

NZ SUN CITY COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS RULES 2025

The NZ Sun City Country Music Awards are proud affiliates of the New Zealand Country Music Association (NZCMA).

Material performed in these awards must be of **Country Origin**. Country origin excludes the Tiny Tots section.

Contestants will be judged on musical and vocal ability, diction, stage presentation, emotional impact, entertainment value, and suitability of song for the contestant and the section.

Entry Rules

1. Entries must be made via our Sun City Awards Website. **Your entry will only be officially accepted once the entry fee has been transferred via internet banking.**
2. No entries will be accepted after the closing date – **1st October 2025**. The awards committee reserves the right to limit the number of entries once maximum capacity is reached, or extend closing date if required.
3. **Age Groups:** contestants ages are determined by the commencement of the annual NZCMA Awards circuit on **1st August** each year.
 - Tiny Tots: Under 7 years at 1st August 2025**
 - Junior: Under 13 years at 1st August 2025**
 - Intermediate: 13 years and under 18 at 1st August 2025**
 - Senior: Over 18 years at 1st August 2025**
 - Veteran: 55+ at the 1st August 2025**
4. The Veteran Novice, Senior Novice and Under 18 Novice sections are open to contestants who have never won a ‘first’ place prize of any age group in any section at any Awards (excluding ‘Tiny Tots’). Please consider eligibility for this section carefully.
5. A Junior, an Intermediate, or a Veteran competitor may partner a Senior in the Open Duo section and this will be eligible for the Senior Overall prize. However, to be eligible for entry to Entertainer of the Year both partners must be in the same age category.
6. The Novice and Original Song sections are not eligible for any Overall Prizes.
7. Except for the Original Song section, contestants may enter once only any section for which they are eligible and for which they have paid the required entry fee.
8. Duos and groups will only be eligible to enter the duo and group section.
9. Open Instrumental, Open New Country and Open Oldtime are eligible for Overall in their respective age categories.

Section Rules

Veterans:

10. Entrants aged 55 years and over **may choose** to compete in the Veteran sections. If a 55+ competitor chooses to enter any Veteran section, they **will NOT be eligible to enter any Senior sections. They may however enter Open sections.**
11. All Veteran section finalists will compete at the separate Sunday afternoon ‘Veteran Finals Showcase’ where all Veteran section prize winners, plus a Veteran Overall title, will be awarded.

Groups:

12. The group section will consist of three or more persons, vocal or instrumental. All contestants’ names must be on the entry form and may not be changed after the acceptance of entry.

13. Group sections must provide their own backing. Group contestants may use the amplifiers and drums only. Musical instruments and drumsticks must be supplied by the contestant.

14. Juniors, Intermediates, and Veterans may partner Senior contestants in the Open Group Section. To be eligible for the Senior Overall prize the group must consist of an equal or greater number of senior aged contestants. However, to be eligible for entry to Entertainer of the Year all group members must be in the same age category.

Open Old-time:

15. Songs must be pre-1965 and must be performed and played in an old-time style.

16. Contestants can be self-accompanied, use a guitarist of their choice or use the provided Old-time guitarist.

Gospel:

17. Gospel is a song that is primarily about someone's faith and their relationship with God.

New Country:

18. Songs performed in the New Country section must have been released by a commercial recording artist in the past 5 years.

19. Contestant must name the song artist and year released as part of their introduction.

Best Local Entry:

20. Trophies will be awarded to the highest achieving local Under 18 years and highest achieving local 18 years and over (taken from audition performances). The recipients must be active and financial members of the Nelson Country Music Club Inc.

Instrumentals:

21. Instrumentalists using electronic instruments e.g. keyboards must not utilize pre-programmed automated accompaniment.

22. Instrumentalists must provide their own instruments & drummers must provide their own sticks.

Original Song:

23. This section is not pre-judged; it is to be performed for the judges at the auditions (and finals if selected) either by the song writer or a nominated singer/s of their choice. Only the song will be judged, not the vocal performance.

24. By entering the Original Song section you are declaring that you have not used AI assistance in writing your song.

25. Must provide three (3) copies of lyrics with entry (the judges will be given a copy of these lyrics to have with them while you perform your song)

26. The winning song of the Original Song section will be eligible for entry to Entertainer of the Year in the song writing section only.

NZ Song:

27. All songs performed in the NZ Song section must have been composed by a New Zealander.

28. Contestants must name the composer as part of their song introduction.

Backing band, rhythm setting and chord chart rules:

29. Backing bands are available for all sections except Group and Old-Time sections.

30. You may not add to the backing band supplied (with the exception of instruments played

by competitors themselves.)

31. A rhythm setter will be supplied to convey the rhythm and tempo of the song to the backing bands. No pre-recorded music or discs allowed.

32. Each contestant is required to have **FOUR** copies of their chord charts stating key, rhythm, timing and tempo (a metronome 'bpm' timing is preferred)

Competition Rules:

33. All contestants must report to the Stage Manager 30 minutes prior to audition and remain in the venue. Chord charts are to be handed to the Stage Manager at reporting time.

34. The Senior & Veteran Overall Winner/s of the NZ Sun City Country Music Awards must stand down for the next NZ Sun City Country Music Awards.

35. Entrant's equipment is used & stored at their own risk. Neither the Nelson Country Music Club nor the Awards Committee will be held responsible for the loss or damage, theft, etc to an individual's personal property or effects.

36. Judges decision is final and binding and no correspondence will be entered into.

37. No contestants, backing band members, officials or helpers may possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs in or near the hall or backstage during auditions or finals.

38. The Awards Committee reserves the right to refuse admission to any of the functions during the weekend.

39. Any violation of the rules could result in disqualification.

40. The Committee will decide the number of finalists in each section. The Committee reserves the right to decide the number of finalists in each section, pre-judge or delete any section and recall any contestants at the discretion of the Convenor.

41. Finalists only will be refunded for finals tickets. NO other refunds.

42. All trophies competed for annually must be returned by **1st October**. Trophies and cups to be engraved at the winner's expense.