

2025 Cello Section Application Guidelines

1. Competition Overview

■ Preliminary round Thursday 25 September · Friday 26 September · Saturday 27 September Yomiuri Otemachi Hall	
■ Semi-final Monday 29 September · Tuesday 30 September Yomiuri Otemachi Hall	
■ Final Thursday 2 October Suntory Hall(Main Hall)	
■ Award ceremony / Prize winner's concert Friday 3 October The venue will be announced later	

Organizer

- Minato City
- Minato City Sports, Community, Culture and Health Foundation (Kiss Port Foundation)
- The Tokyo MINATO CITY International Music Competition & Workshop Executive Committee

Sponsor

Details will be announced at a later date.

2. Organization Overview

Details will be announced at a later date.

3. Organization

The Executive Committee will establish a secretariat to plan and manage this competition, and each time it holds a competition, it will also establish a music committee and a judging committee.

The Music Committee and the Judging Committee consist of musicians from Japan and other countries with specialized knowledge. The name of the jury who will judge the Preselection should be made public.

4. Competition Flow

■ Timetable	
Friday 30 May 2025	Application deadline Upload performance data for Preselection *The names of jury members will be announced after the deadline.
Early June 2025	Preselection Evaluating the performance data of the programme
Mid-June 2025	Contestants admitted to the public rounds will be selected.
Tuesday 23 September 2025	Contestants arrive in Japan / Registration Jury arrives in Japan
Wednesday 24 September 2025	Drawing of lots Judging Committee Meeting
Thursday 25 September 2025	Preliminary round starts
Friday 26 September 2025	Preliminary round
Saturday 27 September 2025	Preliminary round Results announced
Sunday 28 September 2025	Workshop Rehearsal with piano for the Semi-final
Monday 29 September 2025	Semi-final
Tuesday 30 September 2025	Semi-final Results announced
Wednesday 1 October 2025	Orchestral rehearsal
Thursday 2 October 2025	Final
Friday 3 October 2025	Award ceremony / Prize winner's concert

5. Application Procedure

■ Eligibility

The Competition is open to people of all nationalities, who were born between 1995 and 2009.

*All applicants must be aged at least 16 and have not yet reached the age of 31 on the first day of the competition (i.e., on 25 September 2025).

Those who are to participate in the competition may not be rejected on any ideological, linguistic, political, religious, or racial grounds.

■ How to apply

All applications must be made through the online application service "Muvac". No other method will be accepted.

*Please note that Muvac requires account registration in advance (free of charge).

Details on how to apply on Muvac will be posted at a later date on the official website of the Competition. If an applicant encounters technical problems while applying online, the applicant must contact "Muvac" (in English) as soon as possible.

■ Items required for application

- Name, address, age, contact information such as email address and telephone number etc. as well as CV/résumé (created on Muvac profile page)
- Image data of face photo (color)
*The face photo should be clear enough; nothing in the background, no hat, no sunglasses, or anything else on the face. It also has to be taken after March 2025.
- Image data of passport (color)
- Video and audio data of the performance of the repertoire for Preselection (a performance video)

■ Preselection

The preselection jury appointed by the Executive Committee will select approximately 30 candidates who will be admitted to the Preliminary round.

Although Preselection is not open to the public, those who applied to participate are allowed to listen to all performances.

After the deadline, the viewing site on Muvac will be informed.

6. Notification of Approval for Participation in the Preliminary Round / Application Fee

- The notification of approval for participation and the scores of the works by Japanese composers (Preliminary round repertoire) will be sent to the candidates who pass Preselection (hereinafter referred to as the "Contestants").
- Contestants must pay an application fee (JPY 30,000) in cash at the time of registration in Tokyo.

7. Travel / Accommodation Expenses

The travelling expenses to and from Minato City to participate in the competition shall be borne by the Contestant. However, foreign Contestants (excluding those residing in Japan) will receive a travel subsidy of JPY 100,000. Contestants from Asia will receive JPY 50,000 or round-trip economy class airfare from the international airport nearest their place of residence to Tokyo, whichever is less. The amount of travel subsidy will be calculated based on the Contestant's place of birth (nationality).

(Claims from the country where Contestants study abroad will not be accepted.) Contestants of foreign nationalities residing abroad may stay in free accommodation arranged by the organizers (breakfast included). Contestants who bring their pianists must bear all costs associated with the pianist's travel and stay. Only the Contestant himself/herself may stay in the above accommodation free of charge.

Contestants who wish to have their companions stay at the same hotel must indicate this after notification of approval to participate in the Preliminary round. In this case, the accommodation expenses shall be borne by the Contestant.

Contestants must arrive at Minato City by the start of the drawing of lots on 24 September 2025, and must appear to register at the Competition Secretariat Office. Those who do not register by the deadline will forfeit their right to participate.

8. Practice

The Executive Committee will provide an official pianist for the Contestants without their own pianist, and allow each of them to have 90-minute opportunity to practice with the pianist once before Semi-final without any charge. Contestants will be given one opportunity to practice with the orchestra before the Final. The allocation of practice time with the orchestra on the day of the Final round is left to the discretion of the conductor.

9. Performance

The order of performance will be decided on the day before the Preliminary round by drawing lots.

Contestants must attend the specified place by the designated time of the day. However, if a Contestant is late for the designated time due to unavoidable circumstances, the Executive Committee may approve his/her performance with his/her request, depending on the progress of the Competition.

Although it is acceptable to look at the score during the performance, it will affect the judging except for chamber music.

The Preliminary, Semi-final, and Final rounds are open to the public.

10. Cession of Rights

Regarding all performances related to participation in the Competition and all performances at concerts arranged by the Competition as part of the prize for the first prize winner, all rights below belong to the Executive Committee, and Contestants may not have any objection in any form to the Executive Committee's use thereof, nor can the Contestant make any financial claim, regardless of reasons.

- Broadcasting on radio, television, etc.
- Making audio or video recordings, whether for broadcast or not.
- Making audio or visual recordings to produce CDs and DVDs, etc., and reproducing or selling them.
- Photographing, and reproducing, distributing, or selling those photographs.

10.1. Jury

The jury will consist of seven (subject to change) internationally renowned judges.

The jury members must inform the Judging Committee of any Contestant who has studied under them for more than three months within the past two years.

Contestants are not entitled to object or appeal to the decision of the jury.

The jury and Contestants must not have any contact from the beginning of the Preliminary round to the end of the Final. Violation of this rule will disqualify the Contestant and disqualify the jury.

10.2. Prizes

First Prize	JPY 5,000,000, Diploma and Gold medal
Second Prize	JPY 2,000,000, Diploma and Silver medal
Third Prize	JPY 1,000,000, Diploma and Bronze medal

If more than one prize winner is awarded the same rank, the total amount of cash prizes at that rank and the following rank(s) shall be divided equally.

The amount of prize money shall include taxes by Japanese tax law.

Audience Prize	JPY 300,000
Certificate of Merit	JPY 300,000

Additional prizes will be awarded separately from organizations and individuals who support the purpose of this competition.

10.3. CD Release

The Executive Committee may release a CD of the Competition's live performance.

10.4. Concert Contract

The first prize winner is guaranteed a recital in Japan until the next competition. In that case, the performance fee will be paid.

The prizewinner's first concert in Japan after winning the first prize in this competition must be a concert arranged by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will decide the invitation schedule for the concert after consulting with the prizewinner.

Furthermore, the first prize winner must promptly notify the Executive Committee if he/she plans to enter another competition within one year. In such a case, the above concert contract may be canceled.

10.5. Repertoire

At every round in this Competition, each participant is allowed to choose the order in which he or she will play the different works on his/her programme.

The works performed in the Preselection may be included again in the Preliminary and later rounds.

As for the repertoire for the Preliminary and subsequent rounds, contestants must select or indicate their programme when applying for the Preselection. Should they wish to make any changes to their pre-declared programme, they must notify us by Tuesday, 15 July, 2025 (details on how to submit changes will be announced later). No changes will be accepted after this deadline.

■ Preselection

Participants will upload their performance videos of A and B below (namely two works) to the online application service "Muvac Tokyo MINATO CITY International Music Competition & Workshop" before the deadline.

- The recording must not be older than October 2024.
- No editing is allowed within each one work of the repertoire.
- Deadline: 30 May (Friday), 2025 12:00 p.m. (JST) *before the end of the day; i.e. 23:59
- No alteration should be acceptable after the deadline.

A : any one from the following (at contestant's choice)

- J.S. Bach
Prelude and Sarabande from any one of the Suite for Solo Cello below:
- Suite for Solo Cello No.4 in E-Flat Major, BWV 1010
 - Suite for Solo Cello No.5 in C Minor, BWV 1011
 - Suite for Solo Cello No.6 in D Major, BWV 1012

B

- F. Schubert
- Arpeggione Sonata in A Minor, D.821
I. Allegro moderato (the first movement only)

■ Preliminary round (approximately 30 mins.)

Contestants will choose and perform one from each of A and B, and C; namely three works in total.

A : any one from the following (at Contestant's choice)

- J.S. Bach
Prelude and Sarabande from any one of the Suite for Solo Cello below:
- Suite for Solo Cello No.4 in E-Flat Major, BWV 1010
 - Suite for Solo Cello No.5 in C Minor, BWV 1011
 - Suite for Solo Cello No.6 in D Major, BWV 1012

*Sarabande without repeat

*The same choice as in the Preselection acceptable

B : any one composition for solo cello at Contestant's choice

a movement as an excerpt possible, but published works for solo cello only accepted

C : Japanese composer's piece (for solo cello, approximately 8 mins.)

The score will be sent to the Contestants whose participation has been approved.

■ Semi-final (within 70 mins.)

Contestants will create a recital programme (within 70 mins) with one of L.van Beethoven's cello sonatas included (at contestant's choice).

Contestants may include works for solo cello or/and those with piano accompaniment. Excerpts from larger compositions are also acceptable. The programme should consist of works in various styles so that the Contestant can sufficiently show his/her ability required for a professional cellist. However, published works can only be included.

■ Final

Contestants will choose and perform any one from A, and B respectively (with orchestra).

A

- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto No.1 in C Major, Hob.VIIb:1
- J. Haydn: Moderato (the first movement only, with cadenza)
- J. Haydn: Cello Concerto No.2 in D Major, Hob.VIIb:2
I. Allegro moderato (the first movement only, with cadenza)

*cadenzas created by Contestants themselves only accepted; either previously performed or unperformed

B

- E. Lalo: Cello Concerto in D Minor
- E. Elgar: Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op.85
- R. Schumann: Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op.129

Orchestra

Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor

Kimbo Ishii

This Application Guidelines has been prepared in accordance with "The Tokyo MINATO CITY International Music Competition Guidelines," and any issues arising in connection therewith will be resolved in accordance with the Competition Guidelines in Japanese and the laws of Japan.