



The rules and regulations that apply to new applicants for the summer 2026 WBYO

1. All summer 2026 WBYO applicants must be between **16 and 27, including September 14, 2026.**
2. All young music professionals born/originated between 01 January 1999 and 31 December 2010 in the **non-EU Western Balkans** —Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia—and holding a high/advanced level of musical education are particularly invited to go through the application process for the WBYO Summer 2026 season.

Young musicians from other countries in the region, including Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Slovenia, as well as from the rest of the European Union, and also from other countries beyond, are also welcome to submit their applications to participate in the WBYO 2026.

3. The decision of the WBYO audition panel members in the choice of players is final.
5. All candidates must compete yearly for a place in the Orchestra, even if they have previously played there. However, musicians who have been former section leaders or were on the highly commended before the current auditions are automatically eligible to attend the orchestra project without sending video recordings. Video recordings may be requested for preparation purposes in the following steps.
6. **All candidates must apply form and the required video recording before the closing application date. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline or without the requested video recordings.**
7. Candidates may apply to audition from any Western Balkans country, if country is the candidate's country of birth, residence, or country of study/work.
8. *As part of the audition process, WBYO seeks the finest young musicians in the Western Balkans and EU interested in working at the highest level of excellence and are committed to music and social engagement.*

The mission of the Orchestra is to bring the most talented young musicians of the **Western Balkans and EU** together, uniting them under internationally renowned lecturers and conductors every time in an ensemble that transcends cultural, social, economic, religious and political boundaries, all in the common pursuit of musical excellence. The highest standards are therefore critical to the further success of the WBYO, and **the Orchestra seeks as members those who are committed to working towards such high standards.**



8. As part of its mission, WBYO is an initiative committed to its musicians' musical and cultural development and improving their employment prospects. During the application process, all applicants will be asked to explain briefly why they are interested in joining WBYO projects and what they hope to gain from the experience if they become orchestra members.

9. WBYO does not charge candidates for auditioning.

Disability Policy:

The Western Balkans Youth Orchestra welcomes applications from disabled young musicians who satisfy the usual criteria for application to audition. A disabled musician who wins a place in the orchestra will not be omitted because of that disability. The orchestra will try its utmost to ensure that a disabled member can participate as much as possible in all its activities: participation in performances and social activities.

General information:

Candidates will be asked to play a prepared piece of their choosing (e.g., a movement from a concerto, sonata with or without piano, etc.) and **ALL** selected [WBYO Summer 2026 Orchestral Extracts](#).

The application process includes the registration form and video recordings. Applicants must record a video of themselves playing the mandatory orchestral excerpts and their solo piece in **SEVERAL TAKES**.

The video cannot be from a performance or an older recording (no older than nine months from the application deadline). It is to your advantage if the video is high quality and if you play with a pianist.

The solo piece should be 5 minutes at most. It is acceptable to play only five minutes of a longer piece. Please upload no fewer than two video on YouTube. This is the only format that will be accepted. Ensure the setting is on '**unlisted**' (not 'private' or 'public').

Flautists, you are also expected to play the piccolo at your audition if you want to perform with it in the orchestra.

Oboists, it is optional to audition on the English horn, but it increases your chances if you do. As for the tours, we will need musicians who can also cover the auxiliary instruments.



Clarinetists, please note that you must bring an auxiliary instrument, but please get only one! Playing an auxiliary instrument increases your chances. We will need musicians who can also play the auxiliary instruments for the tours.

Bassoonists, you may have difficulty bringing a contrabassoon to the auditions. Please let the panel know if you play it.

Percussionists will be asked to play a selection of prepared orchestral extracts (no solo piece needed).

Woodwind Players, you don't need to prepare a solo piece for your auxiliary instrument, just the orchestral excerpts (bass clarinet, Eb clarinet, piccolo, English horn, contrabassoon, etc.).

Auditions are held project-wise to fill approximately up to 70 orchestra places.

Selected former and current WBYO members do not need the re-audition since they represented a high level of preparation, musical engagement and also commitment to the orchestra.

However, the WBYO also has a reserve list of about 150 players, which we rely on heavily, and those selected for the reserve list have a good chance of getting asked to play in the orchestra at some point during the year. The experience of auditioning for the WBYO is widely regarded as invaluable preparation for future auditions with professional orchestras.

Successful candidates will become members of the summer 2026 WBYO. They will be invited to participate in the July/September 2026 orchestra residency and concert tour (**Be embraced**) in the Western Balkans, Germany, and Belgium. They can work with expert instrumental professors and perform in several concert halls in the Western Balkans region (or open air), and Germany (Aachen, Aub, Bayreuth, Dortmund, Essen, Oberhausen) and Belgium (Brussels).

Orchestra residency typically begins with an up two-week rehearsal period (From July 28th in Shkodra, Albania), when musicians work in tutti rehearsals and sectionals with the **WBYO Tutors**, followed by a concert tour. In addition to preparing repertoire for the forthcoming tour, the rehearsal period offers opportunities for chamber music, personal and career development, and other recreational and social activities to enable musicians to make the most of working in a multinational environment.



We expect musicians who are invited to become members of the 2026 WBYO summer/autumn project.

BE EMBRACED, July 28 to September 14, 2026

Conditions for musicians

Members of the WBYO will receive a **daily allowance**, the amount of which will be announced after the completion of the selection process. **Tuition and accommodation (including breakfast)** are provided free of charge.

Travel costs to the first project location and from the final concert venue will be fully covered. Travel during the concert tour will be organized by orchestra bus.

Return travel after the final concert in Germany will be arranged as follows:

- **By flight** for participants residing outside Germany
- **By bus or rail** for participants residing in neighbouring countries

Tips for Auditions:

The key to a successful audition and WBYO membership is the thorough preparation of orchestral excerpts and scores. Make time for your extracts/part, listen to the piece if it is unfamiliar to you, and/or look at the score. You must play the extracts/orchestra scores accurately and sensitively to the context of the whole piece, paying particular attention to accurate rhythm, tempo, dynamics and tuning.



WBYO Data Protection Declaration for Auditions:

We value protecting your data. Therefore, we would like to inform you about the personal data WBYO processes in connection with our audition process and for which purpose.

1. Your Data

To effectively hold auditions for membership to the WBYO, we will collect, process and store the following personal data for each candidate:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Citizenship
- Address (permanent and residence, e.g. due to studies)
- Email Address
- Mobile Phone Number
- Name of current college/music school/music faculty and teacher
- Short motivation: why do you apply for WBYO
- Link and download a copy of your audition video

Your data will be shared with the WBYO panel members or alumni tutors and with the *WBYO Accelerando* project partners, in whole or in part.

We will save your data for the year you apply and the following year. Furthermore, your data will continue to be saved for the legally required period to ensure our compliance with the law (usually seven years, or in some cases, due to requirements of some public funding bodies, ten years).

This data will be processed for the following purposes:

- To contact you, and
- To organize the auditions as described on this website.

If you enter personal data on this website, you permit us to use the data for the above-mentioned purposes. Your data will be safely stored and not shared with third parties other than those listed above. The only exception is sharing with state authorities, should WBYO be legally obliged to do so.

We are not obligated to submit the data we request on our website. However, you cannot participate in WBYO's audition process if you do not submit the data.



By submitting your application via our online process, you agree to collect, process, store and share your data to the extent described above.

2. **Legal Basis for Data Processing**

The legal basis for processing your data is your application to audition for WBYO or is to be found in our legitimate interest according to the GDPR, which consists of achieving the goals listed in Item 1 above.

3. **Transferring Your Data to Third Parties**

To safely process your data on our website, we use programs and tools from third-party providers with whom we maintain contracts for data processing. This ensures that these third parties safeguard your data, according to the GDPR. This concerns the following suppliers:

- IT Service Provider: **ThinkYoung**
- Application Form Provider: **ThinkYoung**

4. **Your Rights in Connection with Your Data**

You have the basic right to be informed about your data, to have such data corrected, deleted, limited, its transportability ensured, and to protest against its storage. To do any of these, please contact the WBYO Accelerando project lead partner: ThinkYoung, Place du Luxembourg 6, 1050 Ixelles, Belgium, info@wbyo-accelerando.org.

If you think that the processing of your data conflicts with data protection law or that your rights regarding your data have been infringed in some other way, don't hesitate to contact us. However, you are also entitled to contact the Data Protection Authority.