

NATIONAL MUSIC **MINISTRY TRAINING AREA (MTA)** *Rules & Guidelines*

➤ **PURPOSE**

To encourage and strengthen the exercise of musical giftedness in the local church (Col. 3:16-17).

➤ **RULES**

1. **A student may only register one entry for any given MTA category at the National Convention** (e.g. one vocal solo submission or one instrumental ensemble submission). A student may only register for a maximum of four separate music MTA categories at the National Convention, including duets and ensembles.
2. All entries shall consist of only music that is identified by lyrics and themes which reflect the truths of Scripture. See the “Statement on Choosing Music Wisely” in the hints section below.
3. The Junior High Division shall be limited to students having completed grades 7-9, and the Senior High Division to those having completed grades 10-12. (An entry consisting of two or more students is considered a Senior High entry when any member of the group has completed grades 10-12.)
4. All entrants must provide three (3) copies* of the music, together with three (3) copies** of any acquired arranging permissions (if applicable) and three (3) copies of a correctly filled-out evaluation form. Only one copy of any accompaniment track on CD or thumb drive must be submitted. **These three (3) copies of music together with all MTA submission materials must be presented at registration on the first day of convention.** The final deadline for all MTA materials to be received in the Convention Office is no later than 8pm the first day of Convention.

Copies* of the music must be submitted as follows:

- Music submitted should be transcribed following acceptable Standard Musical Notation.
- At a minimum, music must be submitted as a lead sheet which includes the melody line and all measures (no chord or tab charts).
- Measure numbers must be included on EVERY copy, either on every measure or at a minimum, at the beginning of each line.
- All copies should be labeled with the student’s name, grade, church, regional, and category.
- These copies must be clear of previous markings (i.e., these should not be the same copies you used at the Regional level, if the evaluators made any markings on them).

**Photocopies of the music are permissible by copyright law (Public Law #94-553, Section 107).*

5. The Categories of Music MTAs are as follows:

Vocal Solo	Vocal Duet	Vocal Trio
Vocal Quartet	Vocal Ensemble (5-8 voices)	Vocal Choir (9+ voices)
Piano Solo	Piano Duet (1 or 2 pianos)	Instrumental Solo
Instrumental Duet	Instrumental Ensemble (2-6)	Instrumental Group (7+)
Music Composition	Arranging (existing song)	Songwriting (pop/folk)

6. Memorization is not required for participation. However, the memorization category on the Evaluation form will be evaluated according to how much you rely on or need your music. Only memorized presentations will be eligible for scholarship consideration at the National Convention.

7. **Music must be performed exactly as it appears on the score. It is illegal to arrange copyrighted music without permission of the copyright owner, except to make minor simplifications. (If you are adding any dynamic expressions, please be sure they are clearly marked.) Three (3) copies of written permission for any major arranging must accompany the music submitted for the evaluators.

8. Accompaniment for Music MTA entries may be either piano, acoustic guitar, or accompaniment track on CD or thumb drive. Music MTA entries using an accompaniment track must provide printed music that matches that accompaniment track. Music MTA entries using an accompaniment track will not be eligible for scholarship.

9. Students may select their own accompanist; or, if needed, an accompanist can be provided. If the Ministry Training Area Coordinator provides an accompanist, there is a \$10 administrative fee per entry. The student must indicate the request for an accompanist when registering the MTA presentation online. In addition to the three copies of the music and three copies of the MTA evaluation form, at the time of registration the student must also submit one copy of the music for the accompanist, along with the \$10 administrative fee. If, during the Convention, the entrant fails to meet with his or her accompanist for a scheduled rehearsal, the accompanist reserves the right to choose not to play for the entrant; the MTA Coordinator and/or the Youth Council reserve the right to disqualify the MTA submission.

10. Performance of the Accompanist will not be considered in the evaluation of the entry.

11. The same musical selection and group members must be used throughout the Regional and National MTA events. In the event of an emergency, substitution of group members can be made in the entry, but only with the approval of the Youth Council.

12. The song selection must **not** be one that has been previously evaluated at the IFCA National Youth Convention.

13. Direction of presentations in any form (having a "conductor") is not allowed, except for Vocal Choirs (9+ voices) and Instrumental Groups (7+ instruments). Those in violation will be disqualified (this includes conducting from the audience).

14. Presentation Attire Guidelines

- All clothing must be **modest**—appropriate for the worship environment. Any questions or concerns can be directed to mta@ifcayouth.org.
- **Young Men:** Dress pants (no jeans), dress shirt with collar, belt and dress shoes; no flip-flops. Hair must be clean and neatly groomed.
- **Young Ladies:** Dress or blouse with skirt or dress pants (no jeans). Dress shoes or sandals; no flip-flops. Hair must be clean and neatly groomed.

For Composition, Songwriting & Arranging entries:

In addition to any applicable rules above, the following rules should be considered.

1. Original songs/compositions shall consist of only music that is identified by lyrics and themes which reflect the truths of Scripture.
2. Each entry may only be submitted by one individual – not a team/collaboration of two or more people. (A music teacher may give assistance or advice, but the entrant must do the actual work.) A presenter may enter up to one original songwriting/composition and one music arrangement. A presenter may present an original song as a vocal/instrumental presentation as well (to be evaluated separately).
3. The entrant must sign the evaluation form, indicating that the submitted song is his or her own original work. **Any evidence of copyright infringement will automatically disqualify the entry.**
4. All entries submitted should **not** have been evaluated at any previous IFCA National Youth Convention, and the composition, song, or arrangement must be the original work of the entrant.

Compositions

- A. Compositions should have an original melody and original lyrics (if used).
- B. Entries will be evaluated according to the generally accepted and traditional music principles, and should be submitted as a printed manuscript created with music notation software. Manuscripts should be transcribed following acceptable standard musical notation.
- C. A recording of the composition must also be submitted as an audio file on a thumb drive. (The quality of the recording will not affect evaluation.) The song does not have to be presented live, although this is allowed. The recording should contain the performance of the score as submitted for evaluation. Any musician or musicians can perform for the recording. Exported audio files from notation software will also be accepted. **Failure to submit a recording will disqualify the entry.**

Arranging

- A. *Music arrangements* can be made for voices (solo, choir, etc.) or for an instrument.
- B. Entries will be evaluated according to the generally accepted and traditional music principles, and should be submitted as a printed manuscript created with music notation software. Manuscripts should be transcribed following acceptable standard

musical notation. Arrangements should be transcribed as the full arrangement (any necessary part pertaining to the arrangement – such as, solo line, choir parts, piano accompaniment, etc.)

- C. A recording of the song must also be submitted as an audio file on a thumb drive. (The quality of the recording will not affect evaluation.) The song does not have to be presented live, although this is allowed. The recording should contain the performance of the arrangement, as it has been transcribed (If it is a SATB choir arrangement with piano accompaniment, then 4 parts with piano should be heard; if it is an arrangement for trumpet with piano accompaniment, then that should be heard; etc.). Any musician or musicians can perform for the recording. Exported audio files from notation software will also be accepted. **Failure to submit a recording will disqualify the entry.**
- D. **The entrant must contact the song's copyright owner or publisher to receive permission to make an arrangement of the song. Three (3) copies of the permission letter must be attached to the music when submitted for evaluation. (If the song is in public domain, the appropriate research and/or information indicating such should be included in the entry.)

Songwriting

- A. Songwriting submissions differ from compositions in that they are more appropriately categorized as being in the folk/pop genre and have a greater emphasis on lyrical content than on musical accompaniment. They should have an original melody and original lyrics.
- B. Entries will be evaluated according to the generally accepted and traditional music principles, and should be submitted as a printed manuscript created with music notation software. Manuscripts should be transcribed following acceptable standard musical notation. *Original songs* should, at a minimum, be a lead sheet which includes at least the melody line and lyrics (If possible, also include written chords or chord names.)
- C. A recording of the song must also be submitted as an audio file on a thumb drive. (The quality of the recording will not affect evaluation.) The song does not have to be presented live, although this is allowed. The recording should contain the performance of the score as submitted for evaluation. Any musician or musicians can perform for the recording. Exported audio files from notation software will also be accepted. **Failure to submit a recording will disqualify the entry.**

SPECIAL NOTE: *We reserve the right to use, publish and/or distribute the works presented as promotional, or inspirational material within the IFCA youth ministry. This exposure may include but is not limited to: The Voice Magazine, IFCA e-mail publication, or distribution on our IFCA Youth website and social media.*

➤ **EVALUATION**

1. A panel of 3 persons will evaluate each entry. There are 6 categories of evaluation on each Ministry Training Area evaluation form where the evaluators will record written feedback. Each evaluator will assign a division 1, division 2 or division 3 rating for each category as well. Overall score will be calculated by taking an average of the scores awarded from all 3 evaluators.

<u>Final Division Rating</u>	<u>Average Score</u>
Division 1 (highest)	1.0 – 1.5
Division 2	1.6 – 2.4
Division 3 (lowest)	2.5 – 3.0

Note: The National Ministry Training Area evaluators are advised to consider the age and experience of the entrant in the evaluation process and score accordingly.

2. An introduction must be made by the presenter(s) to explain the theme. The introduction must include their name(s), church, IFCA region, and title and author of their piece or presentation.
3. One evaluator will serve as the official time keeper. The length of each presentation should be no more than 10 minutes.
4. Evaluators will meet with each student to give verbal feedback in addition to their written feedback. Evaluation forms and music will be returned to students via their church leaders at the end of Convention.

➤ **SCHOLARSHIPS**

1. Scholarships may be awarded to students in grades 11 or 12 who are awarded an overall Division I rating.
2. For performance MTAs, only memorized presentations will be eligible for scholarships.

Questions? Contact:

Pastor Andy Huber

NATIONAL MINISTRY TRAINING AREA COORDINATOR
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IFCA Youth Ministry

Statement on Choosing Music Wisely for Ministry Training Area (MTA) entries.

IFCA Youth Ministry has one primary goal with MTA presentations: to encourage and equip students to better use of their giftedness in the context of local church ministry.

The style of music that is used for worship varies from church to church. It is not our intent to impose a musical standard on individual congregations throughout the IFCA fellowship.

With this in mind, we would like to suggest some qualities to consider when choosing music to use as an MTA entry at regional and national IFCA Youth Ministry events.

Excellent sacred music will contain qualities that make the music worshipful and spiritually edifying. We would ask you to consider these qualities when choosing pieces for your music MTA entry.

1. Lyrics that uphold and exalt the Triune God
2. Melody that creates a worshipful environment
3. Harmony that supports the message and spirit of the piece
4. Rhythm that supports the piece but is not dominant or abrasive
5. A song arrangement that is intended to be sung as a vocal solo (or duet) and which corresponds to the singer's vocal range
6. Message that is doctrinally correct
7. Presentation/Decorum: tasteful and honoring to the Lord
8. Appropriateness: responds to the occasion and purpose of being used in a corporate worship gathering
9. Edification: directed toward the hearer, and not self
10. Objective: That it is a ministry, not a performance

Philippians. 4:8, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things."

These guidelines are meant to help singers wisely choose music that will glorify God, edify the saints, and allow them to both use and hone their gifts. Any singers who are unsure whether their song choices meet these guidelines should contact the IFCA Youth Council at mta@ifcayouth.org.

We would like to offer the following list of suggested songs which we believe meet all the above requirements and which we heartily recommend as vocal MTA submissions.

- 1) Any of the hymn arrangements from "The Sacred Solos of Dan Forrest"
 - [This resource](#) includes 10 hymn arrangements in three different vocal ranges as well as performance example recordings and accompaniment recordings.
- 2) Any of the arrangements from "Classic Hymns for Two Voices" or "Classic Hymns for Two Voices II"

- [This resource](#) and [this resource](#) each include 10 arrangements of both classic hymns and newer songs and each is intended to be sung as a duet, but could work as a solo. Both books are for medium voices (can be sung by most) and can be ordered with a performance CD.
- 3) Any of the arrangements from “Contemporary Classics for Two Voices”
- [This resource](#) includes 10 arrangements of some well-known contemporary songs and can be ordered with a CD. It is written for two medium voices (can be sung by most).