International Festival for Vocal Music
a cappella
Academy
with Contest

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

www.a-cappella-wettbewerb.de

1 The International »a cappella« Academy Leipzig

The International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig aims at young vocal groups from all around the globe. The Academy wants to support young ensembles without stylistic restrictions and contribute to the exchange between them and professionals. The Academy comprises the competition, workshops, a masterclass, a seminar and a showcase and is part of the International Festival for Vocal Music **a cappella**.

2 Initiator and Presenters

The International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig has been initiated by Leipzig-based vocal group amarcord. It is presented by the non-profit association Verein zur Förderung der Vokalmusik a cappella e. V., Oststraße 118, 04299 Leipzig, Germany.

3 Participation

An application including all required materials is precondition to the admission to the Academy. The jurors select which ensembles will be admitted to the Academy based on the application materials in order to maintain the artistic level of the Academy.

4 Application

4.1 Requirements

Vocal groups with at least three singers may apply for the International **a cappella** Academy. The average age of the group's members may not exceed 29 years at the application deadline.
The contest performance may include pieces sung with or without amplification. All vocal groups compete in one category and will be judged by the same criteria. At least half of the sung repertoire should be sung one-to-a-part. Former competition and Academy participants may apply again (apart from Award-winners).
During the contest performance, the vocal groups are not allowed to use music instruments. Loops and effects may be used, when the input signal clearly can be recognised as being produced in the moment of the contest performance by the group. Audio-Samples recorded prior to the contest performance may not be used. PA, mixer and microphones will be provided by the presenters. The vocal groups may bring their own equipment, when the Academy management agrees.

4.2 Application material

The following materials must be submitted for the application (digital only):

- fully executed application form
- planned competition program including title, composer and arranger
- Biography in English and, if possible, German
- Audio files: 20-minute excerpt from a concert or a live recording, no fewer than five pieces
- a current photo of the ensemble in printable resolution (black/white: 600 dpi, color: 300 dpi) including copyright information
- Copies of identity documents (identity card or passport) of all ensemble members (for proof of age)

4.3 Participation fee

The International **a cappella** Academy charges a participation fee of € 100.00 for each group. The fee shall prevent

short-term withdrawals and serve the Academy's costs (renting the hall and the technical equipment, expense allowances for clinicians and lecturers etc.).
When admitted to the International **a cappella** Academy, the participation fee has to be transferred until February 20th with the following subject: International **a cappella** Academy *year* | *name of the ensemble*. Find the account details under 16 "Contact and Bank Account".

4.4 Application
The application process for the International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig is as follows:

February 28th 2027	Application deadline
March 15th 2027	Information on the admission to the Academy
March 31th 2027	Binding confirmation on participation and transfer of the participation fee (see 4.3)
May 1st 2027	Deadline to send the final contest program and the scores

5 Admission and Refusal
The jurors announced by the Academy management decide on the admission of the applying ensembles to the International **a cappella** Academy. The decision is made on basis of the application material. The applicants will be informed about their admission or refusal until March 15th 2027.

6 Course of events
The International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig 2027 will take place at various locations. The competition on June 2nd 2027 will be staged at Gewandhaus Leipzig. The contest performances will be given in the Great hall.
Prior to the contest performances, each vocal group has time to check the acoustic and sound of the Great hall. Dressing rooms will be provided when available. The contest performance is limited to 20 minutes. It begins while entering the stage and ends while leaving it. Excessing this time limit may cost points. During the performance time, at least four pieces shall be sung. The audience is asked to remain silent and not to applaud. Following the contest performances of the competing ensembles, the jurors will meet.

On the following day, the ensembles may consult the individual jurors to evaluate the contest performances and receive advice and input.
The workshops, the masterclass and the showcase take place on June 3rd and 4th 2027. The public prize ceremony will be staged during the showcase of the **a cappella** Academy.
The winner of the first prize in the competition will appear at the final concert of the Festival of Vocal Music **a cappella** Leipzig at Gewandhaus Leipzig.
All participants will receive a detailed schedule after their admission. The schedule may be subject to change.

7 Jurors
The jury of the International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig consists of four to five jurors. Each year, a member of the hosting vocal group amarcord is part of the jury. The jurors will be announced by the Academy's management.

8 Assessment criteria
Each member of the jury shall judge each vocal group using a score of between 0 and 40 points. Assessment shall be based on the following criteria:

- Technical performance (rhythm, intonation, phrasing, articulation)
- Artistic performance (authenticity, tone, balance, agogics, dynamics, tempo, interpretation)
- Stage presence (expression, including use of gesture, mime and acting)
- Overall impression

Each criteria may be assessed with up to 10 points.

Groups may only be declared prize-winners if they produce a convincing performance in all the criteria specified and

make a coherent overall impression demonstrating outstanding artistic potential. The jury reserves the right to withhold prizes or to share them between different entrants. Equal scores may be awarded to different groups.
Should a competition performance exceed the specified length, a fixed number of points to be decided before the competition will be deducted from the score.
The winner(s) will initially be chosen on the basis of the mathematical result. Afterwards, the jury will discuss on the three groups receiving the highest scores. Should disagreement prevail concerning the distribution of prizes or the merits of the top three groups, the chairman of the jury shall be empowered to decide any disputes by means of a casting vote.

9 Prizes

At the International **a cappella** Academy, each participant receives a certificate of participation. Furthermore, various prizes are awarded. The prize money will be transferred to the winners after the competition.

9.1 Leipzig a cappella Award

The winner of the first prize receives the Leipzig **a cappella Award** and prize money of € 2,000.00. The winner commits to sing at the final concert of the Festival of Vocal Music **a cappella** Leipzig. This concert will probably be recorded and broadcast by local radio station MDR Kultur/Klassik. The best-placed ensemble will also be invited to give an honoured concert at the festival the following year.
The second winner receives prize money of € 1,500.00.
The third winner receives prize money of € 1,000.00.

9.2 Audience Award

Following the contest performances of all participants, the audience votes for the winner of the audience award. Every person in the audience, who was present at both competition days, can give his or her vote to an ensemble. The ensemble receiving most of the votes receives the audience award.
The winner of the audience award receives prize money of € 500.00.

9.3 amarcord Special Prize

The hosting vocal group amarcord may grant a special prize. This prize rewards the outstanding interpretation of a piece sung unamplified.
The winner of the amarcord Special Prize receives prize money of € 500.00.

10 a cappella Workshops

All participating ensembles are invited to take part in the **a cappella** Workshops on a wide range of topics from the a cappella world. The workshops are free of all costs for the participants. The workshops are held by the individual jury members. The **a cappella** Workshops are also open to the public – however, active participation is reserved for the Academy participants.

11 a cappella Masterclass

All participants are invited to take part in the **a cappella** Masterclass. The Masterclass is free of all costs for the participants. Each vocal group may work with a professional singer and clinician on one of its pieces. The **a cappella** Masterclass is open to the public.

12 a cappella Showcase

All participating ensembles are invited to take part in the **a cappella** Showcase following the workshops with the jury members on a wide range of topics from the a cappella world and the **a cappella** Masterclass. Here, the ensembles have the opportunity to present themselves to the audience outside of the competition atmosphere and to directly implement on stage what they have learned in the workshops and in the **a cappella** Masterclass.

13 a cappella Seminar

All participants are invited to take part in the **a cappella** Seminar free of charge. Participants will receive scientific insights into topics such as vocal health and care from a renowned ENT physician. The **a cappella** Seminar is not

open to the public.

14 Travel and Accommodation

The International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig grants travel assistance in individual cases and supports the participating ensembles in finding accommodation in Leipzig during the Academy period. There is no legal claim.

15 Legal Issues

The presenters behold the right to record and take pictures of all activities during the International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig and the Festival of Vocal Music **a cappella** Leipzig (Audio/Video/Photo), and use it in connection with the Academy and festival. The participants do not have legal claims concerning the resulting material. All participants agree with the publication of the recordings and pictures with the International **a cappella** Academy being the exclusive owner.
The performances by Academy participants within the International **a cappella** Academy Leipzig and the Festival of Vocal Music **a cappella** Leipzig will not be paid. This applies in particular to the performance of the prize winners at the final concert as well as the performances of the ensembles in the context of the a cappella showcase.

16 Contact

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17 Bank account

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