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2021 MUSICAL THEATER SONGWRITING CHALLENGE OPENS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Washington, DC—Calling all high school songwriters! Beginning today, April 6, 2021, the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Theatre Wing are accepting submissions to the [2021 Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge](#). This national contest is for high school students with a passion for writing songs that could be part of a musical theater production and the wide range of musical styles represented in contemporary musicals. The goal of the program is to engage professionals in the musical theater field in nurturing the next generation of songwriters.

New this year, iHeartRadio Broadway joins the program as a partner and will provide promotional support of the final recorded songs including the songs' public debut in a special matinee radio and online broadcast. iHeartRadio Broadway is among Songwriting Challenge's returning partners that are Disney Theatrical Productions, Concord Theatricals, and the National Music Publishers' Association.

The Songwriting Challenge provides selected student winners (an individual or duo) with their own coaching team consisting of a mentor and music director (both musical theater professionals) to hone an original song into a Broadway-ready composition and then have that song recorded by Broadway musicians and vocalists in New York City. The final songs are combined into an album, are featured in the iHeartRadio Broadway matinee, distributed on streaming music platforms, and compiled into a songbook created by Concord Theatricals.

The application is simple and can be completed online. The deadline is May 17, 2021 at midnight ET.

Details for the 2021 Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge are:

- After the submission deadline of May 17, 2021, the Arts Endowment and the Wing will convene panels to review all submissions. Each panel consists of experienced songwriters, musicians, and industry professionals who select winners without knowing any identifying information about the applicant. **Winners will be announced at the end of July.**
- Beginning in August, the winners work with their coaches remotely using video conferencing software to delve deeply into the purpose, tone, style, composition, and lyrics of each song. After this coaching period, the song is transcribed for an ensemble and the winner has the opportunity to select the instruments and voices that make up their ensemble.
- The recording sessions take place in the late fall. At this time, we don't know how the sessions will be structured in terms of virtual and in-person activity.

To meet the 2020 class, learn about them, and listen to their songs, [go here](#). To learn more and to apply, go to arts.gov/songwriting. To join the conversation on Twitter use #IWriteMusicals.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their

creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the Arts Endowment supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) to learn more about National Endowment for the Arts.

About the American Theatre Wing

The American Theatre Wing is a not-for-profit organization, founded on the eve of America's entry into WWI by 7 suffragists and theatre makers who came together to support the nation by harnessing the power of theatre. More than a century later, ATW's vital work continues to be driven by the fundamental belief that theatre is essential to our economic, educational, and social and emotional well-being as a society.

Through a powerful suite of programs that address all aspects of the national theatre ecology, ATW encourages the discovery of theatre by people of all ages, nurtures talent on stage and off, creates pathways for success for students and young professionals, and encourages the development of the art form itself by recognizing and supporting innovative and excellent work with awards and grants. Building a just, equitable and inclusive American theatre is a guiding principle of all of ATW's work and programs. ATW is the founder and co-presenter (with The Broadway League) of the Tony Awards®, and the home to OBIE Awards. [AmericanTheatreWing.org](https://www.AmericanTheatreWing.org)"