



2023 OFFICIAL APPLICATION
MEMPHIS BLUES SOCIETY, BATTLE OF THE BLUES CHALLENGE, MEMPHIS, TN
MEMPHIS BLUES SOCIETY, 1910 MADISON AVE., #627 Memphis, TN 38104

ABOUT THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE

The Blues Foundation, based in Memphis, TN, hosts the annual International Blues Challenge (IBC) in January or February in the clubs on Beale Street in downtown Memphis, TN. Ahead of the annual IBC, affiliated blues societies worldwide hold local band competitions to select and send their best solo/duo musician(s) and bands to the annual IBC held in Memphis.

Winning acts of the 2023 MBS Battle of the Blues Challenge advance to represent the Memphis Blues Society at the 2024 International Blues Challenge, January 16-20, 2024.

For information about the 2024 IBC, visit the Blues Foundation website: <https://blues.org/international-blues-challenge/>

MEMPHIS BLUES SOCIETY BATTLE OF THE BLUES APPLICANT INFORMATION:

For 2023, The Memphis Blues Society begins a simplified entrant application process. For previous MBS Battle of the Blues Challenges, entrant song CDs and applications were requested to mailed (via the U.S. Postal Service) to the MBS. This is now replaced by online Website/Email communication!

The Memphis Blues Society will accept only the FIRST TEN applications (5 Band / 5 Solo/Duo acts) received that meet the requirement qualifications listed in this document. When sufficient numbers of qualified applications are received by the Memphis Blues Society, the application availability period will close.

******* ENTRY DEADLINE: NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE OFFICIAL DEADLINE DATE: MONDAY OCTOBER 10, 2023, 11:59pm. *******

ENTRANT RULES, REQUIREMENTS

1. **Each entrant is required to submit the following with their application:**
 - a. **Bio** (one paragraph in length only)
 - b. **One high-resolution promotional photo** (.jpg format).
 - c. Three MP3 files of original music. The quality of the recording and associated graphics is not a consideration in the MBS Battle of the Blues Challenge selection process.
 - d. **Online, Social Media presence:** All entrants must have an online, Social Media presence to be considered. This includes at least one of the following: website, Facebook, Instagram, BandCamp, ReverbNation and/or other social media page(s). **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Entrants must provide a list, including web addresses for each.

Email all items listed above to both email addresses listed below:

- president@memphisbluessociety.com
 - MemphisBluesSocietyMembership@gmail.com
2. **Entrant Fees, MBS Membership Requirement**
 - a. **Each entrant application requires a \$20 entry fee.**
 - The entry fee can be paid securely online at: <http://www.MemphisBluesSociety.com> homepage. Click on the "MBS Donation" button on the homepage. Be sure to note in the payment comment section "**MBS 2023 IBC FEE**".
 - b. **All Acts Must Be Members of the Memphis Blues Society.**
 - Individual entrants (including each in a duo) must be INDIVIDUAL MBS members (\$25 annual fee).
 - Band entrants must be MBS BAND members (\$50 annual fee).
 - Membership fees can be paid securely online at: <http://www.MemphisBluesSociety.com>. Click on the 'Membership' tab at the top of MBS homepage.
 3. **Acts outside a 90-mile radius from Memphis, TN** may compete. However, they must join the MBS as a BAND member (\$50 annual fee) plus pay an \$20.00 application fee.
 4. **Event Dates, Venue Information, and Requirements**
 - a. Your signature on this application is a guarantee of performance for all dates you qualify to compete. Do not sign if you have a conflict with any of the following dates:
 - **Wednesday October 18 & Thursday October 19, 2023, 6:30-11pm.** Memphis Blues Society Battle of the Blues Judging: Hernando's Hideaway, 3210 Old Hernando Rd., Memphis, TN 38116. All acts must play BOTH nights)
 - **IMPORTANT: All competition entrants must be in the venue from the start of the daily competition, through their set.**
 - **Afterwards, one member from each act MUST REMAIN IN THE VENUE for the duration of the competition each evening.**
 - **January 16-20, 2024, International Blues Challenge.** Winning MBS solo/duo and band musicians must all be available to compete in the 2023 IBC, in the clubs on Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee.
 - b. **Failure to perform due to a performance conflict** results in immediate disqualification of your act.
 - c. **Act members must remain the same in all rounds.**
 - No substitutions will be allowed without prior consent of the Memphis Blues Society board and only in the case of an emergency.
 - The Memphis Blues Society must have 24-hour notification to consider any substitution request.
 5. Entrants grant permission to the Memphis Blues Society for use of photos, audio and video tapes for promotional purposes only.
 6. All decisions of the judges are FINAL.



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BATTLE OF THE BLUES CHALLENGE APPLICATION

(TO SUMBIT: complete all required fields, sign and date. Copy, scan or photograph and e-Mail all form pages to both email addresses:

president@memphisbluessociety.com & MemphisBluesSocietyMembership@gmail.com

NAME OF SOLO/DUO OR BAND	
WEBSITE	
FACEBOOK	
SOCIAL MEDIA (OTHER)	

MEMBERS: (LIST FULL NAME. VOCALS ARE TO BE LISTED AS AN INSTRUMENT)

MEMBER 1 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 2 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 3 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 4 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 5 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 6 INSTRUMENT	
MEMBER 7 INSTRUMENT	

- Will you be bringing or do you require any additional or special equipment other than standard backline gear (Drum kit, Bass amp, 2 Guitar amps)? Please list below:

- Does your drummer require a left-handed set-up: YES or NO? (Please circle)

LIST THE SONG TITLES OF YOUR 3 ORIGINAL MP3s Submitted:

1
2
3



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BAND NAME	
CONTACT NAME	
STREET ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	
PHONE	
EMAIL ADDRESS	

I certify that our band meets the eligibility requirements outlined in the Blues Challenge Rules listed in this document. Any misrepresentation will result in disqualification.

SIGNATURE OF BAND REPRESENTATIVE:

\$20.00 Application Fee + \$50.00 Band Membership [If applicant doesn't have a current Band membership (OR if they reside outside a 90-mile radius of Memphis, TN)]
TOTAL INCLUDED: \$ _____

Please email this complete application, with all required fields filled-in, signed and dated to both email addresses:
president@memphisbluessociety.com & MemphisBluesSocietyMembership@gmail.com

CHECKLIST: DID YOU COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING?

- ☐ Email COMPLETED APPLICATION?
- ☐ E-Mail Bio?
- ☐ E-Mail Hi-Res Promo Photo (.jpeg only high resolution)?
- ☐ E-Mail list of weblinks for Website, and/or Social Media pages
- ☐ Email THREE ORIGINAL SONGS (MP3 format)?
E-Mail all above to both email addresses:
president@memphisbluessociety.com & MemphisBluesSocietyMembership@gmail.com
- ☐ Submit \$20.00 Entry FEE on MBS website, www.MemphisBluesSociety.com
- ☐ Submit SOLO/DUO MBS Membership FEE (\$25 each), OR \$50.00 BAND MEMBERSHIP Fee on MBS website, www.MemphisBluesSociety.com?

INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE #39

January 16-20, 2024

The *Blues* Foundation



INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE

For Performers and Blues Societies

Who Can Enter the IBC?

To participate in the International Blues Challenge, you must participate in and win a local challenge sponsored by a current Blues Foundation affiliated blues society. Bands and Solo/Duo musician(s) will be selected to compete. Youth musician(s) will be selected to perform during the Youth Showcase but will not compete. A challenger must never have received a Blues Music Award nomination and a band or solo/duo may not participate in the IBC in three consecutive years.

What is the Blues Music Award Restriction?

The only artists who are deemed ineligible to compete in the International Blues Challenge are artists whose names have appeared on a final Blues Music Award ballot (formerly the W.C. Handy Awards). All other musicians who have had peripheral and/or professional contact through performance with a Blues Music Award nominee, including but not limited to touring band members and studio musicians, are deemed eligible for the IBC. The exception is band members of a band nominated for Band of the Year. If you are concerned that one of your band members might make your band ineligible, we suggest you visit our Award Search or call The Blues Foundation offices before entering your local challenge.

What other restrictions should I be aware of?

Challenger may enter the IBC a maximum of 3 times, after which they are no longer eligible. They may not participate in the IBC in three consecutive years, i.e., there must be a break of at least one year after competing two years in a row. A musician may not compete in the band category and the solo/duo category in the same year. Any challenger, band, or solo/duo, that has won first place at the IBC in Memphis may not enter a challenge in that same category in the future.

Musician must first enter the challenge of their own/home blues society or the closest blues society based on distance. If they are not successful, they may enter the challenges of no more than 2 more blues societies in that year, provided those blues societies are within 250 miles (425 Km) of the home blues society. Challengers are not permitted to enter the challenge of the two distant blues societies if either is held prior to the home challenge.

Musician may be invited to participate in the challenge, but they may not be “pre-selected” and must compete in a fair, live, judged event.

How Does The Blues Foundation distinguish between Band, Solo/Duo, and Youth?

A band is any group with three or more musicians. A solo/duo has no more than two musicians. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed in either category, and vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. A Youth participant is any group in which all performing members are under the age of 21 at the time of the International Blues Challenge.

INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE #39

January 16-20, 2024

****Deadline for Local Act Registration is November 20, 2023****

OFFICIAL RULES & SCORING CRITERIA

IBC judges are Blues professionals and aficionados with a deep understanding and historical perspective of all blues forms. Any given three-judge panel will include members with varying opinions of Blues, covering the spectrum of Blues from the most traditional to soul/blues and rock/blues.

Scoring Categories and Definitions:

- **Blues Content:** The sound and feel of the music should be true to any of blues sub-categories: traditional blues, country blues, soul blues, blues rock and/or contemporary blues. Judges will be listening for inspired and original song selections or new takes on blues standards. Creative reach is encouraged.
- **Originality:** Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the recorded rendition lick by lick is discouraged, will not be looked upon favorably by the judges, and will be reflected in scoring.

Acts must indicate if their songs are their own original material (this can be done at the start of the set or before each song as appropriate) and/or identify the covers that they are playing and acknowledge the originator.

- **Vocals:** The act's vocal skills to include concepts of tone, musicality, meaning, and expression.
- **Instrumental Talent:** Ability level on all instruments featured within the act.
- **Stage Presence:** The ability to command the attention of the audience by the impressiveness of one's manner and appearance on stage. Judges will consider how an act connects with and engages the audience in the music. Proper use of microphones and amplification will be considered.

Basic Scoring Calculation:

Judges will score acts on a 10-point scale, with 10 points being the highest score received and 1 point being the lowest. The following weights will be used in calculating final scores:

- Raw scores for Blues Content will be multiplied by four
- Raw scores for Originality will be multiplied by three
- Raw scores for Talent and for Vocals will be multiplied by two
- Raw scores for Stage Presence will be multiplied by two

The maximum Total Weighted Score an act may receive is 130.

Penalty Points:

An act will be penalized one point from its Total Weighted Score for each of the following:

- Missing the online application deadline or not completing online application completely or accurately by the deadline.
- Missing act check-in or act registration on the first day of the event
- Each night the act neglects to check in with its Venue Coordinator at least 20 minutes before the first performance begins at the assigned venue.
- Excessive time loading-in before and/or loading out after a competition performance
- Failing to acknowledge that a song is a cover and/or not giving credit to its originator
- Each ten seconds that it runs overtime during a competition performance.
- Finishing 3 or more minutes before its allotted performance time expires.
- Showing up late and/or missing Finals Orientation
- Showing up late and/or not being ready to perform on time at the Finals
- Performing in any other venue in the city of Memphis during formal IBC hours and in direct conflict with Blues Foundation programmed activities

The Blues Foundation strongly suggests that after meeting with their Venue Coordinator for their required check-in each night, each act remain in their assigned venue in order to be immediately available to perform at the Venue Coordinator's direction. The Venue Coordinator will be responsible for assessing Penalty Points based on IBC rules.

Affiliates and/or Acts are prohibited from contacting any IBC venue for any reason, and any act that directly contacts a venue leading up to or during the course of the International Blues Challenge will be subject to disqualification. The Blues Foundation is your ONLY contact for this competition.

SCORING SYSTEM FOR JUDGES

Each judge will indicate his or her Raw Score, between 1 and 10, in each category and turn that information over to the Scorekeeper using the following scale:

- **1-3** – Typical of a beginning blues band
 - **4-5** – Typical of a local weekend band
 - **6-7** – Typical of an advanced local band but not yet ready to headline a major blues club
 - **8-9** – Typical of the quality of blues artists who headline major clubs
 - **10** – Typical of those who play the main stage at major festivals
2. The Scorekeeper will multiply the Raw Score in each category by the established multiplier to get each judge's Individual Weighted Score in each category for each act. 3. The Individual Weighted Scores for each category will be added together to determine each act's Total Weighted Score for each judge. 4. Any penalty points assigned will then be deducted from each judge's Total Weighted Score to obtain the act's Net Weighted Score for each judge. 5. After all acts have been judged and each act's Net Weighted Score per judge calculated, each act will be ranked by judge based on that judge's order of scores, with the act receiving the judge's highest Net Weighted Score being given a ranking of 1, and so on for that judge. This will reveal each act's Final Ranking Number for each judge. 6. The Scorekeeper then will total the Final Ranking Number from all judges for each act to determine the Gross Final Ranking. This figure is averaged (divided by the total number of judges) to Achieve the Aggregate Act Ranking. 7. For the Quarterfinals the act in each venue with the best two-day total of Aggregate Act Ranking will advance to the semi-finals.

In the case of a tie, the Scorekeeper shall calculate the sum of all Net Weighted Scores from all judges for the tied acts. The band with the higher sum of Net Weighted Scores wins.

Should you have any questions or concerns, The Blues Foundation staff is always an email or phone call away to assist you. Please do not hesitate to call on us:

Joe Whitmer, Event Producer

joe@blues.org

(901) 527-2583 ext. 11

2023, Rev1 Memphis Blues Society