

PRIX **30**
OPUS

CONSEIL QUÉBÉCOIS DE LA MUSIQUE

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SPECIAL AWARD

30th edition, 2025–2026 season

**First Nations and Inuit
Music of the Year**

Application Guidelines

Definition and Process

First Nations and Inuit Music of the Year

Definition

This award is presented to a First Nations or Inuit artist or ensemble from Quebec who has distinguished themselves through an exceptional musical project that showcases Quebec's Indigenous cultures. The project must have been produced and presented in Quebec during the Opus season.

The project may take various forms, including an indoor or outdoor concert, a performance at a gathering, the release of an album, a sound installation, or any other original musical event. Eligible music may be traditional or contemporary, consistent with the mission of the Conseil québécois de la musique. The project must place Indigenous culture(s) at the heart of its approach and stand out for its exceptional nature.

The award is presented to the artist or ensemble leading the musical project.

Eligibility Criteria

1. First Nations and Inuit participants

- **Residence in Quebec**

The majority (51% or more) of the artists involved in the application must officially reside in Quebec. Applicants who have resided outside Quebec for two years or more are ineligible, unless they retain their status as Quebec residents. In this case, it is their responsibility to demonstrate their eligibility by confirming their enrollment in the Quebec health insurance plan. In the case of a duo, all artists involved must meet the criterion detailed above.

- **Official Membership in a First Nation or Inuit Community**

All applicants must demonstrate their official membership in a First Nation or Inuit community.

The following supporting documents are acceptable:

- an Indian status card or a Nunavik Inuit beneficiary card
OR
- a confirmation of membership from a community, Nation, or representative Indigenous organization that confirms the applicant's official status. Example: a letter of attestation from a First Nations council or the Makivvik Corporation.

For ensembles, the artistic and cultural leadership of the submitted musical project must be provided by a person from a First Nation or Inuit community.

2. First Nations and Inuit Music

- Only musical projects that highlight the Indigenous cultures and traditions of Quebec are eligible for this award.
- The submitted musical project must be rooted in its culture; the Indigenous perspectives must be at the heart of the project.
 - In the case of collaborations or hybrid projects, the majority of the project's musical elements (aesthetic, instruments, lyrics, artistic approach) must be Indigenous.
- Both traditional and contemporary music are accepted.
- Music derived from pop and its subgenres (rap, hip hop, folk, rock, country, chanson, reggae, etc.) is not eligible for the Opus Awards, as it is not consistent with the CQM's mission.

3. Application Package

- The submitted project must have taken place during the 2025–2026 season, the 30th edition of the Opus Awards: the eligibility period runs from September 2, 2025, to September 7, 2026 (activities that take place continuously during the eligibility period may be considered in the overall evaluation of the application).
- An application must be submitted by the registration deadline of October 16, 2026.

Submission of the Application

- **Application submission period:** September 2 through October 16, 2026
- Any individual or organization may submit an application on their own behalf or on behalf of another.
- The online application form must be completed in full.

 [FORM](#)

It is strongly recommended that applications be submitted online in digital format. Printed documents* sent by mail are accepted, but jury members will not be able to review them prior to the deliberation meeting.

*The CQM will not return any documents and may dispose of them as it sees fit.

Validation of the Application

- All forms must be correctly completed, and required supporting documents must be provided in accordance with the regulations. The CQM may require changes to an application to ensure its validity.
- Documents must comply with the eligibility period, with the exception of the resume/biography/background information. In exceptional cases, a reference may be provided outside the eligibility period; in such cases, the connection to the submitted project must be relevant.

Application Fee

There is no fee to submit an application.

Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria

The jury's deliberations will be based on evaluation criteria that will help determine the factors supporting the claim that the application is exceptional.

- The application is complete, well-developed, and showcases the artist or ensemble.
- The musical project of the artist or ensemble stands out for its exceptional nature (boldness, originality, relevance, etc.).
- Through mastery of their art, the artist or ensemble demonstrates remarkable artistic qualities.
- The artist or ensemble is well-established in their field and enjoys recognition from their peers or represents a promising new generation in the field.
- The contribution of the artist or ensemble helps to promote and preserve First Nations and Inuit cultures.

Jury

The jury members are:

- primarily representatives of Quebec's First Nations and Inuit communities. The jury must be culturally diverse: different Nations must be represented, and at least one Inuk representative must be present. Note: These individuals must be officially recognized as members of First Nations and Inuit communities.
- primarily individuals involved in the music and arts communities, though they may also come from the fields of research or Indigenous studies.

There could be a non-Indigenous member if that person is actively involved with Indigenous communities and understands Indigenous perspectives.

Compensation for First Nations and Inuit representatives serving on the jury:

A stipend of \$225 is provided, covering time spent reviewing applications and participating in committee deliberations.

Application Materials

Application Materials

Complete the [online form on the Espace CQM](#) and provide the following documents:

1. Identification:

A majority (51% or more) of the artists involved in the application must be officially Quebec residents.

The artist or, in the case of an ensemble, the artistic director (or artistic leader) of the project must provide:

- ❖ An Indian Status Card (Secure Certificate of Indian Status) or a Nunavik Inuit Beneficiary Card
- OR**
- ❖ Confirmation of membership from a community, Nation, or representative Indigenous organization that confirms the applicant's official status. Example: a letter of attestation from a First Nations council or the Makivvik Corporation.

2. A primary document that includes:

- ❖ Letter of motivation
- ❖ Description of the musical project
- ❖ Video and/or audio links: between 1 and 5 clips maximum in the form of clickable hyperlinks (YouTube, Drive, Dropbox, etc.) / maximum of 10 minutes total.
 - Note: Video quality is not a selection or evaluation criterion. A home recording made with a cell phone is considered on the same footing as a professional recording.
- ❖ Resume, biography, or background information on the artist/ensemble

3. A supplementary supporting document: maximum 10 pages including various elements related to the application. For example: a targeted press kit, a targeted social media report, a program, testimonials, etc.

4. A brief description of the project (max 125 words) and a photo, ideally 1000px x 1000px. If you are selected as a finalist, this text and photo will be used on the prixopus.com website.

5. Letter(s) of support (optional)