



2024 Rules and Regulations

The Polaris Music Prize is a not-for-profit organization that annually honours and rewards artists who produce Canadian music albums of distinction. A select panel of music critics judge and award the Prize without regard to musical genre or commercial popularity.

All genres of music are considered for the Polaris Music Prize and no entry fee is required. Artists or their representatives do not submit to Polaris.

A Long List of 40 nominated Albums of the Year will be selected by an independent jury made up of music scrutineers from across Canada and related unceded Indigenous lands. This same jury will vote for a Short List of 10 titles that will be announced to the media in the summer of the award year. A second panel of 11 members of that jury (the “Polaris Grand Jury”) will convene around the Polaris Music Prize Gala to select the winner of the Polaris Music Prize.

1. Eligibility.

1a. Criteria.

Polaris Music Prize nominees and winners will be selected solely on artistic merit without regard to genre, sales history or professional affiliation.

1b. Album length.

An album is defined as one release of at least 20 minutes of music, or at least 5 songs.

1c. Release definition.

Qualifying releases consist of previously unreleased recordings that have been made available by any of the following methods:

- a) via free or paid music streaming services that are available in Canada.
- b) for purchase in Canada from any digital retailer or artist website.

- c) for purchase in Canada at any physical retailer.
- d) for free with the artist's consent. Promotional advances (i.e. media streams or watermarked copies) will not be considered released until they are made available to the general public.
- e) for purchase or giveaway directly from the artist at performances, appearances or on-line.

1d. Compilations.

Compilations of previously released recordings such as "greatest hits" or "best of" packages or similar are not eligible. At the discretion of the Executive Director and the Jury Foreperson, Polaris may allow compilations of previously released recordings if the curation is deemed to be of historical importance.

Multi-artist releases of newly recorded material will be considered.

Should a compilation album win, the prize money will be awarded to each Canadian artist featured on the compilation, prorated to the number of tracks by each Canadian artist who contributed to the recording.

1e. Collaboration Albums

Collaboration albums between two musical acts must be considered at least 50% Canadian to qualify for consideration. Criteria to determine Canadianness includes, but is not limited to, songwriting and production credits as well as marquee presentation and promotional positioning. Such eligibility shall be determined by the Executive Director and the Jury Foreperson. All rulings are final.

1f. Qualifying period.

To qualify, albums must have been released in full between April 1, 2023 and May 1, 2024.

1g. Canadian definition.

The artist or artists must be Canadian citizens or Canadian landed immigrants. For duo or groups, at least 50% of members must qualify as Canadian. Proof of Canadian status includes:

- a) Valid Canadian passport.
- b) Canadian citizenship papers.
- c) Canadian Birth Certificate.
- d) Landed immigrant status via a Canadian Permanent Resident Card.
- e) Secure certificate of Indian status.

2. Selection Process.

There is no submission process for artists or their representatives. An independent panel of jurors recommend and considers eligible releases. The results of their voting will produce 40 albums for the Polaris Music Prize Long List, and 10 albums for the Polaris Music Prize Short List.

2a. The jury.

The volunteer jury is selected annually and includes Canadians who regularly curate, review or program independent and major label artists, both locally and nationally. Jurors can include journalists, broadcasters, bloggers, programmers, playlist creators, academics, podcasters, DJs and other active music scrutineers who display a wide breadth and depth of knowledge of Canadian music and passion for discovering new albums.

2b. Conflict of interest.

A jury member that professionally or otherwise represents an artist, or has a personal relationship with an artist or artists, or who is a recording artist, must disclose these conflicts to Polaris. In the event that there has been a conflict of interest, they will not be allowed to submit the related artist on their list or mention the associated artists in any internal Polaris jury discussions. Lack of disclosure of a conflict of interest may result in the loss of voting privileges and lifetime exclusion from the jury.

2c. Voting.

Jurors submit a ranked list of what they consider to be the five best Canadian albums. These picks are vetted for eligibility and tabulated to form a Long List of 40 nominees. The jury then selects from this Long List to comprise the 10-title Short List.

Eleven select jurors (“The Grand Jury”) convene around the Polaris Gala to vote for the winner. The Grand Jury voting procedure consists of ranking the Short List in a series of three ranked ballots. The results of the final ballot determine the winner of the Polaris Music Prize. A tie-breaking vote will be held if there is a tie after three ballots.

3. Polaris Music Prize Winner.

The Polaris Music Prize winner will be announced at an event in the fall. The winning artist or group will receive a cash prize. Runners up from the Short List receive a cash prize of \$3,000.

4. Additional interpretations.

Any additional interpretations of the rules, including individual rulings on the eligibility of individual recordings or the status of jury members, shall be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and the Jury Foreperson. All rulings are final.