

**EAST  
COAST  
MUSIC**  
AWARDS

---

MAY 7-11, 2025  
ST. JOHN'S, NL



# Music Awards Guidelines

## 2024-2025

Welcome to the East Coast Music Association (ECMA) 2025 Music Awards submission guidelines. The East Coast Music Association presents over 30 music and industry awards each year. Music award submissions are adjudicated by juries of qualified regional, national and international music industry professionals and peers.

**Please review all guidelines before proceeding with your submission.**

Applicants are expected to be familiar with all general award guidelines as well as the guidelines pertaining to the categories for which they are applying.



## Table of Contents

### [KEY DATES](#)

[Submission Period](#)

[Eligibility Period](#)

[Nomination Announcement](#)

[Winner Announcement](#)

### [ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS](#)

[Atlantic Canadian](#)

[ECMA Membership](#)

[Category Minimums](#)

[Previous ECMA Nominations/Wins](#)

[Eligibility Issues](#)

### [SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS](#)

[Deadline](#)

[Fees](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[Release Requirements](#)

[Adjudicated Release \(1\)](#)

[Contextual Releases \(2\)](#)

[Date of Release](#)

[Rights](#)

### [APPLICATION QUESTIONS](#)

### [JURYING PROCESS](#)

### [AWARD TYPES & CRITERIA](#)

[Quick View](#)

[Crossover Awards](#)

[Evaluation Criteria: Crossover Awards](#)

[Genre Release of the Year Awards](#)

[Evaluation Criteria: Genre Release of the Year Awards](#)

[360° Awards](#)

[Evaluation Criteria: 360° Awards](#)

### [DETAILS BY AWARD CATEGORY](#)

[Album of the Year](#)

[Artiste acadien\(ne\) ou francophone de l'année](#)

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

[Acadian/Francophone Artist of the Year](#)

[African Canadian Artist of the Year](#)

[Blues Release of the Year](#)

[Breakthrough Artist of the Year](#)

[Children's Artist of the Year](#)

[Classical Composer of the Year](#)

[Classical Release of the Year](#)

[Choral Release of the Year](#)

[Country Release of the Year](#)

[Dance Release of the Year](#)

[Electronic Release of the Year](#)

[Entertainer of the Year \(Fans' Choice\)](#)

[Folk Release of the Year](#)

[Fusion Release of the Year](#)

[Global Music Release of the Year](#)

[Group of the Year](#)

[Indigenous Artist of the Year](#)

[Instrumental Release of the Year](#)

[Jazz Release of the Year](#)

[Loud Release of the Year](#)

[Pop Release of the Year](#)

[Producer of the Year](#)

[R&B / Soul Release of the Year](#)

[Rap / Hip-Hop Release of the Year](#)

[Release of the Year](#)

[Rock / Alternative Release of the Year](#)

[Roots Release of the Year](#)

[Traditional Release of the Year](#)

[Solo Artist of the Year](#)

[Song of the Year](#)

[Songwriter of the Year](#)

[Video of the Year \(Fans' Choice\)](#)

[Vocal Release of the Year](#)

## [ECMA DEFINITIONS](#)

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **KEY DATES**

### **Submission Period**

September 3 to October 4, 2024

*Note: All music must be released or available for preorder by October 4, 2024.*

### **Eligibility Period**

Genre Release of the Year awards	June 1, 2023 to April 30, 2025
Crossover awards	June 1, 2023 to April 30, 2025
360° Awards	June 1, 2022 to April 30, 2025

### **Nomination Announcement**

Following submissions and jurying, nominees will be announced at the ECMA 2025 Press Conference in early 2025.

Public Voting: The Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year and Fans' Choice Video of the Year categories will be open to a public vote following the ECMA Press Conference.

### **Winner Announcement**

ECMA winners will be announced live at the East Coast Music Awards: Festival & Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, May 7-11, 2025.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Atlantic Canadian**

Applicants must be Atlantic Canadian in accordance with [ECMA's definition](#). In the case of a group, an artist listing may include the terms "vs", "&", or "featuring", however, at least 50% of group members must fulfill this eligibility criteria. This excludes any sampled or AI-generated music.

For awards and showcase purposes, Atlantic Canada is defined as New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. To be defined as Atlantic Canadian, a person must either be born in Atlantic Canada or have lived in Atlantic Canada for at least 12 months during the ECMA eligibility period (June 1, 2023 – April 30th, 2025). In the case of a group, at least 50% of members must be Atlantic Canadian. Cases where an Atlantic Canadian plays a primary leadership role in the project are eligible for consideration, subject to approval by the Awards & Stages Committee.

Atlantic Canadian Business: Candidates must reside and work in Atlantic Canada. In the case of a company, candidates must maintain an office and be a registered business in Atlantic Canada to be eligible.

### **ECMA Membership**

Applicants must hold a membership in good standing with the East Coast Music Association. This means having an up-to-date ECMA membership covering all members of the group, with no one in your group or party having had their membership revoked due to violations of the ECMA Code of Conduct.

Applicants who do not hold an active ECMA membership will be contacted to update their membership before being considered for an award nomination or stage

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

opportunity. Note that a free ECMA membership is included in, and can be claimed by providing ECMA with proof of, membership with any of the following music industry associations:

- African Nova Scotian Music Association
- Cape Breton Music Industry Cooperative
- Music/Musique NB
- MusicNL
- Music Nova Scotia
- Music PEI

If you have any questions regarding your membership status, please log in to your account online or email us at [hello@ecma.com](mailto:hello@ecma.com).

## Category Minimums

ECMA requires a minimum of four (4) submissions from different applicants in order for an award category to run. If fewer than four submissions are received in a given award category, applicants in that category will be notified and invited to resubmit the following year. A submission may only be carried over to the following year once.

## Previous ECMA Nominations/Wins

In the case of a previous ECMA nomination, a release cannot be nominated in the same award category a second time. Releases previously submitted, but not previously nominated, can be resubmitted for consideration.

## Eligibility Issues

Any eligibility-related issues shall be dealt with at the sole discretion of the ECMA Awards & Stages Committee. ECMA reserves the right to disqualify any applications that do not meet ECMA's [Eligibility Requirements](#) or [Submission Requirements](#). Applicants whose submissions are disqualified or not accepted will not be notified.



## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Deadline**

Submissions will be accepted from **September 3, 2024 at 9:00 AM (ADT) to October 4, 2024 at 11:59 PM (ADT)** at [ecma.awardstage.com](https://ecma.awardstage.com).

All Submission Requirements must be met at the time of submission. In the interest of fairness, incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

### **Fees**

Award submissions are subject to an application fee of **\$20 CAD per award**, with the exception of the following categories, which are **free** to submit to:

- African Canadian Artist of the Year
- Indigenous Artist of the Year
- All [Industry Awards](#)

Any application and membership fees associated with the application must be received for the application to be considered. Application fees are non-refundable.

### **Financial Aid**

New this year, to ensure financial accessibility to all artists, **application fees will be waived for the first 48 hours of the submission period, from September 3, 2024 at 9:00 AM (ADT) to September 5, 2024 at 9:00 AM (ADT).**

Use promo code **First48** during this period to waive application fees.

## Release Requirements

New this year, in keeping with industry trends, we have made changes to our release requirements in an effort to streamline the jury process and ensure a balance across genre categories. Please review the following Release Requirements closely.

### Adjudicated Release (1)

Regardless of the context of a release (album, EP, single, waterfall release), the jury will base their qualitative evaluation on **one** track of the applicant's choice.

### Contextual Releases (2)

In addition to the Adjudicated Release, applicants are required to provide two songs released within the eligibility period in order to demonstrate sufficient artistic activity.

While commercially released music is preferred, applicants may choose to submit an audio recording of a live, ticketed performance as one (1) of their two Contextual Releases.

Releases that are ineligible for nomination, due to having been previously nominated or awarded at the ECMAs, may be submitted for the purposes of Contextual Releases only.

### Date of Release

Recordings must be previously unreleased. Previously unreleased means the music was not available to the public prior to the eligibility period and includes radio or other audio broadcasters (web, satellite, and digital) or retail.

Adjudicated Releases must be available for sale through retail stores, internet sales or streaming, or mail orders.

Applicants must provide proof of release within the eligibility period. This can include proof of purchase for either: manufacturing of physical product (e.g. vinyl records, CDs, or tapes), or online distribution (e.g. CD Baby, Distrokid, Tunecore).

## Rights

Releases must fulfill all legal obligations (e.g. payment of mechanical rights, songwriting credits).

Applicants are responsible to ensure that music samples, videoclips or other audio and/or visual materials contained in any recording, video or other materials that form part of their submission are fully authorized by master rights owners, music publishers and any other third parties that have rights in such materials. ECMA reserves the right to require written confirmation that these rights have been secured. ECMA reserves the right to disqualify submissions, nominees or winners should ECMA determine, at its sole discretion, that these rights have not been secured.

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

*NOTE: There are separate applications for awards and showcase opportunities. To be considered for a stage performance, please submit a Stages Application.*

1. Name of applicant to be considered for an award
2. What region do they represent?
3. Lead contact information (name, role, phone number, email, address)
4. Promo photo (JPG, JPEG, PNG)
  - a. Please ensure your photo is landscape oriented, minimum of 300dpi, and labeled correctly with "Your Name". Photos that are not properly submitted will not be used.
5. List of band members (name, role, phone number, email)
6. Short bio
7. 3 songs released within the eligibility period (1 adjudicated, 2 contextual):
  - a. MP3 or WAV files
  - b. Proof of commercial release for your chosen adjudicated track and at least one contextual release
  - c. License to use music submitted during broadcast should you win in your category
8. Link to artist/group socials (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook etc.) or website
9. Outline of accomplishments within the eligibility period
10. Description of production and engineering choices
11. Self identification information

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **JURYING PROCESS**

After an internal screening process, applications are juried by qualified regional, national, and/or international industry professionals and artists selected for their specific expertise across musical genres. ECMA aims to convene juries that reflect the diversity of regions, communities and musical genres in Atlantic Canada. Each jury is made up of a minimum of 3 jurors. Jury members evaluate applications and score based on set criteria as outlined in the [Award Types & Criteria](#) section.

- Nominees are selected from the combined average of juror scores. While the normal number of nominees for each category is 5, there may be more than 5 nominees per category, such as in the event of a tie. There may also be fewer than 5 nominees, such as in the event of a disqualification.
- ECMA presents 2 Fans' Choice categories that are voted on by the public. Submissions to these categories are first scored by a jury. Up to 10 top-scoring submissions, as determined by the jury, are then shared with the public for online voting.

Note: No other awards are submitted for public voting.



East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## AWARD TYPES & CRITERIA

### Quick View

<u>Crossover Awards</u>	<u>Genre Release of the Year Awards</u>	<u>360° Awards</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Album</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Release</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Songwriter</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Producer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Video (Fans' Choice)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Blues</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Classical</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Country</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dance</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Electronic</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Folk</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fusion</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Global Music</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Instrumental</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jazz</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Loud</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Pop</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">R&amp;B / Soul</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rap / Hip-Hop</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rock / Alternative</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Roots</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Traditional</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vocal</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Solo Artist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Group</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Breakthrough Artist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">African Canadian Artist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Indigenous Artist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Acadian / francophone artist (Artiste acadien(ne) ou francophone de l'année)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Classical Composer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Children's Artist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Entertainer (Fans' Choice)</a></li> </ul>

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## Crossover Awards

- Crossover Awards celebrate a standout release across musical genres.
- Applicants can submit to all crossover categories for which they are eligible.
- The following Crossover Awards are open for submission in 2025:
  - Album
  - Release
  - Songwriter
  - Producer
  - Video (Fans' Choice)
- Jurors are instructed to score each submission based on the criteria outlined below.

### Evaluation Criteria: Crossover Awards

<p><b>Music &amp; Lyrics</b></p>	<p>Assess the technical proficiency of the composition and lyrics (if applicable). Consider the cohesiveness and overall quality of the music and lyrics.</p> <p><i>*Note: This criteria is not evaluated for <b>Producer of the Year</b>. Other criteria will be weighted accordingly.</i></p>	<p>30%</p>
<p><b>Production &amp; Engineering</b></p>	<p>Assess the overall quality of the sound recording and production values including recording, mixing, arranging, use of instruments and other creative elements.</p> <p>For Fans' Choice Video of the Year:</p> <p>Review the technical aspects of the video, including cinematography, editing, lighting,</p>	<p>20%</p>

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

ECMA 2025 Music Awards Guidelines

	<p>and overall production values. Consider the professionalism and polish of the final product.</p> <p><i>*Note: This criteria is not evaluated for <b>Songwriter of the Year</b>. Other criteria will be weighted accordingly.</i></p>	
<b>Marketing &amp; Presentation</b>	<p>Assess the clarity, consistency, and originality of the branding and overall marketing. Evaluate the effectiveness of promotional strategies, as well as engagement on social media platforms and streaming.</p>	15%
<b>Artistic Merit &amp; Originality</b>	<p>Assess the emotional impact and originality of the release's overall sound and style. Evaluate the creativity and innovation demonstrated, considering how the release contributes something new or of value to the artistic conversation and stands out.</p>	30%
<b>Accomplishments</b>	<p>Consider the artist's overall impact and achievements within the music industry throughout the eligibility period, including awards, chart positions, notable performances, and significant milestones. Assess the artist's contribution to their genre and their influence on both the local and broader music communities.</p>	5%

## Genre Release of the Year Awards

- Genre Release of the Year Awards celebrate a standout release within each category’s specific musical genre.
- Applicants can submit to a maximum of two (2) genre categories for which they are eligible.
- The following Genre Release of the Year Awards are open for submission in 2025:
  - Blues
  - Jazz
  - Classical
  - Loud
  - Country
  - Pop
  - Dance
  - R&B / Soul
  - Electronic
  - Rap / Hip-Hop
  - Folk
  - Rock / Alternative
  - Fusion
  - Roots
  - Global Music
  - Traditional
  - Instrumental
  - Vocal
- Jurors are instructed to score each submission based on the criteria outlined below.

### Evaluation Criteria: Genre Release of the Year Awards

<b>Music &amp; Lyrics</b>	Assess the technical proficiency of the composition and lyrics (if applicable). Consider the cohesiveness and overall quality of the music and lyrics.	30%
<b>Production &amp; Engineering</b>	Assess the overall quality of the sound recording and production values including	20%

ECMA 2025 Music Awards Guidelines

	recording, mixing, arranging, use of instruments and other creative elements.	
<b>Marketing &amp; Presentation</b>	Assess the clarity, consistency, and originality of the branding and overall marketing. Evaluate the effectiveness of promotional strategies, as well as engagement on social media platforms and streaming.	15%
<b>Artistic Merit &amp; Originality</b>	Assess the emotional impact and originality of the release's overall sound and style. Evaluate the creativity and innovation demonstrated, considering how the release contributes something new or of value to the artistic conversation and stands out.	30%
<b>Accomplishments</b>	Consider the artist's overall impact and achievements within the music industry throughout the eligibility period, including awards, chart positions, notable performances, and significant milestones. Assess the artist's contribution to their genre and their influence on both the local and broader music communities.	5%

## 360° Awards

- 360° Awards celebrate an artist or group's overall accomplishments during the eligibility period.
- Applicants can submit to all 360° categories for which they are eligible.
- 360° Awards are as follows:
  - Solo Artist
  - Group
  - Breakthrough Artist
  - African Canadian Artist
  - Indigenous Artist
  - Acadian/Francophone Artist (Artiste acadien(ne)/francophone de l'année)
  - Classical Composer
  - Children's Artist
  - Entertainer (Fans' Choice)
- Jurors are instructed to score each submission based on the criteria outlined below.

### Evaluation Criteria: 360° Awards

<b>Music &amp; Lyrics</b>	Assess the overall quality and technical proficiency of the composition and lyrics (if applicable). Consider the cohesiveness and overall quality of the music and lyrics.	20%
<b>Production</b>	Assess the overall quality of the sound recording and production values including	15%

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

ECMA 2025 Music Awards Guidelines

	<p>recording, mixing, arranging, use of instruments and other creative elements.</p> <p><i>*Note: This criteria is not evaluated for Classical Composer of the Year. Other criteria will be weighted accordingly.</i></p>	
<b>Marketing &amp; Presentation</b>	Evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of promotional strategies, as well as engagement on social media platforms and streaming.	15%
<b>Artistic Merit &amp; Originality</b>	Assess the emotional impact and originality of the artist's overall sound and style. Evaluate the creativity and innovation demonstrated, considering how the artist distinguishes themselves.	30%
<b>Accomplishments</b>	Consider the artist's overall impact and achievements within the music industry throughout the eligibility period, including awards, chart positions, notable performances, and significant milestones. Assess the artist's contribution to their genre and their influence on both the local and broader music communities.	20%

## **DETAILS BY AWARD CATEGORY**

*Note: All submissions must meet basic [Eligibility Requirements](#) and [Submission Requirements](#).*

### **Album of the Year**

*Award type:* Crossover Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group and Producer

*Recognizes:* An exceptional full-length album/EP

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- Full-length album/EP – defined as a recording that contains a minimum of five (5) tracks and is a minimum of 15 minutes long.
- In addition to artistic excellence, release must have demonstrated substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media activity
  5. Sync placements
  6. Media coverage
  7. National or international recognition

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## Artiste acadien(ne) ou francophone de l'année

\*Note: English follows.

*Type de prix :* Prix 360°

*Attribution :* Artiste ou groupe

*Reconnaît :* Une ou un artiste ou un groupe acadien ou francophone, tous genres musicaux confondus, qui a connu un succès important auprès de la communauté acadienne ou francophone au cours de la période d'admissibilité.

*Inclut :* Tous les genres musicaux

*Exclut :* Aucune exclusion

*Note :* Les soumissions recevables seront évaluées par un jury d'artistes ou de professionnels acadiens ou francophones de l'industrie de la musique de la côte Est, du Canada ou d'ailleurs.

*Critères minimaux :*

- L'artiste ou le groupe doit être acadien ou francophone. Dans le cas d'un groupe, au moins 50 % des membres doivent être acadiens ou francophones et répondre aux critères d'admissibilité.
- La chanson soumise au jury doit être en français.
- Au moins une (1) des chansons soumises au répertoire contextuel doit être en français.
- Au moins 75 % du répertoire soumis doit être en langue française.
- Les candidatures doivent démontrer un succès important dans trois (3) des critères suivants au cours de la période d'admissibilité :
  1. Ventes ou diffusion en continu
  2. Diffusion à la radio
  3. Diffusion vidéo

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

4. Suivi sur les médias sociaux
5. Synchro
6. Tournées
7. Festivals et représentations
8. Couverture médiatique
9. Reconnaissance nationale ou internationale

— — — —

## **Acadian/Francophone Artist of the Year**

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An Acadian or francophone artist or group in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success during the eligibility period.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

*Note:* Eligible submissions will be evaluated by a regional, national and/or international jury of Acadian or francophone music industry professionals and/or artists.

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Must be an Acadian/francophone artist or group. In the case of a group, at least 50% of members must be Acadian/francophone and fulfill the eligibility requirements.
- The Adjudicated Release submitted must be in French
- At least one (1) of the Contextual Releases submitted must be in French.
- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

3. Video play
4. Social media following
5. Sync placements
6. Touring activity
7. Festival/performance engagements
8. Media coverage
9. National or international recognition

## **African Canadian Artist of the Year**

\*Free to submit!\*

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An African Canadian/Black artist or group in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success during the eligibility period.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

*Note:* Eligible submissions will be evaluated by a regional, national and/or international jury of African Canadian/Black music industry professionals and/or artists.

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Must be an African Canadian/Black artist or group. In the case of a group, at least 50% of members must be African Canadian/Black and fulfill the eligibility requirements.

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

### **Blues Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in blues music.
<i>Includes:</i>	country blues, Chicago blues, Delta blues, East Coast blues
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a

### **Breakthrough Artist of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	360° Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An artist/group in any genre who has demonstrated a substantial increase in success during the eligibility period.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* Applicants must not have previously won an East Coast Music Award in any of the Genre Release of the Year or 360° categories in a prior year, and must not have been nominated in any of the Crossover categories in a prior year (see [Award Types & Criteria](#) section for details).

*Minimum Criteria:*

- Applicants must demonstrate a substantial increase in success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

## **Children's Artist of the Year**

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An artist or group in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success with a fanbase age 12 and under.

*Includes:* All styles of music that are age appropriate for an audience 12 years old and under.

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- Submitted repertoire must be suitable and obviously directed to a young listening audience.
- Submitted repertoire may not include mature content.
- Material must be musical in nature or contain musical elements (ex: narratives or dramatic recordings must contain music).

## **Classical Composer of the Year**

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Composer/Creator

*Recognizes:* Excellence in classical composition or music creation based on a collection of compositions.

*Includes:* chamber music, orchestral, large ensemble, soloist with Ensemble, minimalist, atonal, film score, opera

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- While the composer must be Atlantic Canadian, it is not necessary that the submitted repertoire be recorded by an Atlantic Canadian artist or group.
- Repertoire may be submitted in the form of an eligible release, a live/archival recording or video, or a MIDI rendering with accompanying written score.
- Submitted repertoire must be composed within the last 5 years.

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **Classical Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in classical music.
<i>Includes:</i>	chamber music, orchestral, large ensemble, soloist with Ensemble, minimalist, atonal, film score, opera
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a

## **Choral Release of the Year**

\*This category title has changed. Please see [Vocal Release of the Year](#) for updated criteria.

## **Country Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in country music.
<i>Includes:</i>	alt-country, traditional country, Western swing

*Excludes:* n/a

## **Dance Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in dance music.

*Includes:* NRG, EDM, house, techno, garage, Euro-beat, Miami Sound, Latin freestyle, hip-house, nu-disco

*Excludes:* Dance remixes of other genres/styles of music. Exception: if a dance version and non-dance version of the same recording are released simultaneously, e.g. the album release includes both recording versions.

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Submissions in either the original mix or a remix are eligible. Applicants must indicate the specific submission where more than one mix, extension, or remix exists.

## **Electronic Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in electronic music.

*Includes:* ambient, electro-pop, noise, experimental, grime, dub, drum and bass

*Excludes:* n/a

## **Entertainer of the Year (Fans' Choice)**

*Award type:* 360° Award – Fans' Choice

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An artist or group in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success and an exceptional connection with their fanbase.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **Folk Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in folk music.
<i>Includes:</i>	folk, singer-songwriter, Cape Breton fiddle, Métis fiddle, neo-trad, neofolk, folk-pop, folk rock, roots revival
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a

## **Fusion Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release that incorporates multiple distinct genres to create a unique sound.
<i>Includes:</i>	afrobeats, Celtic hip-hop, classical crossover, electronic fusion, folk fusion, jazz fusion
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a

## Global Music Release of the Year

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in global music, defined as music that incorporates musical elements with clear ties to a geographical region or community.
<i>Includes:</i>	afrobeat (traditional), anison, apala, asia, baila, baithak gana, bengal, bhangra, bhojpuri, bikutsi, bongo flava, cajun, calypso, carnatic, caribbean, celtic, chimurenga, chutney, chutney soca, compas, coupé-décalé, cumbia, dangdut, drinking songs, drone, enka, fann at-tanbura, fado, fijiri, filmi, genge, gnawa, highlife, hindustani, indian ghazal, isicathamiya, jit, jùjú, kapuka, kayōkyoku, khaliji, kizomba, klezmer, kuduro, kwaito, kwela, laiko, entecho, rebetika, lavani, liwa, lingala, luk krung, luk thung, maloya, mambo, mandopop, manila sound, makossa, maloya, marrabenta, mbalax, mbaqanga, mbube, merengue, méringue, morlam, morna, museve, ode, onkyokei, palm-wine, piphat, polka, powwow, ragini, raï, sawt, sakara, schlager, sega, seggae, semba, soca, soukous, spirituals, taarab, worldbeat, zouglou, zydeco
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a
<i>Note:</i>	Applicants submitting releases that meet release requirements in other categories such as Traditional Release of the Year, Roots Release of the Year, Instrumental Release of the Year, Vocal Release of the Year, or Fusion Release of the Year, are encouraged to consider also submitting in those categories.

## Group of the Year

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Group (2 or more core members)

*Recognizes:* A group in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success during the eligibility period.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* Solo artists (See [Solo Artist of the Year](#) category)

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Applicants must be a group (including established duos)
- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

## Indigenous Artist of the Year

\*Free to submit!\*

*Award type:* 360° Award

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

- Awarded to:* Artist/Group
- Recognizes:* An Indigenous artist or group (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success during the eligibility period.
- Includes:* Any genre
- Excludes:* n/a
- Note:* Eligible submissions will be evaluated by a jury of primarily Indigenous music industry professionals and/or artists.

*Minimum Criteria:*

- Applicants must be an Indigenous artist or group. In the case of a group, at least 50% of members must be Indigenous and fulfill the eligibility requirements.
- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

## **Instrumental Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in non-vocal instrumental music.
<i>Includes:</i>	classical, jazz, post-rock, post-metal, post-punk, electronic dance music, ambient music, lo-fi, bluegrass
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a
<i>Note:</i>	Applicants submitting releases that incorporate electronic sounds or production qualities to the Instrumental Release of the Year category are also encouraged to consider submitting to Dance Recording of the Year or Electronic Recording of the Year.

### **Jazz Release of the Year**

<i>Award type:</i>	Genre of the Year Award
<i>Awarded to:</i>	Artist/Group
<i>Recognizes:</i>	An exceptional release in jazz music.
<i>Includes:</i>	early jazz, modern jazz, jazz fusion
<i>Excludes:</i>	n/a

### **Loud Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in metal or hardcore music.

*Includes:* hardcore, metal, punk, or other sub-genres

*Excludes:* n/a

### **Pop Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in pop music.

*Includes:* mainstream pop, afrobeats, adult contemporary, bollywood, K-pop, J-pop, Cantopop, orchestral pop, middle-of-the-road, top 40, dance

*Excludes:* n/a

### **Producer of the Year**

*Award type:* Crossover Award

*Awarded to:* Producer

*Recognizes:* Excellence in music production.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

## **R&B / Soul Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in R&B or soul music.

*Includes:* R&B, soul, funk, nu jazz, highlife, reggae, afrobeats, alté

*Excludes:* Releases submitted to Rap / Hip-hop Release of the Year.  
Applicants may however apply to both categories with two different releases.

## **Rap / Hip-Hop Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in rap, hip-hop, or its sub-genres.

*Includes:* Rap, hip-hop, trap, boom bap, crunk, grime, dancehall, alté

*Excludes:* Releases submitted to R&B / Soul Release of the Year.  
Applicants may however apply to both categories with two different releases.

## **Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Crossover Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group and Producer

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in any genre.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- In addition to artistic excellence, release must have demonstrated substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media activity
  5. Sync placements
  6. Media coverage
  7. National or international recognition

## **Rock / Alternative Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in rock or alternative music.

*Includes:* Alternative, alt rock, soft rock, glam rock, punk rock, progressive rock, hard rock, contemporary and/or popular rock.

*Excludes:* n/a

## **Roots Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in roots music.

*Includes:* americana, folk, contemporary roots, roots revival, global music

*Excludes:* n/a

## **Traditional Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre of the Year Award

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in a music tradition with direct historical roots to a specific ancestry, culture, region, or community.

*Includes:* trad, powwow, call-and-response, bluegrass, Balkan brass, Cajun, cumbia, gamelan, Carnatic, reggae

*Excludes:* n/a

## Solo Artist of the Year

*Award type:* 360° Award

*Awarded to:* Solo Artist

*Recognizes:* A solo artist in any genre who has demonstrated substantial success during the eligibility period.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* Groups (See [Group of the Year](#) category)

### *Minimum Criteria:*

- Applicants must be a solo artist
- Applicants must demonstrate substantial success in any three (3) of the following criteria within the eligibility period:
  1. Sales or streams
  2. Radio play
  3. Video play
  4. Social media following
  5. Sync placements
  6. Touring activity
  7. Festival/performance engagements
  8. Media coverage
  9. National or international recognition

## Song of the Year

\*This category title has changed. Please see [Release of the Year](#) for updated criteria.

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

## **Songwriter of the Year**

*Award type:* Crossover Award

*Awarded to:* Songwriter/Composer/Creator

*Recognizes:* Excellence in songwriting, music creation or production of lyrics and melody based on a collection of songs.

*Includes:* Any genre

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- While the songwriter must be Atlantic Canadian, it is not necessary that the submitted release be recorded by an Atlantic Canadian artist, or for the songwriter to be the performer of the songs.
- On collaborative work, at least one of the songwriters must meet all ECMA eligibility requirements.
- The songwriter can submit songs performed by the same artist/group or a collection of songs performed by various artists, as long as all the songs submitted were released within the eligibility period

## **Video of the Year (Fans' Choice)**

*Award type:* Crossover – Fans' Choice

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group and Director

*Recognizes:* An artistically exceptional music video that resonates with a wide audience.

*Includes:* Any genre

East Coast Music Association Inc.

Toll-free: 1-800-513-4953 / Local: 1-902-423-6770 / Email: [membership@ecma.com](mailto:membership@ecma.com)

Click here for [ECMA definitions](#)

*Excludes:* n/a

*Minimum Criteria:*

- Videos must be a minimum of 1 minute in length.
- While there is no maximum length, applicants may submit up to a maximum of 5 minutes of video for jury evaluation and voting purposes.
- Videos must be available for public viewing on a recognized platform (YouTube, Vimeo, or artist's own website).
- Videos must accompany an eligible release. (See Release Requirements for details.)

## **Vocal Release of the Year**

*Award type:* Genre Release of the Year

*Awarded to:* Artist/Group

*Recognizes:* An exceptional release in vocal music.

*Includes:* a capella singing, barbershop quartet, beatboxing, Carnatic singing, choral singing, collective singing, scatting, throat singing, unaccompanied rap, vocal looping, or vocalizations.

*Excludes:* While other instruments may be present, non-rhythmic instrumental accompaniment must not run through more than 50% of the song.

*Note:* Releases with more significant instrumentation are encouraged to apply for other categories such as Classical Release of the Year, Traditional Release of the Year, or Rap / Hip-Hop Release of the Year.

## **ECMA DEFINITIONS**

For detailed definitions of terms for ECMA purposes, please visit:

[www.ecma.com/ecma-definitions/](http://www.ecma.com/ecma-definitions/)

