to ask any competitor, at any time, to provide proof of age and any prize money may be withheld until such proof has been provided.

## **Repertoire**

- Applicants must select any work or works composed and/or published strictly between 1810 -1900
- Performance time must not exceed 20 minutes in total duration. The jury reserves the right to disqualify contestants who run over time.
- The competition program submitted in the application form is binding. Subsequent alterations by the competitor are not permitted. The Short-listing Judge may request finalists to perform only a selection of the repertoire submitted at the Performance Final.
- If possible, vocalists should perform original text editions
- Transcriptions for modern instruments will be accepted

## **Finalist Selection**

- Finalists will be announced no later than Monday 17 August 2026.
- All applicants will be notified of their result by email
- Finalists will receive emailed notification of their selection and further information regarding the Performance Final
- The selection judge's decision, made in conjunction with Melbourne Recital Centre staff, is final and incontestable. No explanations will be provided.

### **Recognition of Guidelines**

- By their submission of the online registration, the applicant acknowledges acceptance of the competition guidelines as well as the decision of the jury as binding on behalf of all competitors. There is no right of appeal.
- Applications that do not meet the requirements of the competition guidelines can be rejected

### **The Jury**

- The Jury will consist of a panel of music industry figures
- Any competitor who makes an attempt, or on whose behalf an attempt is made, to communicate with any member of the Jury prior to the completion of the competition may be disqualified
- The decisions of the Jury are final and may not be challenged on any grounds

### **Accompanists**

- Finalists must provide their own accompanist at their own cost if required for the Performance Final held on Saturday 12 September 2026.
- Accompanists for solo entrants do not need to meet the eligibility criteria as specified above.

### **Performance Final Schedule**

- Applicants accept the obligation to perform at the Performance Final on Saturday 12 September 2026 if selected
- The Performance Final runs from 3.00pm to 5.30pm
- Order of performance and rehearsal schedule will be emailed to each finalist prior to the Performance Final and is at the sole discretion of Melbourne Recital Centre
- Finalists must compete in the order in which their names appear in the program unless officially authorised or directed otherwise
- Each finalist must register personally at Stage Door on the day of the Performance Final at the time specified in correspondence from Melbourne Recital Centre
- Finalists must notify Melbourne Recital Centre staff when leaving the building during the day of the Performance Final

### **Practice, Warm-Up & Rehearsals**

- A warm-up room and practice time on stage will be available at Melbourne Recital Centre on the day of the Performance Final at times to be advised
- If finalists arrive late to their scheduled practice time this may result in no practice time being available

### **Personal Presentation**

- The Jury expects behaviour of finalists and audience to be appropriate to the occasion
- Stage presentation will be considered by the Jury

### **Withdrawals**

- Finalists who are unexpectedly unable to compete in the Performance Final should notify Melbourne Recital Centre to that effect at least 48 hours before the commencement of the Performance Final wherever possible

### **Copyright and Printed Material**

- Finalists must use original material copies or authorised photocopies for performances (authorised photocopies must be accompanied by a letter from the Publisher or Copyright Holder). Photocopies provided for the Jury are permitted and will be destroyed by Melbourne Recital Centre after use. This rule is in accordance with the directions of the Australian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society and Copyright Agencies Limited, and no variations will be permitted.
- Melbourne Recital Centre holds all other necessary APRA & PCCA licences for the Performance Final

### **Insurance**

- Finalists are responsible for insuring their instruments against damage arising out of participation in the competition

**Broadcasting**

- Melbourne Recital Centre or its agent reserves the right, without payment of any fee, to record, film, broadcast, telecast, webcast or photograph any item of the competition.
- The completed online application automatically grants Melbourne Recital Centre permission for any audio, film or photographs to be used for promotional or marketing purposes
- The Competition will be recorded for delayed audio broadcast on 3MBS Melbourne

*The Great Romantics Competition is supported by Annamila Pty Ltd, and Mrs Margaret S. Ross AM & Dr Ian C Ross.*