

Chamber Music America

2017 CLASSICAL COMMISSIONING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Application Deadline: April 2, 2017, Midnight, ET

Grant Notification: June 2017

Grant Period: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020

*This program is supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation,
The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and the Chamber Music America Endowment Fund.*

Chamber Music America's *Classical Commissioning Program* provides grants to U.S.-based presenters and professional contemporary classical and world music ensembles for the commissioning and performance of new works by American composers. The program supports works scored for 2–10 musicians performing one per part, composed in any of the musical styles associated with contemporary classical music.

ELIGIBILITY: ENSEMBLES

An ensemble is eligible if it

- is a professional group with a commitment to contemporary classical or world music (as demonstrated on a submitted work sample)
- consists of "fixed" personnel and instrumentation or is part of a flexible roster or a collective that performs in varying configurations of no more than 10
- in the case of a duo, performs as equal partners, rather than as soloist and accompanist, and consistently publicizes itself as a duo
- has 501(c)(3) status, OR the leader/primary member of the ensemble is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident

ELIGIBILITY: PRESENTERS

A presenter is eligible if it

- is a 501(c)(3) organization or otherwise eligible for charitable contributions for federal income, estate and gift-tax purposes
- presents classical, contemporary, other music genres, and/or multi-disciplinary performing arts programs

PRESENTERS AND ENSEMBLES

- must be based in the U.S. or its territories
- must be CMA Organization-level members
- must have no overdue reports or financial obligations to CMA
- must have waited one full grant cycle after completing any previous CMA commissioning project before re-applying

Ensembles may apply to either CMA's 2017 *Classical Commissioning* or *New Jazz Works* program, but not both. Similarly, a composer may appear on only one application in either program. A presenter may submit only one application and apply with only one ensemble. However, a presenter's venue may appear as a performance site on any number of applications submitted by ensembles.

ELIGIBILITY: THE COMPOSER

- must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- may not have outstanding commitments to this commissioning program, or to *New Jazz Works*
- may be a member of the applicant's ensemble
- is an individual, not a group
- may not appear as a composer on more than one application to a CMA commissioning program—including *New Jazz Works*—for the period beginning July 1, 2017

THE COMPOSITION

The proposed new work must be

- a new concert-music piece written for 2–10 musicians and scored for one musician per part (a conductor, if used for the performances of the work, is considered one of the 10 musicians)
- premiered no earlier than October 1, 2017, and scheduled by February 1, 2019
- in the form of a notated score (the composer retains all rights)
- finished and two copies of the score submitted to CMA by September 30, 2018
- performed at least three times in public in the U.S. or its territories by June 30, 2020
- performed exclusively by the commissioned ensemble (including guest artists) through June 30, 2020

The program does not fund previously written works, works in progress, arrangements of previously written works, compositions that are soloistic in nature (such as concertos), music for dramatic works (staged or unstaged), chamber opera, incidental music for other media or fees for non-musician participants in the proposed work. If the work is to be written as part of a collaborative project involving other artistic disciplines, it must also be a stand-alone work for concert performance.

GRANT COMPONENTS AND FUNDING

Composer Fee

The fee ranges from \$5,000 to \$20,000, depending on the length and scope of the proposed work, as well as on the size of the ensemble for which it is scored. CMA may fund the request in full or in part.

	Up to 10 minutes	10 to 25 minutes	More than 25 minutes
2 to 4 musicians	\$5,000 to \$7,500	\$7,500 to \$15,000	\$13,000 to \$18,000
5 to 10 musicians	\$7,500 to \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$17,000	\$15,000 to \$20,000

Rehearsal Honorarium

Each musician, including guest artists, receives \$1,000 toward rehearsal of the new work.

If the composer is a member of the ensemble or if s/he will conduct the work, the rehearsal honorarium is considered to be included in his/her commission fee. Conductors are eligible for honorariums; however, the number of musicians (including the conductor) may not exceed 10.

Copying Costs

Up to \$1,000

GRANT AWARD AND PAYMENT

CMA contracts with and makes grant payments to the applicant entity—either the ensemble or presenter. It is the grantee's responsibility to compensate the composer and, if the grantee is a presenter, the ensemble.

If a grantee ensemble has 501(c)(3) status, payment is made to the organization. If not, all grant payments are made to the designated primary ensemble member, who must provide government-approved documentation showing his/her U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status. A presenter grantee must provide proof of non-profit status.

Grant funds are taxable; grantees must comply with all applicable city, state, and federal laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations affecting the project. The designated ensemble member or presenter grantee is solely responsible for the management of the project, and the disbursement and reporting of grant income.

PANEL REVIEW PROCEDURE

Classical Commissioning applications are reviewed by an independent panel of chamber music professionals versed in current compositional trends and performance practices. The panel does not include members of the CMA staff or board. See [Representative list of recent panelists](#).

Round 1: Ensemble Audio Review

Audio Samples are evaluated through “blind listening” based on the ensemble’s artistry, cohesiveness, and ability to perform contemporary music. Panelists listen to 2 minutes of each Audio Sample from the beginning.

Round 2: Composer’s Audio Review

Approximately 35 applicants advance to this round. The Composer’s Audio Samples—also listened to “blindly”—are evaluated for originality and potential to write a compelling new work.

Round 3: Full Application Review

The panel reviews approximately 25 applicants (fully identified) based on the quality of the project—idea for the commission, reason for selecting the composer and his/her ability to write for the ensemble; and if applicable, recordings of proposed guest artist(s). Finally, top-scoring applicants are evaluated for the composer’s compatibility with the ensemble’s artistic strengths and ability to carry out the project at a high artistic level.

THE APPLICATION

CMA uses an online application through Submittable. Only online applications will be accepted. Go to <https://cma.submittable.com> to create a free Submittable account if you do not already have one.

- Log-in at <https://cma.submittable.com>
- You may type directly into the online form or draft your responses in an offline document and cut/paste your information into the online application.
- To save the work you have done on your application, you must click the "Save Draft" button at the bottom of the form before exiting. You may return to your saved application to continue working on it by following the log-in instructions. Submittable maintains your draft for 21 days.
- CMA recommends that you also save your draft in an offline document as backup.

Uploads

Audio Summary Document

Provides personnel, instrumentation, and information about each selection to guide the panel’s listening, including notes about any special tunings, other musical or technical elements, or electronics.

Audio Uploads

The audio samples should demonstrate the highest quality of the ensemble’s (and guest artists’) playing, the group’s ability to perform contemporary music, and the composer’s artistic compatibility with the ensemble.

- Audio files must be uploaded to the online application. Acceptable file-types are mp3 or m4a.
- Submit audio featuring small ensemble music (2-10 musicians), with up to 5 minutes of a single work or an excerpt from that work on each file.
- Submissions are reviewed from the beginning; therefore, editing of each file is recommended.

Ensemble’s Audio

- submit two selections (contrasting works are recommended);
- must include at least one work written within the past 25 years (Audio File 1 or 2);
- must include at least one unedited recording from a live concert performance (either Audio File 1 or 2); the remaining sample may be re-recorded from a commercially released or studio recording;
- may not include works: 1) performed by soloists or that contain extensive solo passages; 2) that prominently feature guests/soloists not involved in the proposed commission; 3) with orchestra; 4) that are scored for more than 10 musicians; and 5) that are performed by more than one musician per part.

Additional Ensemble Audio notes:

- If the ensemble is a subset of a larger collective or roster, a majority (greater than 50 percent) of the musicians that will perform the commissioned work must appear on each work sample. Include, if possible, at least one work with the same (or similar) instrumentation and size as the work to be commissioned;
- If the new work is for a small group, such as a trio, do not include audio performed by a larger ensemble;
- If the ensemble is of fixed instrumentation and personnel (such as a string quartet) and has had a personnel change, the recording must feature a majority (greater than 50 percent) of the current members;
- If desired, include a work of another period if the music reflects the group's mission and strengths.

The Composer's and (if applicable) each Guest Artist's Work Samples:

- two selections, preferably chamber music, for the composer and one sample per each guest artist;
- must include work[s] written within the past 25 years;
- may be re-recorded from a commercially released studio recording.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

MOU(s) from the composer and, if applicable, guest artist(s) are required. Presenter applicants must also upload one from the ensemble. A composer should not sign an MOU with more than one applicant, and an ensemble should not appear on more than one application. If a duplication occurs, the applicants will decide which application moves forward. If no agreement is reached, both applications will be disqualified.

To Submit an Application

- Go to <https://cma.submittable.com> and click on "2017 Classical Commissioning Application."
- Complete all text boxes and prepare your attachments.
- Name files as indicated below:
 - Audio Summary Document: **Applicant Ensemble name – Audio Summary Document** (e.g., XYZ Ensemble-Audio Summary Document); acceptable file types: xls, xlsx, pdf
 - Audio files: **Applicant Ensemble Name – Audio** (e.g., XYZ Ensemble-Audio 1); acceptable file types: mp3, m4a
 - Memorandum(s) of Understanding from the Composer and, if a Presenter applicant, between the Ensemble and Presenter
 - Composer's bio or résumé and guest artist bio(s), if applicable
- Upload attachments to application.
- When complete, sign and date the application.
- Click "Submit" to send the application to CMA. You will receive a confirmation email.

OTHER INFORMATION

[FAQS](#) | [APPLICATION](#) | [APPLICATION WORKSHOP SCHEDULE](#)

SUPPORT

For program and membership assistance, contact:

Program: [Susan Dadian](#), program director, CMA Classical/Contemporary, (212) 242-2022, x102

Membership: [Aryo Wicaksono](#), membership manager, (212) 242-2022, x114

Technical: contact [Submittable Knowledgebase](#)

[Chamber Music America](#), the national network of ensemble music professionals, was founded in 1977 to develop, strengthen, and support the chamber music community. With a membership of over 6,000, including musicians, ensembles, presenters, artist managers, educators, music businesses, and advocates of ensemble music, CMA welcomes members representing a wide range of musical styles and traditions. In addition to its funding programs, CMA provides its members with consulting services, access to instrument and other insurances, conferences, seminars and publications, including *Chamber Music* magazine, and a website, www.chamber-music.org.

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Required of ALL Applicants

From the Composer (on his/her letterhead, scanned and submitted with signature)

To Chamber Music America:

This letter confirms my intention to compose a new work, [provide title, if known], for [insert Ensemble or Presenter Name], which has applied for funding from Chamber Music America's *Classical Commissioning Program*.

My commission fee is \$_____. The proposed work will be approximately _____ minutes long and scored for _____ [instrumentation].

I understand that if the grant is awarded:

- the work must be completed and two copies of the score submitted by September 30, 2018;
- [Ensemble Name] will have exclusive rights to perform and record the work, without paying rental or other fees, through June 30, 2020.

I confirm that I am not part of any other grant application to Chamber Music America's 2017 *Classical Commissioning* or *New Jazz Works* programs, and that I have no unfinished CMA-sponsored commissions at this time.

This letter is not a binding or legal agreement, and does not impose any legal obligation or duty. [Applicant] will formalize the above terms with a written contract if awarded a 2017 CMA *Classical Commissioning* grant.

Signed _____
[Composer Name]

For Presenter Applicants Only

From the Ensemble

To Chamber Music America:

This letter confirms [insert Ensemble name]'s intent to perform a proposed work [provide title, if known] by _____ [insert Composer name] in collaboration with [insert Presenter Name]—which has applied for funding from Chamber Music America's 2017 *Classical Commissioning Program*.

If a grant is awarded, [Ensemble Name] will give three public performances of the work in the U.S. by June 30, 2020.

I confirm that our ensemble is not a part of any other application to the 2017 CMA *Classical Commissioning* or *New Jazz Works* programs and that we have no unfinished CMA-sponsored commissions at this time.

This letter is not a binding or legal agreement, and does not impose any legal obligation or duty. [Applicant] will formalize the above terms with a written contract if awarded a 2017 CMA *Classical Commissioning* grant.

Signed _____
[Ensemble Contact]
[Ensemble Member Name]

For Each Guest Artist, if applicable

To Chamber Music America:

This letter confirms my intent to perform a proposed work [provide title, if known] by _____ [insert composer name] in collaboration with [Insert Ensemble and, if applicable, Presenter Name]—which has [have] applied for funding from CMA's 2017 *Classical Commissioning* grant program.

If awarded, I agree to perform the new composition with the ensemble on at least three occasions at concert venues in the U.S. by June 30, 2020.

This letter is not a binding or legal agreement, and does not impose any legal obligation or duty. [Applicant] will formalize the above terms with a written contract if awarded a 2017 CMA *Classical Commissioning* grant.

Signed _____
[Guest Artist Name]