2025-2026
Policies & Procedures Manual

for GMA Members

PLEASE KEEP THIS DURING THE ENTIRE BALLOTING PERIOD

Contact us at dove@gospelmusic.org.

57th ANNUAL GMA DOVE AWARDS
ELIGIBILITY, SUBMISSION & BALLOTING - POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The mission of the Gospel Music Association is to expose, promote, and celebrate the Gospel through music.

I. PURPOSE

The Dove Awards help the Gospel Music Association (GMA) accomplish its mission by publicly honoring those persons who have demonstrated excellence or significant accomplishment in the field of Christian/Gospel music.

II. SUBMITTED ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

All persons who are Professional members of the Gospel Music Association by **APRIL 16, 2026**, or are approved Dove Registered Entities, are entitled to submit entries for consideration for the GMA Dove Awards ballot.

III. VOTING ELIGIBILITY

All Professional Members of the GMA *(active as of June 18, 2026)* are entitled to vote on the GMA Dove Awards First Ballot.

All Professional Members of the GMA *(active as of July 31, 2026)* are entitled to vote on the GMA Dove Awards Second Ballot.

Professional Members are able, but not required, to vote in all categories within the limitations specified on the ballot.

IV. AWARD ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility period, for all award categories, will be 12 months beginning on the 1st day of May, 2025 and ending on the 30th day of April, 2026 prior to the presentation of the awards.

In all categories, the GMA must receive each entry from three or more of its Professional Members or one previously approved Dove Registered Entity, for that entry to move forward in the submission/balloting process.

Product must be tracked by SoundScan in the United States (*except for Artist, Producer, Musical, Choral, Video & Film Categories which do not need to be tracked by SoundScan*). Eligibility will be verified with SoundScan. The first recorded scans must fall within the eligibility period, regardless of the release date stated on the entry form or on SoundScan.

Screening judges will determine whether or not the product's content is appropriate for the GMA Dove Awards. To assist the judges in their determination, the GMA Board has authorized the following content criteria.

"For purposes of GMA Dove Award eligibility, the content of all entries will be: based upon the historically orthodox Christian faith contained in or derived from the Holy Bible; or apparently prompted and informed by a Christian world-view."

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Protocol: For a project to be considered for a Dove Award in any Category, it must have been created completely, or in majority, by a human.

Any current member requesting the GMA to consider adding a new, or retired, category must build a task force and select a key contact that will bring data to our Awards & Criteria Committee. This data will need to show proof of impact in the previous/current eligibility period and GMA membership backing with submissions/ voting. Any proposals should be submitted by January 1st.

V. SUBMISSION/BALLOTING PROCESS

The process for the GMA Dove Awards consists of an online submission form, a review process of submitted product, and two separate online ballots. The content of each will be as follows:

A. Online Submission Form – Will contain appropriate instructions and provisions for submitting entries in specified GMA Dove Award categories. The GMA reserves the right:

a. To disallow entry forms that have insufficient information to verify the entry eligibility and forms for which no contact is readily available. Members submitting entries will not be notified if their entry or entries are ruled ineligible.
b. To place any entry into the category it deems appropriate and to rule on the eligibility of any product.
c. To withdraw any category in any year if the GMA determines there is an insufficient number of eligible entries in that category (less than 10) and, at the GMA's discretion, to place the affected entries in another category.

B. First Ballot – Will list, in alphabetical order, the candidates for nomination:

a. Eligible entries in Division I - IV (*excluding categories: Packaging and Music Video*), receiving three or more Professional GMA member entries or one Dove Registered Entity entry all of which have been confirmed eligible by the Dove Awards Screening Committee.
b. Song of the Year candidates will be derived mathematically using data provided by CCLI, Billboard, Luminate and SoundScan.
c. Songwriter of the Year candidates will be derived mathematically using data provided by CCLI, Billboard, Luminate and SoundScan.
d. Producer candidates will be derived by a Craft committee and using data provided by Billboard.
e. Nominees for Packaging, and Music Video of the Year are derived by a Craft committee and entries for this category will not appear on the First Ballot.

C. Nominee Totals – The number of nominees in a category will be determined by the total amount of entries that make it onto the first ballot in that category (with the exception of Song of the Year which will list 10).The scale is as follows:

a. 15 or more entries = *5 nominees*
b. 10-14 entries = *3 nominees*
c. Less than 10 entries = *May be withdrawn or combined with nearest category*

*Any current category not meeting a minimum of 15 eligible submissions will be reviewed by A&C Committee at its January meeting.

D. **Second Ballot** – Will list, in alphabetical order, the Nominees:
   a. The top entries in each category which received the most votes in that category on the first ballot.

VI. VOTING/TABULATION OF BALLOTS

The GMA utilizes the "Borda Count" to score Dove Awards entries on the first and second ballots. Eligible voting members will rank three (3) entries from 1 to 3, with a rank of 1 being the most favorable. The first choice of each voter receives the highest number of points. Each subsequent choice then gets one less point than the preceding choice. The points from each voter are added together to determine the top candidates from each category. The Dove Awards balloting software tabulates the final score based on this methodology.

In the event of a tie vote on the first ballot, the number of finalists for that category will be increased in order to include all entries which are tied. In the event of a tie vote on the Second Ballot, both/all recipients receiving the highest number of votes will be awarded a Dove Award.

The number of votes received by any particular nominee will not be disclosed to anyone unless so directed by resolution adopted by a majority of the Board of Directors of GMA.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF RECIPIENTS

Prior to the announcement of the recipient(s) at the annual GMA Dove Awards presentation, or such other events as may be selected by the Gospel Music Association, the name of the recipient(s) of the Dove Award in any category will be disclosed to persons who, in the president's judgment, require such information in connection with the production and/or broadcast of the GMA Dove Awards presentation.

WHO GETS THE DOVE AWARD?

SONG of the YEAR
DIVISION I / Category 1
Dove Awards are presented to the songwriter(s) and publisher(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

ARTIST/NON-ARTIST SONGWRITER of the YEAR
DIVISION I / Categories 2-3
Dove Awards are presented to the songwriter.
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

ARTIST of the YEAR
DIVISION I / Category 4
Dove Awards are presented to the artist and record label.
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

NEW ARTIST of the YEAR
DIVISION I / Category 5
Dove Awards are presented to the artist and record label.
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

PRODUCER of the YEAR
DIVISION I / Category 6
Dove Awards are presented to the producer or production team.
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

RECORDED SONG of the YEAR
DIVISION II / Categories 7–21
Dove Awards are presented to the artist, featured artist(s) and songwriter(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

ALBUM of the YEAR
DIVISION III / Categories 22-32
Dove Awards are presented to the artist (if prominent on the album) and the producer(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for the artist and the producers with 51%+ participation.

MUSICAL/CHORAL COLLECTION of the YEAR
DIVISION IV / Category 33
Dove Awards are presented to the creator(s), arranger(s), and orchestrator(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above with 51%+ participation.

RECORDED MUSIC PACKAGING of the YEAR
DIVISION IV / Category 34
Dove Awards are presented to the art director(s), graphic artist(s), illustrator(s), and photographer(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

SHORT FORM/LONG FORM MUSIC VIDEO of the YEAR
DIVISION IV / Categories 35-37
Dove Awards are presented to the artist, featured artist(s), director(s), and producer(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

FEATURE FILM/ TELEVISION SERIES of the YEAR
DIVISION IV / Categories 38-39
Dove Awards are presented to the director(s) and producer(s).
Complimentary Trophies are for all noted above.

57th Annual GMA Dove Awards Categories

Category # / Category

Division I

1. Song of the Year
2. Songwriter of the Year (Artist)
3. Songwriter of the Year (Non-Artist)
4. Artist of the Year
5. New Artist of the Year
6. Producer of the Year

Division II

7. Rap/Hip Hop Recorded Song of the Year
8. Rock/Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year
9. Pop/Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year
10. Inspirational Recorded Song of the Year
11. Southern Gospel Recorded Song of the Year
12. Country/Roots Recorded Song of the Year
13. Bluegrass Recorded Song of the Year
14. Contemporary Gospel Recorded Song of the Year
15. Traditional Gospel Recorded Song of the Year
16. Gospel Worship Recorded Song of the Year
17. Spanish Language Recorded Song of the Year
18. Spanish Language Worship Recorded Song of the Year
19. Worship Recorded Song of the Year
20. Children's Recorded Song of the Year
21. Christmas Recorded Song of the Year

Division III

22. Rap/Hip Hop Album of the Year
23. Rock/Contemporary Album of the Year
24. Pop/Contemporary Album of the Year
25. Southern Gospel Album of the Year
26. Bluegrass/Country/Roots Album of the Year
27. Contemporary Gospel Album of the Year
28. Traditional Gospel Album of the Year
29. Gospel Worship Album of the Year
30. Spanish Language Album of the Year
31. Worship Album of the Year
32. Christmas/Special Event Album of the Year

Division IV

33. Musical/Choral Collection of the Year
34. Recorded Music Packaging of the Year
35. Short Form Music Video of the Year (Concept)
36. Short Form Music Video of the Year (Performance)
37. Long Form Music Video of the Year
38. Feature Film of the Year
39. Television Series of the Year

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