

2021 AGO/QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITIONS FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS

CHECKLIST FOR CHAPTER COMPETITION COORDINATORS

All publicity, correspondence, and documentation concerning the competition should use its correct name: AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists.

All 2021 chapter competitions will be held online. This checklist is designed to assist chapter coordinators in organizing and running the online competitions.

Competitors will make their performances available to you through their “Add Your RCYO Recording” applications on the AGO website at least one week before the competition date. They will also have the option of creating and submitting CDs directly to you.

Requirements for hosting:

1. Become familiar with the competition rules available online at <https://www.agohq.org/performance-competitions/rcyo/>.
2. All chapter competitions must be held by audio recording between February 13 and April 18, 2021.
3. The Chapter Competition Coordinator must have regular access to email and be proficient in its use. He/she must also be comfortable using the technology required to record and/or broadcast competitors’ performances or engage the assistance of someone who can.
4. Complete and submit the host chapter application form on the RCYO webpage no later than October 15, 2020. No more than six competitions may be held in each region. The Regional Competition Coordinator will determine the six chapters based on their location and the number of potential competitors. Chapters within the same region may combine to hold a competition. Chapters will be included in the listing of chapter competitions to be published in the January 2021 issue of *The American Organist* and on the national website.

Planning the competition:

1. AGO Headquarters will forward all the competitor applications to the appropriate chapter coordinators as they arrive. All competitor applications must be submitted online by January 15, 2021.
2. Plan the location of your chapter’s competition judging. You have two options:
 - Option 1: Host the competition at a location where you can **safely** gather the judges. In this location, you would play the music files or the CDs for the judges, and they in turn would both listen to and judge the performances.
 - Option 2: If it is not possible to gather the judges safely and for them to meet in person, the judges will have to listen to the recordings privately at home. Private listening is possible either by sharing the uploaded music files or URL links to uploaded recordings, or distributing any CDs that were created. In this case, you will need to plan video or

audio conference calls to brief the judges and to facilitate their deliberations. Note that during judging, competitors must not be visible to the judges.

3. Plan a broadcast of the competition to the chapter and friends. While the competitors' submissions will be pre-recorded, it is highly desirable that chapter coordinators share these submissions with their chapter. One approach is to pre-record the entire competition and make it available for wider viewing from a video-sharing site. Here's how you might put it together:

- Using the "script" downloadable from the RCYO link at <https://www.agohq.org/performance-competitions/rcyo/> and your computer's camera, record as separate video clips the general introduction to the competition, closing remarks, and your introductions of each competitor, which will be presented after the judges have made their decision.
- Using video editing software, combine the introduction, competitors' submissions, and closing remarks into one video. You may wish to display photographs, chosen hymns, competition program, or other images during the performances.
- Publish the competition video on a video-sharing site such as YouTube or Vimeo. Schedule the video to be viewable as of the date and time of the competition.
- Judges who are listening to the recordings at home may listen to this pre-recorded version but may prefer to listen to the private recordings.
- Plan how you will announce the competition results. It is highly desirable that chapters share the announcement of the results in a live video stream, such as Zoom. This will give everyone the opportunity to meet the competitors and judges. Schedule the time of the meeting based on the number of competitors and the expected performance length, allowing sufficient time for the judges to complete their notes and deliberations.

4. Create a competition day schedule for the judges:

- Brief the judges at least 30 minutes before the competition, either in person or via a conference or video call.
- Conduct the competition. It is preferable for the competition to be pre-recorded and its availability scheduled on a video-sharing site. Judges will either listen to this recording or to audio files provided.
- Manage the judges' deliberations, either in person or via a conference or video call.
- Announce the winner - preferably in a live video meeting. If the first- and second- place winners do not attend the meeting, plan to call them separately.
- Following the announcement of the results, judges should plan to call each competitor separately to discuss their performance and provide them with their written notes.
- When all of the aforementioned steps have been formalized, announce and publicize the competition within the chapter and surrounding area. As you will need to provide attendees with links to competition events, you may wish to use an event-management platform, such as Eventbrite, to help register and communicate with attendees.

Receiving applications:

Please note: In 2021, competitors are required to appoint a proctor to assist them in recording their submissions. The proctor is responsible for uploading the completed submission to the

AGO website at least one week prior to the published competition date. Alternatively, a proctor may simply send you a CD recording.

1. As you receive the applications, contact each competitor separately and confirm the receipt of his or her application.
2. Ensure that each competitor has identified his or her competition organ and chosen a proctor.
3. Remind any competitor under the age of 18 that he or she must be accompanied by a parent or guardian during the recording session.
4. Remind the competitor that it is his or her responsibility to
 - arrange the submission of the recording at least one week in advance of the chapter competition date
 - coordinate with the proctor and arrange access to the chosen instrument
 - optionally appoint a page-turner or ask the proctor to act as-page turner
 - ensure that the only people present at the time of the recording are the competitor, the proctor, the (optional) page-turner, and any required parent or responsible guardian
5. Verify that the chosen proctor is suitable for providing an impartial monitoring and recording of the candidate's performance.
6. If necessary, provide the proctor with directions for downloading the Proctor Guidelines from the national website, <https://www.agohq.org/performance-competitions/rcyo/>.
7. Remind the competitors that they are responsible for obtaining three copies (one for each judge) of each of their selections. Each of the competitors will have purchased *Sonata in Sea* from AGO HQ. Under no circumstances are competitors allowed to distribute (or play from) photocopies unless they have written permission from the publisher; violation of this rule is grounds for disqualification. Accordingly, judges should be encouraged to use personal scores for judging; alternatively, coordinators might work with the competitors themselves to ensure availability of their scores. Competitors should erase or conceal any identifying marks on perusal scores supplied to judges.

Obtaining three scores can be a lengthy process. The following list suggests various ways to acquire scores:

- Contact friends, teachers, AGO chapter members, or other colleagues to request permission to borrow their copies.
- Borrow scores through academic library consortia.
- Use Interlibrary Loan through local public or academic libraries, realizing that this can take several weeks. The WorldCat database indicates the locations of the nearest libraries that have the score(s) in question in their collections.
- Purchase new copies.
- Request written permission from the copyright holder(s), typically the publisher, to photocopy the score(s).

If necessary, competitors should send perusal copies to the Chapter Competition Coordinator for distribution to the judges. The Coordinator is responsible for returning these copies, upon request.

One month ahead:

1. Appoint three judges and two alternate judges in consultation with the dean of the chapter, and the program coordinator (or sub-dean). If any of these parts has a student that is a competitor, he or she cannot be a judge.
2. Ensure that no past or present teacher of a competitor, or any other teacher associated with a school attended by a competitor, serves as a judge.
3. Submit the judges' names to your Regional Competition Coordinator at least 20 days prior to the competition.

At least 20 days prior to the competition:

1. Inform the judges of the works (including editions of Bach works) to be performed. Judges should be encouraged to use their own scores for judging the competition.
2. Download from <https://www.agohq.org/performance-competitions/rcyo/> each of the hymns chosen by the competitors and send copies to each judge.
3. Send a copy of *Sonata in Sea* (provided by AGO Headquarters) to each judge.
4. Confirm the competition day procedure and schedule with the judges.

At least one week prior to the competition:

Note: Competitors (with the aid of the proctor) will have already made their performances available to you through their "Add your RCYO Recording" application on the AGO website, in one of two ways: (1) uploading the music file onto a file-sharing website, such as YouTube, and then sharing the link with you in their application, or (2) creating and mailing CDs to you.

1. When a competitor's submission is received, download and verify that the recording is complete. Verify the order of performance of their chosen repertoire, as well as details about the chosen organ along with any mechanical problems at the time of recording.
2. If you are creating the pre-recorded competition video following the guidelines in "Planning the Competition" above:
 - Publish the competition video on a video-sharing site with scheduled viewing on the date and time of the competition.
 - Schedule a live video conference call (e.g., Zoom) to announce the results of the competition.
 - Send the competition and results event links to all attendees.
 - Send the results event link to all competitors. If the competition is pre-recorded, you may also send the competition link. Please note that judging is blind, so it is important that judges cannot see the competitor while listening to his or her submission.
 - If judging remotely, set up two conference calls before and after the competition. Then send the following to each judge:
 - a. Conference call links for both judges' meetings
 - b. Pre-recorded competition link for optional listening

- c. Each competitor's submitted recording via a shared site or CDs. Ask judges to verify access to these files, and instruct them not to listen to the performance until the time of the competition.
 - d. A general outline of the competition program
 - e. Official forms to score and rate the competitors (available from <https://www.agohq.org/rcyo-2021-chapter-competitions/>)
 - f. The Official Rules
3. Prepare checks for the proctors. See section 4 in the registration section in the RCYO rules.
 4. Prepare honorarium checks for the judges if necessary. See section 12.e. of the rules for details.

Competition day:

1. Meet with the judges before the competition:
 - Meet with the judges at least a half hour before the competition. Make sure judges have access to the following:
 - a. official form to score and rate the competitors (available from <https://www.agohq.org/rcyo-2021-chapter-competitions/>)
 - b. the Official Rules
 - c. the program of the competition performances, omitting the performers' names
 - If the judges are meeting in one location, ensure that they are positioned where they can best hear the recordings and are at least six feet apart from each other.
 - If judging recordings of each performance remotely, judges may choose to listen to either the pre-recorded competition or privately on their own device.
 - Have at least one alternate judge readily available to serve if required.
 - Instruct the judges to provide signed, written comments to the competitors concerning their performances.
 - Make certain that each judge has copies of the works to be performed and a copy of each competitor's choice of hymn.
 - Provide the judges with a list of any uncorrected mechanical problems reported by any of the proctors.
 - Remind judges of differences in editions.
 - Remind judges that the purpose of the competition is to encourage young organists.
 - Judging should be based primarily on the differences in the quality of the performance rather than the differences in the difficulty of the work chosen. Even though judges can decide to withhold a prize, they should keep in mind the age of these players and their stage of development.
 - Remind judges that this competition concludes at the regional level, and the first-place winner will compete at the regional competition to be held in the summer of 2021.
2. The competition:
 - If the competition has been pre-recorded and scheduled to be viewable at the stated time of the competition, you should not need to do anything.
 - If judges are meeting in one location, either play the pre-recorded video or introduce and play each competitor's submission in program order.

- If the competition is being held via a live video meeting:
 - a. Be responsible for conducting the competition on an efficient schedule.
 - b. Serve as “Master of Ceremonies” for the competition. Use the “script” downloadable from the RCYO link at <https://www.agohq.org/rcyo-2021-chapter-competitions/>.
 - c. Make sure attendees have access to the competition program and chosen hymns.
 - d. Play the recordings of each competitor in the order specified in the program. If necessary, explain that the judges may be listening offline.
 - e. Close the Zoom meeting, reminding attendees to tune back in for the results.
3. Judges’ meeting after the competition:
- Meet with judges to facilitate their decision-making concerning first- and second-place winners.
 - In the event of a tie for first place, places will be determined by the sum of the scores on the 100-point scale (find more information in the judging forms). If this still results in a tie, then the judges will determine the first- and second-place winners by consensus.
4. Results meeting:
- Start up the video call at the planned time for competitors, judges, and attendees to announce the results.
 - Conclude the competition as “Master of Ceremonies,” using the script cited above.
 - Emphasize that the first-place winner will compete at the Regional level. State the location and date of the regional competition.
5. Immediately after the competition:
- Distribute the judging sheets to the competitors, and encourage the judges to speak with the competitors about their performances.
 - Send the judges any necessary honorarium checks. See section 12.e of the rules.
 - Send honorarium checks to the proctors. See section 4 of registration rules.
 - Send the first- and second-place winners their cash awards. Prepare a 1099 form for any cash award of \$600 or more.
 - Electronically submit (1) photos and bios of the first- and second place winners, and (2) a list of all competitors with their updated contact information to the Regional Competitions Coordinator and AGO headquarters (competitions@agohq.org) by April 30, 2021.

Thank you for volunteering for this important role!

2021 RCYO Committee

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