



Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia
JĀZEPS MEDIŅŠ RIGA SECONDARY MUSIC SCHOOL
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Riga

**Jazz and Popular Music Wind Instrument
and Piano Performance
Competition *JAZZeps***

RULES AND REGULATIONS

I ORGANISER OF THE COMPETITION

1. The Competition is organized by **Jāzeps Mediņš Riga Music Secondary School** (hereinafter – the Music Secondary School), registration No. 90000053454, in cooperation with the Support Association of Jāzeps Mediņš Riga Music Secondary School, registration No. 40008313078, Str. Stabu 10 k-4, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia.
2. Competition contact information: e-mail: konkursi@jmrmv.gov.lv, mob.: +371 26538465, website: www.jmrmv.gov.lv (section “Competitions”).
3. Contact persons of the Music Secondary School regarding matters related to the Competition: education methodologist Reinis Maurītis, mob.: +371 26538465, e-mail: reinis.mauritis@jmrmv.gov.lv, project manager Anita Alksne, mob.: +371 29164555, e-mail: anita.alksne@jrmv.gov.lv.
4. The official languages of the Competition are Latvian and English.

II PURPOSE OF THE COMPETITION

1. The purpose of the Competition is to promote the development of jazz and popular music performance on wind instruments and piano in Latvia and the Baltic States, fostering the growth of high-level performance artistry and professional development.
2. To popularize jazz and contemporary rhythmic music, as well as to encourage the creation of new, original compositions and the expansion of repertoire.

III PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE OF THE COMPETITION

1. Participants of the Competition
 - Participants are students of professional secondary education institutions (music secondary schools), interest education programs, private schools, or other forms of education who, at the level and scope of a professional secondary education program, study jazz and popular music performance on wind instruments or piano.
2. Division of Participants into Groups
 - **Group A** – 1st and 2nd year students of professional secondary education institutions (music secondary schools), as well as students of private schools, interest education programs, or other forms of education aged 16 to 17 years (inclusive);

- **Group B** – 3rd and 4th year students of professional secondary education institutions (music secondary schools), as well as students of private schools, interest education programs, or other forms of education aged 18 to 20 years (inclusive).
3. The participant's age is determined as of 26 April 2026.
 4. The II round of the Competition will take place on 26 April 2026 at **Spīķeri Concert Hall** (Ģenerāļa Radziņa krastmala 3, Latgale Suburb, Riga, LV-1050).
 5. The organizers reserve the right to change the venue of the Competition, informing participants and involved parties in due time about any changes.
 6. The participant – soloist – performs in the Competition without a prior soundcheck.
 7. The stage will be prepared before each performance – a 2-minute line check is provided for each participant.
 8. The announcement of results and the award ceremony for laureates will take place at the conclusion of the Competition, after the performances of participants from both groups.
 9. The Competition may be recorded in audio, audiovisual, and photographic formats for the purpose of promoting participants' creative activities and informing the public.
 10. Structure of the Competition
 - 10.1. The Competition takes place in two (2) rounds:
 - 10.2. **Round I** – Video pre-selection
 - 10.3. **Round II** – Final round (on-site competition), with a limited number of finalists
 - 10.4. The maximum number of finalists is 20, selected for Round II by the video pre-selection jury.
 - 10.5. Both Round I and Round II are evaluated by a jury composed of:
 - **Kārlis Vanags** – saxophonist, composer, and Artistic Director of the Latvian Radio Big Band;
 - **Tuomo Uusitalo** – Finnish jazz pianist and composer;
 - **Jievaras Jasinskis** – Lithuanian jazz trombonist, composer, arranger, and leader of the Vilnius JJazz Ensemble big band.
 11. The organizers are not responsible for technical problems arising from the quality of the video submitted by the participant or from platform malfunctions.

12. In the event of force majeure circumstances, the organizers reserve the right to change the format or dates of the Competition.

IV PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMPETITION

Round I – Video Pre-selection

1. In the video pre-selection round, the participant shall perform the same pieces that are intended for performance in Round II of the Competition, in accordance with their respective category.
2. The total duration of the submitted video and the program for Round II must not exceed 10 minutes.
3. The participant shall perform the pieces in the same form, tempo, and stylistic interpretation as they will be performed in Round II of the Competition.
4. The participant must perform the pieces by memory.
5. The submitted video for the pre-selection round must not be older than one year.
6. The video recording must be produced in such a way that the contestant is clearly visible; the camera lens must be directed toward the participant, and the participant must be visible in full height throughout the recording.
7. The video must be recorded with a fixed camera position; changes in camera location or position during the recording are not permitted. The video may not be edited, cut, or otherwise technically enhanced.
 - 7.1. The use of external microphones is permitted; however, the audio material must not be post-processed or technically enhanced (including mastering, sound correction, or editing).

Round II – Final Round

8. The program requirements for both the video pre-selection round and Round II are as follows:

Group A	
<p align="center">Piano Performance</p> <p>Two pieces of contrasting character in jazz and popular music styles, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One is a free-choice piece, which may be an original composition and must include both an improvisation section and an accompaniment section; • The other is a blues-form piece, which must include an instrumental theme, accompaniment, and an improvisation section. 	<p align="center">Wind Instrument Performance</p> <p>Two pieces of contrasting character in jazz and popular music styles, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One is a free-choice piece, which may be an original composition and must include an improvisation section; • The other is a blues-form piece, which must include an instrumental theme and an improvisation section.
Group B	
<p align="center">Piano Performance</p> <p>Two pieces of contrasting character in jazz and popular music styles, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One is a free-choice piece, which may be an original composition and must include both an improvisation section and an accompaniment section; <p>The other is a blues-form piece, which must include an instrumental theme, accompaniment, and an improvisation section.</p>	<p align="center">Wind Instrument Performance</p> <p>Two pieces of contrasting character in jazz and popular music styles, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One is a free-choice piece, which may be an original composition and must include an improvisation section; <p>The other is a blues-form piece, which must include an instrumental theme and an improvisation section.</p>

7. The organizers of the Competition shall provide the accompanying ensemble (pianist, bassist, and drummer) for each participant.
8. The exact performance of transcriptions in participants' improvisations is not permitted. If transcriptions or musical quotations are used, their total extent must not exceed 30% of the improvisation section.
9. The organizer of the Competition undertakes to provide a sound reinforcement system and the services of a sound engineer.
10. The contestant must prepare a high-quality, clearly legible lead sheet indicating precise tempo markings (e.g., BPM or metronome marking), style (e.g., swing, bossa nova, funk, etc.), key, formal structure, and repeats.
11. The content of the lead sheet must fully correspond to the submitted video material (form, key, arrangement structure, solo order, etc.).

11.1. The following must be clearly indicated:

- The form of the piece;
- Intro, outro, and other section markings;
- The order of solos (indicating each soloist's sequence and the length of each solo);
- Repeats, codas, D.S./D.C., and other formal elements.
- When preparing the lead sheet, participants should follow the methodological recommendations available at:
<https://www.learnjazzstandards.com/blog/how-to-write-out-a-lead-sheet-jazz/>

V JURY AND EVALUATION

1. The participants of the Competition shall be evaluated by a jury approved by the organizers, composed of three independent experts in the field of jazz music.
2. The performance of each participant shall be assessed according to the following criteria:
 - **Technical performance** (score: 0–10 points) – rhythmic accuracy and sense of time (groove/feel), dynamics, articulation, and intonation appropriate to the chosen style;
 - **Artistic performance** (score: 0–10 points) – stylistic appropriateness of interpretation, quality of improvisation, and originality of the performance;
 - **Overall impression** (score: 0–10 points) – stage presence and communication with the audience.

3. The maximum number of points that may be awarded to a participant by one jury expert is 30 points. The final score of a participant is calculated by dividing the total number of points awarded by all jury experts by the number of jury experts.
4. A member of the jury shall not participate in the evaluation if the participant is their direct student or if any other conflict of interest exists.
5. The decision of the jury is final and not subject to appeal.

VI REGISTRATION

1. To participate in the Competition, applicants must complete the electronic application form – [JAZZeps 2026 – Application Form](#).
2. In the application, the contestant must prepare and include:
 - An access link to the participant’s uploaded video material hosted on YouTube, Vimeo, or a similar platform;
 - The video file title and/or description must indicate the participant’s first and last name, as well as the composer and title of the piece;
 - Each piece must be submitted as a separate video file;
 - An access link to the participant’s uploaded sheet music materials, participant photo, and biography hosted on Dropbox, Google Drive, or a similar platform.

2.1. The contestant shall ensure that the cloud storage content remains accessible until the conclusion of the Competition.
3. Registration, as well as the upload of videos and all required materials, must be completed by 30 March 2026 at 17:00 (5:00 PM).
4. By 7 April 2026, the finalists selected for Round II (on-site competition) and the performance order of participants will be announced.
5. The results of the video pre-selection round will also be published on the organizer’s website www.jmrmv.gov.lv in the section “Competitions.”
6. The program submitted in the application may not be changed.
7. The participation fee for the Competition is EUR 70, consisting of:
 - EUR 20 – participation fee for Round I;
 - EUR 50 – participation fee for Round II.

8. The Round II participation fee shall be paid only by those participants who, according to the announced results, are selected to participate in Round II.
9. The participation fee shall be paid only after receiving an invoice (if the application is submitted during the final days of registration, the invoice must be paid upon receipt; however, the application will be registered).
10. Invoices for Round II participants will be issued after the announcement of Round I results. The invoice will be issued according to the details provided in the application form. If the payer changes, please contact konkursi@jmrmv.gov.lv.
11. Payment deadlines:
 - Round I participation fee – by 30 March 2026 (inclusive);
 - Round II participation fee – by 20 April 2026 (inclusive).
12. By submitting the application, the participant agrees to the processing of their personal data (first name, last name, photo, biography, video materials) for the purposes of organizing the Competition and ensuring publicity.

VII AWARDS

1. In each category, the following awards shall be granted:
 - 1st Prize Diploma;
 - 2nd Prize Diploma;
 - 3rd Prize Diploma;
 - Sponsor-provided prizes for the laureates;
 - Certificates of Participation / Letters of Recognition for all participants of the Competition.

VIII FINAL PROVISIONS

1. By applying for the Competition, you confirm that you have read the Competition Regulations, agree to the terms and conditions of the Competition, and undertake to comply with the provisions set forth therein.
2. By registering for participation in the Competition, participants agree to the organizers' right to make photo, video, and audio recordings during the Competition and to freely use the participant's name(s), surname(s), and the obtained materials without limitation for the purposes of promoting the Competition.
3. All expenses related to participation in the Competition (participation fee, transportation, accommodation, catering, etc.) shall be covered by the participant or by the educational institution in which the participant is enrolled.
4. In the event of withdrawal from the Competition, the participation fee shall not be refunded.
5. Any disagreements or disputes arising in connection with the implementation of these Regulations shall be resolved through mutual negotiations. If no agreement is reached, disputes shall be settled in court in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia.