

World Harp Competition
Rules & Regulations
2026

**World
Harp**
COMPETITION

Stichting Dutch Harp Festival
Churchillaan 11, 17^e verdieping
3527 GV UTRECHT

worldharpcompetition.com



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A. Timetable

1 Sep 2025	Open for applications
1 Oct 2025	Application deadline
22 Oct 2025	Preselection results Open for video submissions
12 Dec 2025	Deadline for video submissions
1 Jan 2026	Candidates & Scouting Jury announced Video judging begins
12 Jan 2026	Invitations sent to semifinalists
22 Jan 2026	Semifinalists announced
16-17 April 2026	Original programs
18 April 2026	Finals during the day Announcement of winners and prize ceremony
2026-2027 season	CCC Program for first prize winner


B. Terminology

- **DHF** | the association which produces the Dutch Harp Festival
- **Festival** | the Dutch Harp Festival 2026
- **Competition** | the DHF World Harp Competition 2026
- **Candidates** | harpists who have completed an application and submitted the required application materials by the application deadline
- **Preliminary round** | the first elimination round of the competition, based on an application and an audio recording
- **Preselection Jury** | the jury responsible for judging the preliminary round
- **Video round** | the second elimination round of the competition
- **Scouting Jury** | the jury responsible for judging the video round
- **Finals** | the final rounds of the competition
- **Original Program** | the program created and presented by the contestants during the finals
- **Competition Jury** | the jury responsible for judging the finals
- **Organization** | the competition director and all team members responsible for organizing and managing the competition
- **Legal Official** | an unbiased third party responsible for upholding the competition rules and resolving disputes

C. Candidates

1. General conditions

- 1.1. The DHF World Harp Competition 2026, hereinafter referred to as the 'competition', is open to all harpists regardless of age, nationality, or musical background. The types of harps that may be used in performance include, but are not restricted to, pedal, lever, electro-acoustic, electric, and ethnic harps.
- 1.2. The official language of the competition is English.
- 1.3. The competition consists of four voting rounds: a preselection round, an online video round, the semifinals, and the finals. Candidates agree to participate in the competition according to the Rules & Regulations outlined in this document. Candidates further agree to comply with the instructions of the competition director and all team members responsible for the organization and management of the competition, hereinafter referred to as the 'organization' and accept the decisions reached by the juries of the competition.
- 1.4. By participating in the competition, candidates cede to the Stichting Dutch Harp Festival (Dutch Harp Festival Association), hereinafter referred to as the 'DHF', the right to record, reproduce and arrange for the reproduction of their performances during the competition and the affiliated Dutch Harp Festival 2026, hereinafter referred to as the 'festival', on any existing or future medium of recording, as well as the right to broadcast and distribute their performances by any existing or future medium of transmission, in the Netherlands and abroad. Additionally, candidates waive all claims to remuneration arising from the use of the above-named recordings and distributions by the DHF.
- 1.5. Candidates are expected to use the original scores of any published works they perform and must be able to supply these scores to the competition upon request. The DHF cannot be held liable for any law infringement committed by a candidate regarding public use of illegal copies.
- 1.6. During the live rounds of the competition, the DHF will provide a selection of harps for use by the candidates, hereinafter referred to as 'competition harps'. Candidates may choose either to bring their own harp or request to perform on a competition harp. Candidates requesting the use of a competition harp may indicate a type and manufacturer of preference. The organization will attempt to fulfill these requests to the best of their ability but cannot guarantee the availability of any specific harp.
- 1.7. All costs incurred in the production of application materials as well as recording for the video round are the sole responsibility of the candidates. Candidates



selected to perform in the finals are entitled to a reimbursement of travel expenses, and accommodation will be arranged during their stay in Utrecht.

- 1.8. During the competition, the DHF cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal property of the candidates.
- 1.9. The first prize winner agrees to take part in the CCC (Care, Coaching, & Career) development program during the period following the competition in 2026 until the next edition of the competition in 2028. This program consists of coaching sessions with a professional career coach appointed by the DHF as well as a series of performances or other relevant activities, a program of which will be designed by the winner in collaboration with the coach and funded by the DHF. Further information will be provided to the winner upon commencement of the program.

2. Entry Conditions

2.1. Applications

- 2.1.1. Applications for the competition will be due by 1 October 2025. The application procedure commences by submitting an online application form as well as supporting documents (outlined in the following section). Applications will only be accepted electronically.
- 2.1.2. The application materials must include the following:
 - An audio recording and accompanying details, as set out in C2.2;
 - A program description for the semifinals, as set out in the following section;
 - In the case of students, a written approval of the teacher;
 - A 150-word biography;
 - Two different publicity photos, in high-resolution suitable for print (minimum 300 dpi), both in color;
 - A registration fee of EUR 100.
- 2.1.3. Applicants who, for financial reasons, are unable to pay EUR 100 may be entitled to a grant covering the full application fee. Distribution of these grants is at the discretion of the organization.
- 2.1.4. As part of the application process, candidates must give a short, written description of the program that they wish to present at the semifinals, hereinafter referred to as the 'original program'. This description must include the following:
 - A title for the program


- The name and composer of at least three works to be performed (these can also be original compositions, traditional folk songs, improvisations, etc.)
 - A 150-word explanation of the program
- 2.1.5. In the case that the original program involves other performers or collaborators besides the candidate, these extra performers will not be considered candidates. There can be only one candidate per application. In the special case of a harp ensemble, the ensemble must select one member to submit the application and serve as the candidate.
- 2.1.6. Applicants will also be asked to certify their full acceptance of the competition rules & regulations.
- 2.1.7. All application materials must be submitted by 23:59 CEST, 1 October 2025. Suitability of these materials is at the sole discretion of the organization.

2.2. Recording requirements

- 2.2.1. Candidates must submit an audio recording of one (1) free-choice piece that they feel best represents them as a musician. There is no limit on the duration of the piece.
- 2.2.2. The recording must be of a live, unedited performance given by the candidate. No cuts or sound alterations of any kind are permitted.
- 2.2.3. The performance in the submitted recording may not have taken place more than one year before the application deadline.
- 2.2.4. The recording must have good sound quality and be submitted as an MP3 file. The name of the file should be the candidate's full name, and all further meta data of the file should be left blank. Any submitted video material will be disregarded, and only the audio portion of the file will be considered in the preliminary round.
- 2.2.5. As part of the application form provided by the organization, the candidate must state the place and date of the recording, as well as certify its authenticity and confirm that no copyright restrictions apply.

2.3. Examination of applications

- 2.3.1. All applications will be examined by the organization. Only candidates whose applications have met the documentation requirements listed under C2.1.2 and the deadline requirement listed under C2.1.5 will be considered in the preliminary round.



2.3.2. A preliminary round will be held to evaluate the audio recordings and select the candidates to be admitted to the video round of the competition. For further description of this selection process, refer to Articles D2 and E3.2.

2.4. Acceptance of candidates

2.4.1. Candidates will be informed by 22 October 2025 as to whether or not they are admitted to the video round of the competition.

2.4.2. The registration fee cannot be reimbursed under any circumstances.

2.4.3. Candidates may not be rejected on grounds of ideology, language, political preference, race, gender, or sexual orientation.

2.5. Registration of candidates

2.5.1. As the applications are examined, data of each candidate will be entered into a register, which will be kept by the organization for the purpose of further facilitating the competition. This register will record:

- The candidate's full name
- The date of birth of the candidate
- The candidate's nationality
- The candidate's email address and telephone number
- Copies of the documents used to establish the candidate's identity
- All other documents enclosed with the application

2.5.2. The data collected from the candidates will be held securely by the organization for a period of five (5) years following the competition, after which it will be deleted. A candidate who wishes to withdraw from the competition or who is not selected for a subsequent round may also request that their data be deleted earlier.

2.5.3. All participating candidates will be entitled to receive one (1) free passe-partout, which grants entry to the events during the Dutch Harp Festival. Candidates may reserve their passe-partout in advance and collect it upon arrival at the festival.




D. Competition

1. Preliminary round

- 1.1. The purpose of the preliminary round is to reduce the number of candidates advancing to the video round by restricting admission to candidates whose audio recordings demonstrate the highest level of music excellence.
- 1.2. The preliminary round will be adjudicated by the preselection jury. It will not be open to the public.
- 1.3. The organization will prepare the audio recordings of the relevant candidates in such a way that no identifying information is associated with them. The recordings will then be presented anonymously to the preselection jury in a randomized order.
- 1.4. The recordings will not be used for any other means than evaluating the candidates during the preliminary round. After the conclusion of the preliminary round, the recordings will be saved in the competition archives for a maximum of five (5) years.

2. Video round

- 2.1. The purpose of the video round is to select a maximum of fourteen (14) outstanding harpists from around the world to present their original program during the weekend of the World Harp Competition 2026.
- 2.2. Each candidate participating in the video round must submit a video preview of their original program by 23:59 CEST on 12 December 2025. The requirements regarding the content of the video preview are set out in D2.5, and the technical requirements are outlined in D2.6.
- 2.3. The videos will be produced by the candidates in advance. The video round will then be held online, at a date to be determined by the organization. The videos will also be broadcast online and available to the public.
- 2.4. A maximum of fourteen (14) candidates will be admitted to the semifinals.



2.5. Content requirements

- 2.5.1. The purpose of the video preview is to give the scouting jury a clear idea of what may be expected from the candidate if they are admitted to the semifinals, and to select the most compelling all-around artists. Candidates are therefore encouraged to design a program which best characterizes them as a musician and depicts their artistic vision.
- 2.5.2. The original program (a live performance of 45 minutes) must feature the candidate playing the harp. Otherwise, the entire design of the program—repertoire, style, theme, staging, instrumentation, etc.—is free for the candidate to create.
- 2.5.3. The video preview must be in English and must feature the candidate playing the harp. Aside from these two guidelines, candidates are encouraged to take advantage of the medium to best express their artistic vision. There are no restrictions on editing.

2.6. Technical Requirements

- 2.6.1. Quality – both visual and audio tracks should preferably be of a professional quality. The video should have a minimum resolution of 1920x1080 (HD) with a 16:9 aspect ratio and a preferred resolution of 4K.
- 2.6.2. Format – all standard video format files will be accepted.
- 2.6.3. Duration – videos should be a minimum of five (5) minutes and a maximum of eight (8) minutes in length.
- 2.6.4. Rights – all rights to the video recordings are reserved exclusively by the DHF until 18 May 2026. Candidates must submit their video privately to the organization and may not publish it publicly. Following 18 May 2026, the original creator of the video is free to use the video as he or she sees fit, and the DHF furthermore reserves the right to use the video recordings for promotional purposes.

3. Semifinals

- 3.1. The purpose of the semifinals is to bring harpists from around the world together, to showcase their creativity and talent, and for the competition jury to select three (3) finalists.
- 3.2. The semifinals will take place in Utrecht, the Netherlands, on April 16th and 17th, 2026.

- 3.3. The performances will be free and open to the public.
- 3.4. Performance agreement
- 3.4.1. Each candidate invited to the semifinals, hereinafter referred to as ‘semifinalist’, will be asked to sign a performance agreement within two weeks of receiving their invitation. This agreement constitutes a binding contract between the DHF and the candidate. If a candidate chooses not to sign the performance agreement or fails to do so within two weeks, then their participation in the semifinals will be considered forfeited. The organization then reserves the right to invite the candidate(s) with the next-highest number of votes from the video round to fill their place.
- 3.4.2. Semifinalists agree to
- Finalize their travel arrangements to Utrecht no later than two months before the semifinals.
 - Submit suitable promotional material for their original program, as requested by the organization. It is understood that the semifinalist is responsible for any expenses incurred in the production of the promotional material.
 - Arrive in Utrecht in time for rehearsals and sound checks, as necessary.
 - Present the final version of their original program during the World Harp Competition semifinals.
 - Be available to participate in the final gala concert and award ceremony during the DHF..
- 3.4.3. The DHF agrees to
- Provide a selection of competition harps for use by the semifinalists.
 - Secure a professional quality concert venue for the competition performances and promote the performances to the public.
 - Provide stage hands and technical support during all performances.
 - Organize practice time and on-stage soundchecks in advance of the semifinalist’s performance.
 - Provide financial support to semifinalists in need of assistance.
 - Grant free entry to the festival to all semifinalists.
- 3.4.4. The jury adjudicating the semifinals and the finals, hereinafter referred to as the ‘competition jury’, will attend all performances given by the semifinalists, in their entirety.
- 3.4.5. The order of performance in the semifinals will be left to the discretion of the artistic director.
- 3.4.6. Three (3) candidates will be admitted to the finals.




4. Finals

- 4.1. The purpose of the finals is to showcase the three most outstanding candidates and for the competition jury to assign 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes.
- 4.2. The finals will take place in the form of a concert in collaboration with ensemble members. During this concert, the three finalists will each be given fifteen (15) minutes to perform a selection of their choice, together with an ensemble of their choice. This performance could either be a highlight from their original program or new material not yet performed in the competition.
- 4.3. Finalists may choose to perform with an ensemble provided by the competition or bring their own ensemble members. The performance fees of the ensemble members during the finals will be covered by the DHF, up to a maximum of €500 per candidate.
- 4.4. The candidates admitted to the finals will attend rehearsals at the times communicated to them. Each candidate will be entitled to the same amount of rehearsal time.

E. Jury & Voting

1. Jury

- 1.1. The organization will assemble separate juries for each phase of the competition. The preselection jury will adjudicate the preliminary round of the competition; the scouting jury will adjudicate the video round; and the competition jury will adjudicate the semifinals and the finals. All three juries will consist of different members. The terms 'jury' and 'juries' will hereinafter be used to refer to the preselection jury, the scouting jury, and the competition jury.
- 1.2. All juries consist of an odd number of members, from a variety of musical and cultural backgrounds. For the video round and the live rounds, both harpists and non-harpists will be installed as jury members. The competition jury will consist of a minimum of five members in such a configuration that there is a majority of non-harpists and also a majority originating from countries outside the Netherlands.
- 1.3. Jury members are chosen by the organization for their international eminence in the world of music, without any regard to ideology, language, political preference, race, gender, or sexual orientation.

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- 1.4. The juries' sole mission is to rank the candidates according to the procedure established by these rules. All secretarial activities of the juries will be executed by an external functionary appointed by the organization, hereinafter referred to as the 'secretary of the jury'. The secretary of the jury does not take part in the voting procedure. In the preliminary round and the video round, the organization will select one individual to perform the functions of both the legal official and the secretary of the jury. In the semifinals and finals, there will be a dedicated secretary of the jury appointed in addition to the legal official.
 - 1.5. One of the members of the competition jury will be appointed chairperson, hereafter referred to as the 'chairperson of the jury', by the organization. The duties of the chairperson are outlined in E2. No further discrimination is made between members of the juries.
 - 1.6. Immediate family members and other relatives of a candidate, up to the fourth degree of kinship, may not serve on the juries.
 - 1.7. Members of the juries may not have students who are candidates in the competition. In this context, 'student' is defined as a candidate who has during the past year taken more than five lessons with the jury member in question. In case of doubt, those concerned will refer the matter to the organization, whose decision shall be final.
 - 1.8. Contestants are not entitled to object to members of the juries, but do have the right to lodge a complaint with the legal official, if they believe that Articles E1.6 and E1.7 have not been observed.
 - 1.9. A list of the names of all candidates will be given to each member of the preselection jury. Each member of the preselection jury will append his or her signature to the rules and to the list of candidates to indicate his or her compliance with Articles E1.6 and E1.7.
 - 1.10. A list of the names of all candidates participating in the video round will be given to each member of the scouting jury. Each member of the scouting jury will append his or her signature to the rules and to the list of candidates to indicate his or her compliance with Articles E1.6 and E1.7.
 - 1.11. A list of the names of all semifinalists will be given to each member of the competition jury. Each member of the competition jury will append his or her signature to the rules and to the list of semifinalists to indicate his or her compliance with Articles E1.6 and E1.7.
 - 1.12. If compliance with Articles E1.6 and E1.7 is established to be untrue, the signatory in question will be excluded from the jury.
 - 1.13. Throughout the entire competition, the juries shall refrain from having any direct or indirect contact with any candidate or his/her next of kin regarding the competition.
 - 1.14. Throughout the entire competition, the juries shall also refrain from making any statements about the candidates or the activities of the jury.

- 1.15. The juries will vote by secret ballot.
- 1.16. The juries shall refrain from any form of consultation.
- 1.17. If a jury member is unable to attend one or more judging sessions, the organization will be authorized to cancel the votes awarded by that member of the jury for the whole of the round in question. If it turns out that one of the candidates whom the absent jury member has been unable to judge is ranked equal with another or others for the round in question, the jury member in question may not take part in the tie-breaking vote.
- 1.18. The identity of the preselection jury members shall remain confidential until after the preliminary round of the competition. The complete list of members of the scouting jury will be announced on January 1, 2026. The complete list of members of the competition jury, with the exception of the chairperson, shall remain confidential until the commencement of the semifinals.


2. Chairperson of the Jury

- 2.1. The chairperson of the jury ensures that the competition jury's work is executed correctly. If, by his or her assessment, a member of the jury has committed a serious breach of the rules, the chairperson of the jury is authorized to suspend that member immediately and to subsequently submit the matter for the urgent consideration of the legal official or the organization.
- 2.2. In the event of illness or absence due to unforeseen circumstances, the chairperson of the jury will be replaced, for the entire competition or for part of it, by the organization. The person replacing the chairperson of the jury must meet all the requirements of jury members listed under E1.
- 2.3. The chairperson of the jury announces the results of the relevant rounds of the competition, herein faithfully reflecting the decisions of the jury.
- 2.4. If the legal official is called upon to pronounce judgment on a matter implicating a member of the juries, he or she is obliged to hear the jury member in question and the chairperson of the jury, where applicable.

3. Voting procedure


3.1. General provisions

- 3.1.1. Members of the juries may not exchange comments about candidates. Any discussion concerning candidates will lead to the suspension of the jury member having caused it.

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- 3.1.2. The secretary of the jury and the legal official will be responsible for counting the ballot papers given to the secretary of the jury by the jury members, and for tallying the votes. The competition director will supervise this process.
 - 3.1.3. The votes will be tallied in a closed location. No one aside from those mentioned in Article E3.1.2 may enter the room where the votes are tallied.
 - 3.1.4. Any correction on a ballot paper must be initialed by the jury member in question and the legal official. If a ballot paper presents difficulties in reading that could result in an error, the legal official or the secretary of the jury may ask the jury member to complete a new ballot paper.
 - 3.1.5. All voting and tallying operations are confidential. The only results to be announced are the designation, without indication of ranking, of the candidates admitted to each round, and the ranking of the three finalists.
 - 3.1.6. The ballot papers, signed by the jury and later sealed by the legal official, will be kept in the competition archives for at least one year. The seals may only be broken with permission of the legal official.
 - 3.1.7. All cases not accounted for in the jury regulations taking place during the preliminary round and the video round will be decided by the organization.
 - 3.1.8. All cases not accounted for in the jury regulations taking place during the semifinals and finals of the competition will be decided by the chairperson of the jury, in consultation with the organization.


3.2. Preliminary Round

- 3.2.1. The preliminary round will be adjudicated by the preselection jury and facilitated by the competition director and the legal official. It is not necessary for this round that the members of the preselection jury be physically present in the same location.
- 3.2.2. The preliminary round will consist of an anonymous review of the written program proposals and recordings.
- 3.2.3. During the preliminary round, the identities of the candidates participating in the preliminary round will remain anonymous to all members of the preselection jury. Prior to the preliminary round, the competition director will assign a random number to each submission and label all program proposals and audio recordings accordingly. Only the competition director will know which numbers correspond to which candidate. The preselection jury is not permitted to know which names correspond to which numbers until after the conclusion of the preliminary round.

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- 3.2.4. For each submitted audio recording, each member of the preselection jury will start listening from the beginning but may stop listening when he or she has received sufficient information to evaluate it. In the event that two or more members of the preselection jury are listening in the same room, the recording may be stopped only once all jury members have indicated that they have heard enough.
 - 3.2.5. To adjudicate the preliminary round, each member of the preselection jury will receive a ballot paper listing the submissions by number. For each submission, each member of the preselection jury will indicate whether they wish to admit the corresponding candidate to the video round by indicating 'YES' or 'NO' under the heading 'May proceed to the video round'. There is no limit to the number of 'YES' votes that may be given by a member of the preselection jury. The ballot papers, signed by all members of the preselection jury, will accordingly be given to the legal official.
 - 3.2.6. Once all the ballots have been collected, the legal official will record how many total 'YES' votes each candidate received. The Organization may then decide either to admit all candidates with three 'YES' votes, all candidates with two or more 'YES' votes, or all candidates with one or more 'YES' votes. Candidates with no 'YES' votes will be eliminated from the competition. With regard to admitting candidates to the video round, all candidates with the same number of 'YES' votes will be given equal treatment.
 - 3.2.7. Depending on the results, and without having knowledge of the identities of the candidates in question, the organization will decide where to establish the cut-off point between the candidates admitted and candidates rejected, in such a way as to maximize the number of candidates that can be heard without exceeding the natural time constraints of the video round.

3.3. Video Round

- 3.3.1. The video round will be adjudicated by the scouting jury and facilitated by the organization and the legal official.
- 3.3.2. To adjudicate the video round, each member of the scouting jury will receive a ballot form with the names of the candidates participating in the video round. Based on their evaluation of each candidate's video, each member of the scouting jury will indicate whether they wish the candidate to proceed to the semifinals by indicating 'YES' or 'NO' under the heading 'May proceed to the semifinals'. In addition, each member of the scouting jury may assign preference votes to three of the candidates by marking a star (*) next to their 'YES' vote. There is no limit to the number of 'YES' votes that may be given by each jury member, but the maximum number of preference votes is three (3).



The ballot papers, signed by each member of the scouting jury, will be collected by the legal official.

- 3.3.3. Candidates will be ranked according to the total number of 'YES' votes and preference votes (*) awarded by the scouting jury. The ranking is as follows: 3***, 3**, 3*, 3, 2**, 2*, 2, 1*, 1, 0. A maximum of fourteen (14) candidates with the highest rank will be invited to participate in the semifinals.
- 3.3.4. In the event of a tie between candidates for the last place in the semifinals, there may be a tie breaking vote. A tie breaking vote will only be held if the candidates involved in the tie received two or more 'YES' votes.
- 3.3.5. In the case of a tie breaking vote, all members of the scouting jury will receive a new ballot paper with the numbers of the equally ranked candidates. Each member of the scouting jury may indicate their preference for one (1) of the candidates involved in the tie.
- 3.3.6. If the outcome of following the procedure in Article E3.3.5 reduces the number of candidates involved in the tie, the same procedure is repeated until the number of candidates selected for the semifinals does not exceed fourteen (14).
- 3.3.7. If an unsolvable tie arises after following the procedure in Article E3.3.6, the chairperson of the jury will decide which candidate(s) will be admitted to the finals.

3.4. Semifinals

- 3.4.1. The semifinals will be adjudicated by the competition jury and facilitated by the organization and the legal official.
- 3.4.2. To adjudicate the semifinals, all members of the competition jury will receive a ballot paper with the names of the candidates. Based on their evaluation of each candidate's performance, each member of the competition jury will indicate whether they wish the candidate to proceed to the final round, by indicating 'YES' or 'NO' under the heading 'May proceed to the final round'. There is no limit to the number of 'YES' votes that may be given by a member of the competition jury. The ballot papers, signed by each member of the competition jury, will accordingly be given to the legal official.
- 3.4.3. Candidates will be ranked according to the total number of 'YES' votes awarded by the competition jury. The three (3) candidates with the most 'YES' votes will be invited to participate in the finals.

- 3.4.4. In the event of a tie between candidates for the last place in the finals, all members of the competition jury will receive a new ballot paper with the numbers of the equally ranked candidates. Each member of the competition jury may indicate their preference for one (1) of the candidates involved in the tie.
- 3.4.5. If the outcome of the counting of the votes of preference following the procedure in Article E3.4.4 reduces the number of candidates involved in the tie, the procedure in Article E3.4.4 is repeated until three candidates proceed to the final round.
- 3.4.6. If an unsolvable tie arises after the counting of the votes of preference following the procedure in E3.4.5, the chairperson of the competition jury will decide which candidate(s) will be admitted to the finals.

3.5. Finals

- 3.5.1. The finals will be adjudicated by the competition jury and facilitated by the organization and the legal official.
- 3.5.2. To adjudicate the finals, all members of the competition jury will receive a ballot paper with the names of the finalists. Based on their evaluation of each candidate's performance in the finals, each member of the competition jury will submit their own ranking of the finalists, with 'first place' being judged to be the best, 'second place' the second best, etc. The ballot papers, signed by each member of the competition jury, will accordingly be given to the legal official.
- 3.5.3. The secretary of the jury and the legal official will fill out a tally form, recording how many times each finalist was ranked in first place, second place, etc. The finalist with the most first-place votes will be the first prize winner. In the event that two or more finalists receive the same number of first-place votes, the second-place votes will be considered. If this still does not resolve the tie, the third-place votes will then be considered.
- 3.5.4. After the first prize winner has been determined, the remaining finalists will be considered. Of these remaining finalists, the one who has received the most first-place votes will be the second prize winner. Any ties will be resolved using the same procedure as outlined in E3.5.3.
- 3.5.5. After both the first and second prize winners have been determined, the remaining finalists will be considered. Of these remaining finalists, the one who has received the most first-place votes will be the third prize winner. Any ties will be resolved using the same procedure as outlined in E3.5.3.



3.6. Audience Award

- 3.6.1. All semifinals are eligible for the audience award.
- 3.6.2. All competition audience members as well as any live-stream listeners may submit their vote for the audience award. Members of the competition jury or the organization may not vote for the audience award, but otherwise there are no restrictions on who may participate.
- 3.6.3. The voting will be handled by a web app. Each voter may submit one vote; multiple votes will not be counted. The unique identities of voters will be determined by email address and confirmed by anti-hacking measures.
- 3.6.4. Votes will be accepted from April 16th through April 18th, 2026, beginning with the first performance in the semifinals and ending just prior to the announcement of the award.
- 3.6.5. The candidate with the most votes will receive the audience award. In the event of a tie, the audience award will be awarded to all candidates involved in the tie. The prize money of which this prize consists will be divided amongst the equally ranked candidates.

3.7. Other Awards

- 3.7.1. For all other awards awarded by the competition jury, all members of the competition jury will receive a ballot paper with the names of the candidates at the end of the round in question. Each member of the jury will indicate which candidate he or she evaluated as the winner of the award in question by indicating the name of the candidate on the ballot paper. The ballot papers, signed by each member of the jury, will accordingly be given to the legal official.
- 3.7.2. In the event of a tie, the members of the jury will receive a new ballot paper with the names of the candidates involved in the tie. Each member of the jury will indicate which candidate he or she evaluated as the winner of the award.
- 3.7.3. If the tie proves to be unsolvable, the chairperson of the competition jury will make the final decision in the finals, and the organization will make the final decision in the video round.



F. Prizes

1. A number of prizes and awards will be awarded amongst the candidates. These will be published on the website of the competition.
2. The prizes, awards, and certificates, signed by all members of the competition jury, will be presented to the laureates as part of a prize ceremony following the finals.
3. All prizes will be awarded.
4. None of the prizes are divisible, with the exception of the audience award.
5. All prize money is subject to tax under the Dutch taxation laws.


G. Authorities

1. Management of the Competition

- 1.1. The DHF World Harp Competition is managed by the organization.
- 1.2. The organization is responsible for overseeing the application of the competition rules and may take any measures necessary to ensure the rules are upheld during the course of the competition. If breaches of these rules take place, the organization is authorized to bring these to light and to refer them to the legal official.
- 1.3. For all matters pertaining to the administration of the competition, the organization is authorized, under its own responsibility, to delegate particular powers or functions to persons not otherwise involved in the organization.

2. Legal Official

- 2.1. For each round of the competition, a legal official will be appointed by the organization. The legal official has the task of fairly resolving any administrative, civil, or disciplinary disputes that may arise between the candidates, members of the jury, members of the organization, and/or members of the DHF. The judgment of the legal official is binding and is not subject to appeal.
- 2.2. The jury and the candidates will be informed of the name and responsibilities of the legal official.
- 2.3. By participating in the competition, the members of the jury and the candidates are deemed to accept the jurisdiction of the legal official.

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- 2.4. In order to be considered, complaints addressed to the legal official must indicate the name of the person or persons against whom they have been lodged.
 - 2.5. The legal official shall keep records of all operations he or she may be called upon to carry out, and of any facts he or she may be asked to establish.

3. Sanctions

- 3.1. The authorities described in articles G1-2 can issue warnings and impose the following penalties on members of the jury and candidates:
 - A reprimand
 - An official warning
 - Exclusion from the competition
 - A permanent ban
 - 3.2. A reprimand can be given by the organization. Warnings and penalties can only be given by the legal official. The other administrative authorities of the DHF do not have any legal or disciplinary powers.
 - 3.3. Apart from the disciplinary measures outlined above, the legal official can also decide on all questions legitimately submitted to it and, in particular, can impose penalties requiring the payment of damages and interest to injured parties.
 - 3.4. In the event of disputes, only the 2026 version of these rules is legally binding.
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