



# *The Recording Academy*<sup>®</sup>

3030 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90404

[www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com)

## **THE RECORDING ACADEMY<sup>®</sup> ANNOUNCES RULE AMENDMENTS AND DATES FOR THE 59TH ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS PROCESS**

*Annual Amendments Affect Streaming Eligibility, Voting Guidelines,  
And Select Award Categories*

*New Regulations Go Into Effect Immediately For The Upcoming 59th Annual GRAMMY  
Awards<sup>®</sup> On Feb. 12, 2017*

**SANTA MONICA, Calif. (June 16, 2016)** — [The Recording Academy<sup>®</sup>](http://www.grammy.com) has completed its annual awards review and established new amendments and key dates guiding the 59th Annual GRAMMY Awards<sup>®</sup> process. Among other changes, the updates allow previously ineligible streaming-only works into the process and limit the number of categories in which members may vote. The new guidelines go into effect immediately in the current-year awards cycle.

"The GRAMMYs<sup>®</sup> aren't just peer-awarded, they're peer-driven. Throughout the year, members of the music community come to us asking to make changes to the Awards process, and we work with them to figure out how those changes might work," said Bill Freimuth, Senior Vice President of Awards for The Recording Academy. "I'm proud of this year's changes because they're a testament to the artists, producers, and writers – the people who rolled up their sleeves to shape the proposals and, in turn, the future of the GRAMMYs. It's exactly what they should be doing. It's their award."

### **Key Dates**

**Eligibility Period:** Oct. 1, 2015 to Sept. 30, 2016

**Nominations Date:** Dec. 6, 2016

**Awards Date:** Feb. 12, 2017

*\*Visit [grammy101.com](http://grammy101.com) for a complete timeline of awards eligibility and voting dates.*

### **Rule Amendments**

#### **Streaming-Only Recordings Now Eligible**

Previous eligibility guidelines required recordings to be commercially available via general distribution or digital recordings/downloads, thereby precluding works released solely through streaming services. The eligibility guidelines have been revised to include recordings released via streaming platforms, and are updated as follows:

- **Release Date:** Recordings (albums/singles) must be available to the public nationwide as stand-alone purchases or streams between Oct. 1, 2015, and Sept. 30, 2016. Imports are not eligible.
- **General Distribution:** Works must be released via general distribution, defined as the nationwide release of a recording via brick and mortar, third-party online retailers, and/or applicable digital streaming services. Applicable streaming services are paid subscription, full catalogue, on-demand streaming/limited download platforms that have existed as such within the United States

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for at least one full year as of the submission deadline. All recordings entered must have an assigned International Standard Recording Code (ISRC).

- **Digital Recordings:** Recordings released nationwide via download or streaming service must have quality comparable to at least 16-bit 44.1 kHz. Submissions sent to The Academy for consideration must also include both the original file and the product, proper label credits (producer, mixer, songwriter, etc.) in the metadata file, and a verifiable online release date.

Recordings must be non-infringing, original works of authorship. To the extent a recording embodies in whole or in part the copyrighted work of a third party, appropriate authorization to use and incorporate such copyrighted work must have been obtained. If allegations are made that a recording is unauthorized and does not meet these criteria, The Academy will consider the allegations and determine, in its sole discretion, the eligibility of such recording.

### **Number Of Categories In Which Voters May Vote Decreases**

To encourage members to vote only in those categories in which they are most knowledgeable, passionate, and qualified, while keeping in mind that certain genre fields contain several distinct award categories, the number of categories in which Academy members may vote has decreased from 20 to 15, plus the four General Field categories (Record Of The Year, Album Of The Year, Song Of The Year, and Best New Artist).

### **Best New Artist Guidelines Amended To Reflect Trends In How Emerging Artists Release Music**

Previous Best New Artist rules were amended to remove the album barrier given current trends in how new music and developing artists are released and promoted. To be eligible in the category of Best New Artist, the artist, duo, or group:

- Must have released a minimum of five singles/tracks or one album, but no more than 30 singles/tracks or three albums.
- May not have entered into this category more than three times, including as a performing member of an established group.
- Must have achieved a breakthrough into the public consciousness and impacted the musical landscape during the eligibility period.

### **Additional Blues Category Added To American Roots Field**

To reflect the dynamic range of Blues submissions The Recording Academy receives, the category previously known as Best Blues Album will now branch into two distinct categories:

- **Best Traditional Blues Album**  
Blues recordings with traditional blues song structures, harmonic structures, and rhythms, that may also employ traditional blues instruments such as acoustic and electric guitar, piano, organ, harmonica, horns, and electric bass and drums. This category includes various subgenres such as Delta blues, Piedmont blues, jump/swing blues, Chicago blues, and classic/Southern soul.
- **Best Contemporary Blues Album**  
Blues recordings that vary from traditional blues song and harmonic structures. These may employ non-traditional blues rhythms such as funk, hip-hop, reggae, and rock, and may also include both traditional blues instruments and non-traditional blues instruments. Recordings may also feature contemporary techniques such as the use of synthesizers, programmed tracks, and loops. This category includes various subgenres, such as funk blues and blues-rock.

### **Best Rap/Sung Collaboration Category Renamed And Redefined**

Best Rap/Sung Collaboration has been renamed and redefined as Best Rap/Sung Performance to represent the current state and future trajectory of rap by expanding the category beyond collaborations between rappers and vocalists to include recordings by a solo artist who blurs the lines between rapping and singing. The expanded category is defined as follows:

- ***Best Rap/Sung Performance***

This category is intended to recognize solo and collaborative performances containing elements of R&B and rap in melody and song. In the case of a collaboration of artists who don't usually perform together, one of the collaborating artists should be credited and recognized as a featured artist.

Additional amendments were made to the number and type of music creators recognized in the categories of Best Choral Performance and Best Jazz Vocal album, and procedural updates were made to the process of populating nominations committees.

The Recording Academy accepts proposals from members of the music community throughout the year. A special Awards & Nominations Committee, comprised of Academy Voting Members of diverse genres, meets annually to review proposals to update award categories, procedures, and eligibility guidelines. The above amendments were voted on and passed at The Recording Academy's most recent semiannual Board of Trustees meeting held in May. For information on the Awards process, visit [www.grammy101.com](http://www.grammy101.com).

Established in 1957, The Recording Academy is an organization of musicians, songwriters, producers, engineers, and recording professionals dedicated to improving the cultural condition and quality of life for music and its makers. Internationally known for the GRAMMY Awards — the preeminent peer-recognized award for musical excellence and the most credible brand in music — The Recording Academy is responsible for groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education, and human services programs. The Academy continues to focus on its mission of recognizing musical excellence, advocating for the well-being of music makers and ensuring music remains an indelible part of our culture. For more information about The Academy, please visit [www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com). For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @TheGRAMMYS on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/TheGRAMMYS), "like" The GRAMMYS on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/TheGRAMMYS) and join The GRAMMYS' social communities on [Google+](https://plus.google.com/+TheGRAMMYS), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/TheGRAMMYS), [Tumblr](https://www.tumblr.com/TheGRAMMYS), and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/TheGRAMMYS).

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