

PABLO CASALS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

FOR YOUNG CELLISTS

2026

Conditions



Pau Casals
FOUNDATION

 **150**
Pau Casals



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FOR YOUNG CELLISTS

2026

The Pau Casals Foundation, founded by Pablo and Marta Casals in 1972, created the Pablo Casals Award in 1984. Over the past 40 years, more than fifty young cellists have received the support of the Foundation. The 2026 edition of the Pablo Casals International Award is open to aspirants from all over the world.

The Award aims to help young cellists in their education in order to perfect their technique and develop their artistry. Three prizes of 18,000 euros, 12,000 euros and 6,000 euros are offered to the winners. In addition, the Pau Casals Foundation also offers promotion and advice to the winners of the Award, who join the network of ambassadors of Casals' musical and human legacy.

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I. Introduction

1.1. Purpose / Aims

The Pablo Casals International Award aims to help young cellists in their education to perfect their technique and develop their artistry.

The aim of the Award is also to establish an open, ongoing relationship with young cellists based on Casals' musical and human ideals.

The Award comprises not only an economic endowment, but also an offer by the Foundation to accompany and advise the winners in the preparation of their future career.

The official communication, interaction and development of the competition call and the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists 2026 will be available in three languages: Catalan, Spanish and English.

The Pau Casals Foundation, founded by Pablo and Marta Casals in 1972, created the Pablo Casals Award in 1984. Since 2020, the call for the Award is open to young cellists from all over the world.

A great number of cellists have been able to take part in the competition throughout the history of the Award and over fifty have received the support of the Pau Casals Foundation.

The winners of the last two editions have been:

2022: **Luka Coetzee** (First Prize) / **Amy Goto** and **Alejandro Gómez Pareja** (ex aequo Aena Special Prize)

2024: **Yo Kitamura** and **Arne Zeller** (ex aequo First Prize) / **Gabriel Guignier** and **Luís Dias Canali** (ex aequo Aena Special Prize) / **Ruoxi Jing** (Third Prize)

1.2. Competition calendar

Deadline for registration and submission of documents (online only, section 2):
7th May 2026 until 23.59 h (CET)

Notification to all applicants of the resolution of the qualification jury.
Maximum of six (6) applicants will be selected for the final audition.
From 1st July 2026

Final audition and jury verdict of the Pablo Casals International Award:
21st November 2026

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1.3. Final audition

The final audition will take place at the **Pau Casals Municipal School of Music in El Vendrell** (Passatge del Tívoli, 3-7, El Vendrell, Tarragona, Spain, 43700) on **Saturday 21st November 2026**. The Pau Casals Foundation will notify the schedule of the event in advance.

It is recommended that the finalists arrive the day before the event in El Vendrell, since the final auditions will begin early in the morning.

Information about the **location of the event**.

2. Registration and requirements

2.1. Eligibility of candidates

Cellists who meet the following requirements may apply for the Award:

- All cellists of any nationality born after **31st December 2004**.
- The winners and finalists of a previous edition cannot apply to the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists again.

2.2. Documentation and requirements

Personal data

- Copy of passport (or ID card for citizens of the European Union).
- Personal and contact details: to be filled in the registration form.

Educational data

- Current study center and teacher.
- Educational project for the near future (from September 2026).

Documentation

- Summarised professional CV with photograph, containing information about the contestant's musical education and his/her most important performances (maximum 1 page).

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- A letter of application from the contestant stating his/her motivation for launching a musical career and the reasons why he/she applies for the Pablo Casals International Award (maximum 1 page).
- Possible additional documentation: signed reports by teachers or other musicians, concert programs and reviews (maximum 4 pages).
- Link to two (2) videos, whose contents and technical requirements are explained further down.
- Two photographs in .jpg or .png format (ideally one horizontal and one vertical).

The applicants must submit all documentation (except for the two photographs) compiled into a single digital file (PDF). This file has to be uploaded to the designated section within the registration form, which can be found in the following link:

<https://www.paucasals.org/en/pablo-casals-international-award>

The title of the digital file (PDF) must be as follows:

First name(s) and surname(s) of candidate

Example: Juan González Pérez

2.3. Videos

- The applicants must send two video recordings of two works for cello solo. A Bach *Suite* and a modern work to be chosen among the list below.
- The total duration of the two video recordings must be 20 minutes minimum and 30 minutes maximum. **The shorter of the two recordings must not be under 8 minutes**, which means that the Ligeti *Sonata* and the Dutilleux *Strophes sur le nom de Sacher* have to be complete. For the other works, the applicants can freely choose the movements they perform.
- The videos must be recorded from the front with only one camera shot and the contestant's hands and face must remain visible.
- The two works can be recorded on different days and place, but no cut or editing is permitted.

Group 1 (Video 1)

J.S. Bach

Suites No. 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6

Group 2 (Video 2)

Z. Kodály

Sonata in B Op. 8



Luis Dias Canali, winner of the AENA ex aequo Special Award of the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists 2024

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G. Cassadó

Suite

B. Britten

Suite No. 1, Op. 72

Suite No. 2, Op. 80

Suite No. 3, Op. 87

G. Ligeti

Sonata

H. Dutilleux

Strophes sur le nom de Sacher

Technical requirements for the videos

The videos must be available on the YouTube or Vimeo platforms with their respective private links. The titles of the videos should be in the following format:

First name(s) and surname(s) of applicant – Pablo Casals International Award 2026 – Group – Piece

Example: Juan González Pérez – Pablo Casals International Award 2026 – Group 1 – J.S. Bach, Suite No. 2.

- The information section of each video will include the date and place of the video recording.
- The videos cannot be subject to any restrictions. The Pau Casals Foundation will likely use some of them for the communication of the Award.
- Sound and image clarity are important. Candidates are advised to record their videos with the best quality they can.
- Candidates are recommended to upload videos within 48 hours of the closing date of the competition call to avoid any last-minute technical problems.
- Applicants who are unable to upload their videos because of restrictions or local censorship of the YouTube or Vimeo platform may submit them through other similar platforms. They also can send the videos through WeTransfer or SwissTransfer. In that case, they should inform the Foundation at the following email address: award@paukasals.org

The presentation of all documentation, videos and corresponding registration payment (see section 2.3) must be made **before 7th May 2026 at 23.59h (CET)**. Registrations completed after the deadline will not be accepted.

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If applicants require additional information, they are welcome to reach out to the organization for further assistance: award@paucasals.org / +34 93 319 20 21.

2.4. Payment of registration fee

The registration fee is **50 euros** and it is not refundable.

The payment can be made by credit card or a bank transfer to the following bank account number and with the following description:

Description: Surname(s) and First name(s) – Number of ID / Passport of contestant

Example: González Pérez Juan – 47847841G

Bank account: 2100 4187 76 22 0001 5767

IBAN: ES56 2100 4187 7622 0001 5767

BIC / SWIFT code: CAIXESBBXXX

Name of account holder: Fundació Pau Casals

Bank details:

CaixaBank

Carrer de Sant Ramon de Penyafort, 36

43880 Coma-ruga (El Vendrell)

Catalonia, Spain

2.5. Examination and eligibility of applications

The candidates will receive a confirmation email notifying that their application has been received.

The Foundation appoints two juries.

The first jury will select up to six (6) finalists from the videos submitted in the call for applications.

The second jury will attend the final auditions and choose the winners of the three awards. Its members will make their opinion also from the selection videos of the finalists and the application file (CV, projects, motivation letter, recommendations).

The decisions of both juries will be final.

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2.6. Acceptance and notification

The candidates registered for the Award will receive an email notification from **1st July 2026** confirming or denying their acceptance as a finalist for the Award.

Those who have been selected and for some reason cannot participate in the final audition of the Award must notify the Pau Casals Foundation as soon as possible.

3. Rules for the final audition

3.1. Travel and expenses

Internal transport

The finalists will organize their own travels to Barcelona, where they will arrive the day before the final audition. The Pau Casals Foundation will reimburse 50% of the travel cost to Barcelona for the finalists and their cellos (economy class).

The Pau Casals Foundation will organize and cover the cost of transportation from Barcelona to El Vendrell (Tarragona, Spain), where the Award final audition will take place.

Accommodation and organization of the first evening

The Pau Casals Foundation will provide all the finalists with one night accommodation in a hotel in El Vendrell and will invite them to a private visit of the **Pau Casals Museum**, followed by a welcome dinner.

The order of performances will be drawn by lot the day before the final audition.

Living expenses

The Foundation will provide a catering service at the Pau Casals Municipal School of Music on the day of the final audition and will arrange the transfer back to the center of Barcelona or to the corresponding airport or railway station.

Finalists can travel directly to El Vendrell by their own and stay in a different place. In this case, they must inform the organization at least two weeks before the final audition and the Pau Casals Foundation will not assume the accommodation expenses.



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Insurance and accidents

The finalists must ensure that they are covered by their own insurance during their stay in Spanish territory, for themselves as well as their instruments.

The Foundation is not responsible for the consequences of any accidents, illnesses or other impediments that may arise for the finalists during their stay.

Other

If for any reason a finalist needs a letter of invitation for a visa giving access to Spanish territory, they must notify the Foundation in advance. The Foundation does not cover the costs of this procedure.

The Foundation will not be responsible for any of the aforementioned expenses with regard to accompanying persons of the finalists.

3.2. Accompanying pianists

The finalists will have a professional accompanist proposed by the Foundation for the final audition. If a finalist prefers to have the accompaniment of another pianist, they must notify the Pau Casals Foundation at least one month before the audition and assume all corresponding costs.

The organisation will make available to the contestants a studio with a piano for a 30-minute rehearsal on the day of the final audition. Each finalist will also have an individual practice room for warming up and practicing

3.3. Underage

Finalists who are underage on **21st November 2026** must have the explicit consent of their legal guardian(s) to participate in the Award and be accompanied by them or their representative during the final audition.

No underage finalists will be accepted without the fulfilment of these conditions.

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4. Jury and final audition

4.1. Jury

The juries of the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists 2024:

Jury members for the selection of the finalists:

The cellists **Peter Thiemann**, **Erica Wise**, **Victor Pau Codina** and **Santi Barguñó**, Music Advisor of the Pau Casals Foundation.

Jury members for the final audition:

The cellists **Arnau Tomàs**, **Mikayel Hakhnazaryan**, **Julia Hagen**, **Nadège Rochat** and **Santi Barguñó**, Music Advisor of the Pau Casals Foundation, also acting as **jury secretary**.

4.2. Obligations of the jury

Members of the jury who have a close relationship with any candidate or finalist, or who are their teachers, will abstain from judging their performance.

There will not be any prior contact between the finalists and the jury during the course of the Award.

5. Final audition

Repertoire

The finalists must perform two works in front of the jury in a public audition:

First

Bach Cello Suite

Three movements (Prelude, Sarabande and Gigue) from *Suites 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6*. The *Suite* chosen for the final audition must be different from the one recorded in the video for the selection.

Second

Concert

1. **L. Boccherini**: Cello Concerto in B-flat major, G.482
2. **J. Haydn**: Concerto No. 2 in D major Hob.VIIb:2 (1st movement)



Gabriel Guignier, winner of the AENA ex aequo Special Award of the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists 2024

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3. **C. Saint-Saëns:** Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33 (complete)
4. **R. Schumann:** Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129 (1st movement)
5. **P.I. Tchaikovsky:** Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33 (complete)

The entire repertoire above must be performed from memory.

Finalists must provide advance notification of the repertoire they will perform at the final audition. The deadline to communicate the repertoire will be **21st October 2026**, and no changes will be accepted after this date.

Sheet music

The finalists have to bring the sheet music (with the accompaniment part) of the concerting piece they have chosen.

Description of final audition day

- The finalists will be accompanied to the Pau Casals Municipal School of Music of El Vendrell at a time agreed with the organization, at least one hour before their scheduled performance.
- Finalists who do not appear at the final audition at the agreed time will not be able to participate in the audition and lose their condition as finalists.
- The finalists should remain in the vicinity of the Pau Casals Municipal School of Music until the end of the audition and subsequent deliberation by the jury.
- After the announcement of the results, the finalists will be invited to a free talk with the members of the jury, ask questions or seek advice.

6. Obligations of the winners

The winners will sign an agreement with the Pau Casals Foundation, specifying the obligations of both parties.

The winners will have to state in their CVs, biographies, and programs that they have received the First Prize, Aena Special Prize (Second Prize) or Third Prize of the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists from the time of the award and for a minimum of five years thereafter.

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7. Prices and promotion

All finalists will receive an honorary distinction accrediting their participation in the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists 2026.

The prizes will be distributed among the winners and their total amount is 36,000 euros:

First Prize

18,000 euros

Aena Special Prize (Second Prize)

12,000 euros

Third Prize

6,000 euros

In addition to their financial prize, the winners will have the opportunity to participate in concerts and artistic promotion activities organised by the Pau Casals Foundation during the two years following the awarding of the prizes.

The winners undertake to participate in a maximum of four (4) concerts or promotional activities. Participation in these events will not be subject to any financial remuneration, but the accommodation and travel expenses will be covered by the Pau Casals Foundation.

Each of the winners and finalists will receive a diploma from the Pau Casals Foundation.

The winners and finalists may benefit from advice and support from the Pau Casals Foundation all over the time of their education.

8. Administration and organisation

The Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists is organised by the team of the Pau Casals Foundation.

The team of the Foundation will provide logistic support and any other assistance to the candidates, jury and audience attending the final audition.

It will also be responsible for guaranteeing and supervising the rules set by the Award and may make any necessary or convenient decisions in order to correctly run the Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists.



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9. Legality and data processing

All the details provided by the candidates in the application form will be for the exclusive use of the Pau Casals Foundation.

Individuals or entities with access to this data include:

- Jury
- Press
- Legal representative
- Pau Casals Foundation team

By accepting their participation in the final audition, the finalists are also agreeing to the recording of videos, photos, and possibly interviews. All this material will be used for the promotion of the Award and the finalists.

The Pau Casals Foundation will record the auditions of all finalists and broadcast them live via streaming on platforms deemed suitable for the promotion of the Pablo Casals International Award.

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10. Contact

Pablo Casals International Award for Young Cellists

Tel. +(34) 933 192 021

award@paucasals.org

<https://www.paucasals.org/en/pablo-casals-international-award>

Pau Casals Foundation

Office in Barcelona

Casa del Gremi de Velers

C/ Sant Pere Més Alt, 1, 4t, 2a

08003 Barcelona

Tel. +(34) 933 192 021

fundacio@paucasals.org

www.paucasals.org

Pau Casals Museum

Avinguda Palfuriana, 67

Platja de San Salvador

43880 El Vendrell

Tel. +(34) 977 684 276

museu@paucasals.org

www.paucasals.org

Location of final audition:

Pau Casals Municipal School of Music

Passatge del Tívoli, 3–7

43700 El Vendrell – Tarragona

Tel. +(34) 977 66 33 06

museu@paucasals.org

www.paucasals.org

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FOUNDATION

Pau Casals Museum

Avinguda Palfuriana, 67
Platja de Sant Salvador
43880 El Vendrell

Pau Casals Foundation

Casa del Gremi de Velers
C/ Sant Pere Més Alt, 1, 4t, 2a
08003 Barcelona

www.paucasals.org     @paucasals_fund

T +(34) 93 319 20 21 / fundacio@paucasals.org

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