

Concerto Competition

The LSO occasionally holds a Concerto Competition, to allow our members and select other members of the U-M life sciences community a chance to perform a solo work with the LSO.

The next Concerto Competition date has not yet been set but will be held in late 2024 at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance's Earl V. Moore building on North Campus. Winners are chosen by our music director and panel of judges.

Anyone interested in competing in the 2024 Concerto Competition should **send an email to orchestra@umich.edu** in summer or fall 2024.

Each competition is open to any LSO member accepted after the fall auditions, and to members of the U-M Life Sciences community who are capable of performing as solo vocalists, or who play instruments not typically represented in the LSO.

Full Concerto Competition rules are below – please read them carefully before indicating interest in competing.

Past winners:

(See the dates of their performances and the pieces they played in our [list of past LSO Concerts.](#))

2022: Thor Sigurdson, cello and Andrew Custer, trombone – Both performed in the May 2023 concert.

No Concerto Competition was held in 2020 due to COVID-19

2017: Josh Jung and David Brown, M.D.

(Note: Josh performed with the LSO in 2018, and Dr. Brown performed with the LSO in 2019)

2014: Eric Dluzniewski and Naki Kripfgans

(Note: Eric performed with the LSO in 2015 and Naki performed in Spring, 2016)

2013: Neil McKay, tuba (Note: performing a Mozart piece for French horn)

2011: Adrienne Cheng, cello

2010: Cathy Twu, piano

2009: Mike Hsu, violin

2007: Trina Stoneham, violin

2006: Tugsu Armstrong, violin

2005: Giant Lin, violin and Matt Shevrin, French horn

2004: Kent Rice, violin

2002: Doug Weaver, oboe

LSO Concerto Competition Rules

Eligibility

1. Contestants must be active members of the Life Sciences Orchestra for the current season, or must be clearly affiliated with the U-M life science community as defined below. If the audition is by group of instrumentalists, all must meet the entry criteria.

In addition to orchestral instruments, contestants on voice or instruments not traditionally represented in the orchestra (for example, saxophone) are also allowed.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, pianists, and percussionists who do not own their own instruments, are not eligible.

Previous winners of the LSO Concerto Competition may not compete again, unless they compete as part of a Concertante or solo group (i.e. duo, trio, quartet).

Examples from the standard orchestral repertoire that may be used for group auditions include the Beethoven Triple Concerto, Mozart Sinfonia Concertante, or various Baroque concertos composed for multiple solo instruments, etc. Conversely, players who compete and win as part of a group are eligible to compete again in the future as a stand-alone soloist. However, a soloist may only be named formally as winner once, despite solo performances with the orchestra on more than one occasion as in the above-mentioned scenarios.

2. The definition of the life sciences community for Concerto Competition purposes is [the same as that for regular LSO auditions](#). As with LSO membership, non-LSO

members who sing or play non-orchestral instruments may audition if they are current faculty, staff, students, trainees, alumni or volunteers with a clear U-M life sciences affiliation.

However, spouses or adult children of U-M life sciences community members are only eligible if they are current members of the LSO; those who play non-orchestral instruments or sing, and therefore are not able to be current members of the LSO, are not eligible.

Note that these criteria differ from and are more restrictive than the standard for general entry into the LSO. If prospective auditionees have questions about their eligibility, they should contact the LSO executive committee at orchestra@umich.edu.

3. The musical selection chosen must be approved by the music director and the committee before the date of the competition to determine whether a work is “suitable” for the LSO. Criteria for a “suitable” piece may include, but are not limited to: technical difficulty of the orchestral parts, need for additional instruments not part of the LSO, cost of music, and duration.

The LSO executive committee will make every effort to minimize the impact of cost in this decision, and together with the music director will make the final decision as to whether an accompaniment part is suitable for the LSO.

4. Entrants may enter with a single concerto movement, an entire concerto of brief length or a work for solo instrument and orchestra that does not follow a concerto form (e.g. Debussy’s Rhapsodie Premiere for Clarinet). Single concerto movements should be substantive enough to stand alone on a concert program.

Entrants must be prepared to audition with all movements that they propose to play, though the audition judges may not ask to hear all the movements. In cases where the entrant auditions with multiple movements, the judges may decide to allow only one movement to be performed with the orchestra at the concert. Works performed by the LSO within the past five years are not eligible.

5. Winners will be expected to rehearse their piece at rehearsals designated by the music director.

6. No monetary award or compensation is offered in conjunction with entering or winning the competition, or from sales of any potential recordings made of the performance. All rights to this performance are retained by the LSO.

Competition Protocol

1. The LSO Executive Committee will create an LSO Concerto Competition Committee (judges). This committee will be composed of the current music director, the current assistant music director and at least other judge, including one member of the LSO executive committee. The committee will hear all auditionees on a single day.
2. Concerto competitors may hire their own piano accompanist for the audition if they choose, but accompanists are not required. The LSO does not provide an accompanist.
3. Competitors must notify the Concerto Competition Committee by the stated deadline of the piece of their choice, and may only audition if the choice is approved as a potentially acceptable piece for the LSO to play.

At the audition, competitors must provide 3 copies of the piece to the committee.

4. If the Concerto Competition Committee does not feel there is a suitable candidate, then none shall be selected.
5. If the committee feels there is more than one suitable candidate, the committee will select the candidate that it deems will represent the LSO in the most positive light.
6. The winner will play at the spring concert and must commit to be available for that date and for the dress rehearsal that will be announced, as well as other Sunday evening rehearsals to be agreed upon by the Music Director and winner.