

# How to Successfully Run Your Virtual Music Festival



New Brunswick Federation of Music Festivals  
La Fédération des festivals de musique du Nouveau-Brunswick

# Overview



- ⦿ Competitors video record their performance at home, at their teacher's studio, or at another venue.
- ⦿ Competitors submit a link to the recording[s] to the festival administration for forwarding to the adjudicator.
- ⦿ Written comments from the adjudicator are sent to the competitors along with marks or placements, if applicable.
- ⦿ Students can still receive certificates and award monies, if applicable.

- ⦿ There are various options for hosting the video links and recording written and/or verbal feedback from the adjudicator.
- ⦿ The adjudicator receives access to all their videos and views them on their personal schedule, within the timeframe set by the festival. The festival does not need to schedule all performances.
- ⦿ A virtual 'live' adjudication or masterclass session could be scheduled as a *Zoom* meeting for the class participants and the adjudicator.

# Software Options



## Festival website

- ⦿ NB festivals, without their own website, can host on-line registration forms on the NBFMF website at no cost
- ⦿ Data from these forms are exportable to an Excel spreadsheet

*Music Festival Suite* is a festival management software.

- ⦿ Subscribing festivals manage their registrations, schedules, volunteers, awards, and communications with festival participants all in one location
- ⦿ Customized branding
- ⦿ Accepts video links within their system for viewing
- ⦿ Data is stored securely
- ⦿ Complies with Privacy and Anti-Spam laws

To learn more, visit <https://www.musicfestivalsuite.com/>

*Solarislive* is an event management software for the arts community, with options for competitive music festivals.

- ⦿ Subscribing festivals manage their registrations, schedules, volunteers, awards, and communications with festival participants all in one location
- ⦿ Does not accept videos
- ⦿ Automated reports of all types
- ⦿ Includes several ways to raise funds

Learn more at <https://solutions.solarislive.com/>

*WeVu* is an educational media-hosting platform that can be used for virtual music festivals.

- ⦿ Allows for asynchronous uploading of audio, video, images, and pdf files
- ⦿ Source quality audio – no compression or down-sampling
- ⦿ Does not provide a registration component
- ⦿ Adjudicators can make real-time comments throughout the video, or on scores.
- ⦿ Students can view adjudicator comments in the platform and/or export them.
- ⦿ Each adjudicator has a dedicated ‘site’ which can be organized to received videos and digital scores by class
- ⦿ Competitors upload their files to the correct class by using the supplied link

Learn more at <https://wevu.video/how-wevu-works/>

*Dropbox* is a file hosting service that offers cloud storage, file synchronization, personal cloud, and client software.

- ⦿ Allows for asynchronous uploading of files
- ⦿ Due to their size, video links will need to be placed in a spreadsheet to be uploaded to Dropbox
- ⦿ Does not provide a registration component
- ⦿ Can be organized with folders and sub-folders, each with specific access link to protect privacy

Learn more at <https://www.dropbox.com/>

Google Drive is a file storage and synchronization service that allows users to store files on their servers, synchronize files across devices, and share files.

- ⦿ Allows for asynchronous uploading of files
- ⦿ Due to their size, video links will need to be placed in a spreadsheet to be uploaded to Google Drive
- ⦿ Does not provide a registration component
- ⦿ Can be organized with folders and sub-folders with specific access links to protect privacy

Learn more at

[https://www.google.com/intl/en\\_zm/drive/](https://www.google.com/intl/en_zm/drive/)

*Zoom* provides videotelephony and online chat services through a cloud-based peer-to-peer software platform and is used for teleconferencing, telecommuting, distance education, and social relations.

- ⦿ Participants can see and hear each other, or not, depending on settings chosen
- ⦿ Suitable for hosting a group adjudication session with a class
- ⦿ Participants join by a supplied link
- ⦿ A participant can share a screen with other

Learn more at <https://zoom.us/>

# Festival Timeline



## *As soon as possible ...*

- ◎ Let your stakeholders know you are holding a virtual festival in 2021.
- ◎ Set your festival dates and registration deadline.

Suggestion: Operate your virtual festival in approximately the same time frame that you normally do. This is the time your stakeholders have in their yearly calendar for this event.

## *As soon as possible ...*

Check the FCMF website for additional detailed resources to help you in preparing documents for a virtual festival, including:

- Waiver templates
- Recording guidelines
- Naming convention template
- Adjudicator contract template
- Competitor and Teacher Letter template
- Adjudicator Instruction Letter template
- Fee calculation formula

# Decide how you want to receive scores

## ◎ Paper copies

- Students deliver a copy of each book to festival to be sent to the adjudicator, then returned and picked up
- Festival can provide copies of music for test pieces and any other books in your library to reduce the number of books to be sent

## ◎ Digital copies

- Purchased digital downloads with receipt of purchase
- Public domain digital downloads with proof of public domain status
- Scan of personally owned original copy, with cover included, saved as PDF

Suggestion: Provide a naming convention for competitors to use that includes discipline, class name and number, competitor name.

Decide if you are going to offer a location for recordings for students and/or teachers who may not have a suitable space or instrument.

- ◎ Location options include a church, community, or university venue with a quality acoustic piano
- ◎ Make arrangements with
  - > The venue for required number of days
  - > Piano tuner
  - > Videography equipment and operator
- ◎ Prepare COVID operational plan and have it approved by the venue

Decide on the registration process you are going to use and set-up well in advance.

Decide on the virtual storage format you want to use for receiving and storing the video links and digital score files.

➤ Options are outlined in previous slides

Suggestion: Get comfortable with new software or digital platforms before the rush of registration and submission deadlines.

# Registration Details



Follow your usual process for creating registration forms and receiving entries.

- ◎ Paper entry forms
- ◎ Website based entry forms
- ◎ Festival software platform such as *Solarislive*, *Music Festival Suite*, etc.

Suggestion: Include a competitor and accompanist waiver that covers sharing the videos with adjudicators, and on social media, in the registration process so you don't have to do it later.

*Note: Template is available on the NBFMF website*

Set a deadline for submission of video links and scores at least a week prior to your festival start date.

- ⦿ The date should be at least a week prior to your festival start date.
  
- ⦿ Remember to include this date in your confirmation letter to students and teachers.
  
- ⦿ Links of the videos and scores can be received by:
  - > email;
  - > through an on-line registration system; or
  - > through *WeVu* or *Music Festival Suite*

If receiving files by email, set up a dedicated email for receiving submissions as this will make it easier to track entries.

- ⦿ Decide if you want to request competitors to send their video links and scores in separate emails for each class entered, or for all classes in one email.

Prepare a document to send to teachers and students upon registration outlining:

- ⦿ Video and score submission deadline [from above]
- ⦿ Video recording rules
- ⦿ Score submission rules
- ⦿ Naming convention for files
- ⦿ Submission process for video links and scores
- ⦿ Contact information for the person available to provide technical support.

*Note: Template is available on the NBFMF website*

*After your registration is closed ....*

Email video and score submission guideline document to all participants and teachers.

Follow your usual process for:

- checking entries
- vetting repertoire
- adjudicator contracts

Suggestion: Consider adjusting adjudicator contracts to pay them per entry, rather than by the day.

*Note: Adjudicator contract template and information on determining a per entry pay scale is available on the NBFMF website.*

- ⦿ If offering a recording session[s], schedule times for at least a week in advance of your submission deadline.
- ⦿ Communicate recording schedule to participants, teachers, and accompanists.
- ⦿ Ensure files of recordings are labelled and uploaded as per guidelines.

# Processing Video and Score Submissions



If receiving video and score links by email, in your email folder set up folders for each Discipline you have entries in.

Example: Junior Piano, Senior Piano, Strings, Woodwinds.

- ⦿ Depending on your festival management software, you may not need to complete this step.
- ⦿ If your festival has a lot of entries, you may want to create a sub-folder for each grade and/or class that you have entries in.

Example: Class 101 – Grade 1 Piano - Jazz

- ⦿ Alternatively, you may want to organize the submissions by adjudicator.

In your virtual storage platform, set up the same set of folders, and sub-folders as you did for email.

- ◎ In each sub-folder, you should place:
  - > the appropriate class list
  - > the digital scores
  - > adjudication sheet files
  - > the corresponding spreadsheet with participants names and their video and digital score links

Note: If you are using *WeVu* this step is done within the platform. Visit <https://wevu.video/how-wevu-works/> to view a demonstration video.

- Create a spreadsheet, in Excel or Google Drive, for each discipline, or adjudicator, that you have entries for.
  - > It may be helpful to create a separate 'sheet' for each class within one file for the discipline or adjudicator.
  - > When completed, each spreadsheet goes to the corresponding adjudicator.

**OR**

- If you use an on-line registration system, you can export the entries to an excel spreadsheet to save you re-typing the information.

- ◎ A week before your submission deadline, send a reminder to participants and teachers of the approaching deadline.
- ◎ As submissions are received, copy the links to the appropriate class spreadsheet, then file the email in proper folder you set up previously.
  - Check your spam folder regularly for potential mis-directed emails.
- ◎ After the submission deadline, contact any registered competitors whose performance files are missing to make sure the submission was not lost in cyber space or your spam folder.

# Adjudicators



Prepare adjudication forms by classes or adjudicators as per your usual process

- ⦿ Leave the forms as Word files so adjudicators can type in their remarks and send back to you
- ⦿ Place in the appropriate class folder in your virtual storage platform [Dropbox, Google Drive]

Note: If you are using *WeVu*, you may not need adjudication sheets. Adjudicators can make comments, in real time, while watching the video. Students can log in to view, and the comments can be exported.

Visit <https://wevu.video/how-wevu-works/> to view a demonstration video

Send the adjudicator an email with the link to the appropriate virtual storage folders that now contain everything they need, or log-in information to your festival management software.

If you are sending scores to the adjudicator by courier:

- ⦿ Ensure everything is accurately labelled and clearly marked in a way that will not get dislodged during transit;
- ⦿ Purchase sufficient insurance to cover the cost of replacing the scores if lost or damaged;
- ⦿ Require a signature by the receiver; and
- ⦿ Retain a list of the scores sent, with photos, in case of loss or damage.

Communicate clearly to the adjudicators the:

- ⦿ Instructions for your marking scheme
- ⦿ Expectations for written and/or verbal comments
- ⦿ Description of your award system
- ⦿ Instructions on hosting a virtual adjudication session, if applicable
- ⦿ Instructions on how to return information

Provide the adjudicator with:

- ⦿ A copy of your local festival syllabus
- ⦿ A copy of your provincial festival syllabus
- ⦿ Provincial Music Festival recommendation forms
- ⦿ List of eligible students for awards
- ⦿ List of eligible students for recommendation to your Provincial Music Festival

Request that detailed written adjudications be returned to you within a reasonable time frame, taking into consideration the number of entries that need to be heard.

- If there are a lot of entries, consider asking the adjudicator to listen in sections and return the comments at the end of each section.

A virtual adjudication or masterclass session can be scheduled with link being sent to each class participant.

# Recognition of Competitors



Prepare certificates as per your usual process.  
Set aside.

- ⦿ If desired, request a digital signature from the adjudicators, and/or president, to include on the certificates.

Determine award placements as per your usual process.

Determine competitors recommended to advance to your provincial music festival based on adjudicator recommendations.

Distribute adjudication sheets, certificates, and award monies to competitors or teachers.

- ◎ Your process for distribution will be determined by your:
  - > Preference for digital or paper returns
  - > Geographical area to cover
  - > Size of festival
  - > Volunteer base

Announce award placements and Provincial Festival recommendations. Options include:

- > Holding a live virtual announcement session
- > Your website
- > Facebook
- > Local Paper
- > Creating a file with list and distributing to all participants and teachers

If your festival normally offers a Rose Bowl Competition, or something similar, this can be scheduled for a few days or a week after the completion of your classes.

- ◎ This event could be held virtually as well, using a similar process as the festival.

A Showcase of Talent video could be prepared with performances recommended by the adjudicators to be live streamed on your Facebook page or YouTube channel.

Suggestion: Allow a generous amount of time to prepare for the above activities as new skills will be involved and it may take longer than you expect.

Winning performances could be featured as posts on your Facebook page over several days or weeks, depending on the size of your festival.

- Ensure you have signed waiver forms before posting on social media or your website. These waiver forms should be collected during the registration process.

# Recognition of Donors



- ① Feature donors – names and logos – regularly on your Facebook page.
- ① Post a list of donors and logos on your website.
- ① Create a document with names and logos to be included in communication to participants and teachers.

# Getting Technical Help



If you are using a festival management software, use their support services as required.

If your committee does not have a technology-savvy member consider:

- ⦿ Partnering with a local community college that offers digital courses. They may have students that need practical work assignments, or someone may be available for hire.
- ⦿ Contacting local high school for students who excel in technology that may be able to help as part of a school co-op class for credit or a volunteer program.

For general assistance, contact Barbara at [info@fcmf.org](mailto:info@fcmf.org)