

# **IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame® and Awards Standard Operating Procedures**

## **Background**

After the International Polka Association (IPA) was chartered in 1968, the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame® and Awards were established to recognize deserving polka personalities whose efforts had national impact and contributed to the organization's goal of preserving and advancing polka music. The processes that govern the execution of these efforts have evolved over the years to improve efficiencies and embrace technologies.

## **Objective**

The goal is to ensure an ongoing open, objective, efficient, and accurate administration of the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards processes. This is accomplished by entrusting the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards Committee with the responsibility of administering these processes according to established policies. The committee serves as the liaison between the Executive Board and the Board of Trustees to ensure all efforts are in keeping with the organization's overall mission. It also endeavors to leverage current technologies such as tele-conferencing, videoconferencing, electronic communications, Internet services and applications, etc., to create ongoing management and process efficiencies.

## **Oversight Structure**

- IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards Committee

For many years, a chairman, appointed by the IPA president, managed all the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards business and provided leadership to the Board of Trustees. In the fall of 2014, a Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards Committee (hence forth "committee") was established by the IPA President, with authority granted by Article I, Section 2. of the IPA's bylaws, to assume these duties and make ongoing improvements to the processes. The committee comprised three members: the IPA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, one IPA Director, and one IPA Trustee. The director and trustee were appointed by the president with the concurrence of the Executive Board. It was understood that the members of the committee would serve at least three-year terms and could be replaced over time as a result of completions of terms, future elections, new appointments, resignations, etc.

In the fall of 2020, the IPA President, with the concurrence of the Executive Board, chose to expand the committee to five members. This was done in order to create better representation from the diverse polka music industry at large, leverage additional experience and best practices, foster greater collaboration, better manage the workload, and to increase accuracy, transparency, and timely communication in all efforts. The new committee comprises five IPA Polka Hall of Fame inductees, one of whom must be a current trustee. Executive Board officers and directors no longer serve on the committee. One of the committee members serves as the group facilitator and liaison between the committee and the Executive Board. This person ensures all committee efforts are in keeping with established standard operating procedures and tasks are accomplished

timely. He/she is responsible to regularly update the Executive Board regarding the status of all IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards activities and to document process enhancements. Another committee member, who must be a trustee, serves as the liaison between the committee and the Board of Trustees. He/she is tasked to engage fellow trustees (via meetings, telecons, email messaging, etc.) to ensure compliance with their position requirements, review IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame nominee biographies to assess their eligibility for placement on the ballot, and select the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame Pioneer inductees. Another committee member manages the annual IPA Polka Music Awards and oversees the polka artist/band registration and recording submission process, works with the IPA web specialist to post musical tracks and information to be referenced by electors when voting, and communicates instructions and deadlines via all available media channels. Any of these responsibilities may be shared with other committee members as needed to ensure the timely completion of all tasks.

- Trustees and Electors

Currently, there are 13 IPA Trustees, each of whom also perform as an elector. Each trustee oversees 14 other electors creating an Academy of Electors of 195 regular members plus any emeritus voters. Retiring trustees in good standing may be granted Trustee Emeritus status by the committee in order to maintain their voting privileges. Each trustee represents a geographic area (as described below), with the exception of one At-Large Trustee who oversees electors chosen from anywhere across the country.

Trustee Area Name	States/Countries Represented
At-Large	N/A (manages electors chosen nationwide)
Northern	AK, Canada, Western NY (to Syracuse)
Northeastern	ME, NH, VT, MA, RI
Long Island Sound	CT, Long Island NY
New York/Metro	Eastern NY, Eastern PA, NJ
Penn/Ohio	Western PA (to Scranton), OH, WV
Southeastern	MD, DE, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL
Midwest (East)	MI, IN, KY
Midwest (Central)	IL, MO
Midwest (North)	MN, WI
Southern	NM, TX, OK, AR, LA, MS, TN, AL, México
Northwestern	MT, ND, SD, WY, NE CO, KS, IA
Pacific	WA, OR, ID, CA, NV, UT, AZ, HI

The IPA President appoints each IPA trustee to serve a six-year term. Electors are appointed by trustees for three-year terms. Trustees in good standing may serve additional terms with the approval of the IPA President. Similarly, electors in good standing may serve additional terms with the approval of their trustee. A designated committee member maintains the accuracy of the master list of electors. Beginning on November 1, 2014, all trustees and electors are required to communicate via email and access the Internet in order to perform their duties. The primary duty of all electors is to participate in the annual IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards election process. Failure to do so may result in the termination of their service. All committee members, trustees, and electors ultimately serve at the pleasure of the IPA President.

## **IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame®**

### Nomination Process

The Academy of Electors votes each year to determine the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame inductees in the Living and Deceased categories. Hall of Fame nominees are nominated for consideration by the submission of their biographies for review by the Board of Trustees. Nominations can be made by anyone or the nominee himself/herself. The biographies should address three key areas:

#### 1.) Experience

Eligible nominees must have 25 years or more of dedicated professional experience in the polka industry. This should include service with bands, media shows, organizations, festivals, or similar entities.

#### 2.) Awards, Accomplishments, Achievements

Eligible nominees must have received recognition in the polka music industry regionally or nationally. Their significant accomplishments should include, national awards, major media projects (recordings, TV, radio, Internet, motion pictures, videos, etc.), high-profile events, or and any other successful polka-related endeavors.

#### 3.) Contributions toward Preserving and Advancing the Polka Music Industry

In keeping with the mission of the IPA, eligible nominees must have contributed to the preservation and advancement of polka music without personal financial gain. This should include any polka organization membership or support, official service on polka music boards/committees, polka promotional efforts, cultural or charitable activities, or any other altruistic or volunteer work that resulted in the enhancement of polka music's image, the broadening of its audience, or its greater good.

References with contact information must also be provided.

### How To Nominate

As of November 1, 2020, new and updated biographies must be submitted electronically via the IPA website form at <https://www.ipapolkas.com/application-hof/> by December 31<sup>st</sup> of a given year for consideration in the next election period. If a potential Hall of Fame nominee has made it known to an IPA official that he/she does not want to be considered for this recognition and someone else submits their nomination, the nominee's biography will be held in abeyance in the event he/she reconsiders. The identities of nominators and nominees will not be publicly disclosed to honor their privacy.

### Review and Selection of Candidates

The designated trustee liaison committee member forwards the biographies to the Board of Trustees who review the submissions to determine the nominees' eligibility based on the three criterion for inclusion on the Hall of Fame ballot. If the majority opinion of the trustees regarding the eligibility of one or more of the nominees results in a tie, the non-trustee members of the committee will add their votes to the tally. If a tie persists, the IPA President will vote to break the deadlock. The biographies of qualified candidates are posted on the electors' section of the IPA website to be referenced by electors as they participate in the election process. The designated trustee liaison committee member

informs the nomination submitters whether or not the nominees have met the requirements for placement on the ballot. Originally, electors would mail their completed hard copy IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame and Awards ballots to a designated independent judge for tabulation. Beginning with the 2021 election period, a third-party electronic balloting service is contracted replacing the paper balloting process. After the election results are tabulated, the committee informs the IPA President of the results and designated members contact the candidates chosen for induction. Information on how the other candidates on the ballot fared in the election will not be publicly disclosed to honor their privacy.

### Pioneer Category

After the initial Hall of Fame voting has been completed, the designated trustee liaison committee member facilitates the Board of Trustees in jointly selecting the annual Pioneer Hall of Fame inductee. The current list of living qualified Hall of Fame candidates on the ballot is referenced during this process. Pioneer HOF candidates must have demonstrated a dedicated career of professional polka activity and made a significant contribution to the industry.

### Living and Deceased Candidates and Nominees

Candidates from each of the three IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame categories: Living, Deceased, and Pioneer are selected and inducted each year. The number inducted from each category is determined by the committee and IPA President. Qualified candidates on the Living ballot who pass away are transferred to the Deceased ballot for consideration in the subsequent election period. Deceased nominees who are deemed qualified for the first time will be placed on the Deceased ballot after a one-year moratorium (or until the following election period.)

### IPA Music Awards

The Academy of Electors votes each year to determine the IPA Polka Music Award winners. Currently, deserving polka artists are recognized with the following music awards: *Polish Style Band of the Year, International Style Band of the Year, Polish Style Male Vocalist of the Year, International Style Male Vocalist of the Year, Polish Style Female Vocalist of the Year, International Style Female Vocalist of the Year, Polish Style Album of the Year, International Style Album of the Year, Polish Style Song of the Year, and International Style Song of the Year*. At least five applicants must be officially registered (see "How to Apply") to be considered for each award.

### Eligibility Requirements for Recording Awards

Recording artists vying for *Polish Style Album of the Year, International Style Album of the Year, Polish Style Song of the Year, and International Style Song of the Year* awards must release their recordings by December 31<sup>st</sup> of a given year to be considered in the subsequent election period. They may submit more than one recording, as a soloist or representative of multiple groups, and nominate a song for *Song of the Year* award consideration from each in the same year, if applicable. Furthermore, recording artists may submit an album or single for award consideration in a style other than the style in which their group is registered. Compilation albums featuring original tracks of previously

released and submitted songs are not eligible for *Album of the Year* award consideration. However, new arrangements of previously submitted songs and those that were never previously released on a compilation album may be submitted as singles and considered for the *Song of the Year* award. On albums featuring multiple bands, each group may designate one song for award consideration as well. To be considered an eligible “polka” album for award consideration, the recording must feature songs within the polka genre that make up at least 50% of the total tracks. The polka genre typically includes polka, waltz, oberek, mazurka, czardas, schottische, rheinländer, etc. If necessary, the committee will determine if a recording meets the genre requirement. At least five recordings must be officially submitted in each of the Polish and International polka style categories in a given year in order for the IPA to conduct their corresponding *Album of the Year* and *Song of the Year* awards balloting. If the minimum of five is not met, any submitted recordings will be automatically included with those received during the following year for award consideration in the applicable style.

### How to Apply

All polka artists/bands or their authorized representatives, whether they released a recording or not, must register for award consideration via the electronic application form on the IPA website at <https://www.ipapolkas.com/application-musicawards/> each year by January 14<sup>th</sup>. Only those who register in this manner will be listed on the ballots used by the electors in the annual election process. Registrants must designate lead vocalists for award consideration. This is necessary since the IPA cannot make assumptions whether polka artists are currently active or considered lead vocalists. Artists or Executive Producers who released a recording in the current year of consideration must complete the applicable recording fields on the form and upload a link to their musical tracks and artwork so their work can be featured on the electors’ secure website for reference. Artists who did not release a recording in the current year of consideration are still eligible for Band of the Year and Vocalist of the Year awards as long as they provide a musical files or links to files or videos that feature their live performances or recorded tracks accomplished within the previous three years of the next election period. The reason for these requirements is to provide the national electors with actual files to listen to so they can make informed decisions when voting in the annual election period.

### Leon Kozicki Trustees Award

The designated trustee liaison committee member facilitates the Board of Trustees in jointly selecting the recipient of the annual “Leon Kozicki Trustees Award.” Nominees for this polka musician’s award must meet the following criteria: 1.) have not been inducted into the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame, (note: receiving this award would not disqualify nominees from eventual IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame consideration), 2.) have at least 15 years of dedicated, significant service to the same prominent musical group and/or leader; and 3.) may not be deceased.

1. A nominee is any person submitted for consideration to be placed on the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame ballot or for any award.

2. A candidate is a nominee who has been vetted and deemed qualified by the trustees and placed on the IPA Polka Music Hall of Fame ballot.

February, 2025