

## **Kol HaOlam 2020 Shabbaton and Competition** ***Eligibility and Application Information***

The Kol HaOlam Shabbaton and competition will be held on Friday through Saturday night, February 29, 2020, at 8 p.m. The event takes place at Adas Israel Synagogue in Washington, D.C.

### **Format**

After last year's experiment with a change in format, Kol HaOlam will return to its previous format of two songs by each group not to exceed eight minutes. All winners will be determined by a panel of professional judges (other than the Audience Favorite award). The only change from previous years will be that six groups will be chosen to compete rather than eight.

Groups are chosen based on a rigorous audition protocol. A panel of three people experienced in Jewish a cappella (not the same people who will judge the competition) will review all audition tapes and score them using a protocol similar to the competition protocol. The six groups with the highest scores will be invited to compete. If any of them decline to participate, the next group off the list will be invited.

### **Awards**

Kol HaOlam awards recognition to the groups that come in first, second, and third place. Additionally, Kol HaOlam offers awards for Best Soloist, Best Beatboxer, and Audience Favorite.

For any group or member of a group that receives an award, the group will receive a cash prize. The amount of the cash prizes will be determined on the evening of the event depending on ticket sales, but it generally ranges from \$1,000 for the first place winning group to \$250 for the individual prizes.

### **Group Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for Kol HaOlam, a group must be a Jewish *a cappella* group. We do not require that all members of the group be Jewish. Your group should explain how it meets the definition of a Jewish *a cappella* group in the bio that your group will submit in the application form.

Additional criteria include the following:

- The Reigning Champion (the group that won First Place in the previous year's Kol HaOlam competition) is ineligible for the competition. There is no limitation on participation by groups that won other categories. The Reigning Champion may compete again the following year.
- Groups auditioning for and competing at Kol HaOlam must have a minimum of four (4) members and a maximum of eighteen (18) members singing on the audition video and performing in the competition. Additionally, most of the members singing in the audition video must be the same members who compete in the competition. Recognizing that some students may either join the group or leave the group after the first semester of the school year, the group may have up to four new members or lose up to four previous members compared to the audition video (as long as they still meet the overall minimums and maximums).
- All members of the group must be undergraduate students enrolled at the school with which the group is affiliated. Members may include individuals who are taking time off from academic studies but have not withdrawn from the school. For groups that include students from more than one school, students who go to a different school other than the school with which the group is formally affiliated may perform on the audition video and at the live competition as long as they are regular members of the group and are not just joining for the purposes of the competition.
- Kol HaOlam is a strictly amateur competition for college students. No member of the group may be paid for participation in the group or the Kol HaOlam competition. Groups that employ professional music directors are ineligible, whether those directors are full-time or part-time.
- All members of the group performing either in the application video or at the live competition must be under 25 years old.

Groups are required to submit accurate lists of their participating members to Kol HaOlam with their audition package and, if selected, prior to the competition. A group's inclusion of unlisted or unapproved members in any performance may be grounds for disqualification.

Kol HaOlam will occasionally make exceptions to the group eligibility criteria discussed above on a case-by-case basis. To receive an

exception, the group should submit a written request to Kol HaOlam explaining the situation. All requests for an exception from the requirements for the application videos must be submitted by November 2, 2019, and all requests for an exception from the requirements for the live competition must be submitted by February 1, 2020. Groups should contact Kol HaOlam promptly if issues requiring an exception arise after the relevant deadline.

## **Song Requirements**

Each group must prepare two competition songs as well as a third song to be performed at the close of the competition if the group is selected as the First Place winner.

Kol HaOlam's emphasis is on Jewish and Hebrew music. For the two competition songs, the following requirements apply:

- One song must be entirely in Hebrew (it can be a mash-up between two Hebrew songs, but not a Hebrew and English song), and it can have either religious or secular content. Judges will be looking for significant Hebrew singing by the ensemble, not just by a soloist(s), but it is not required that the ensemble sing for the entire song. The judging sheet is posted on the website so that you can see what other aspects of the song will be considered by the judges.
- The other song must be Jewish in some way, defined for this competition as a song that is (1) in Hebrew, Yiddish, or Ladino regardless of content; or (2) in English or another language with Jewish content of any type. Song parodies are permitted as long as they have Jewish content and meet the other requirements listed here.
- Songs may be up to four minutes long. Timekeeping begins when the first word or note is sounded (either by a person or by a pitch pipe) and it ends when the last note is completed. If a group introduces a song before singing begins, time begins when the group's representative begins the introduction. There will be point deductions if a song exceeds four minutes. Applause is not counted against the time limit.

Any group having a question about whether either song it intends to sing meets the Kol HaOlam criteria should contact Kol HaOlam officials before the exception deadlines for the audition and competition.

Please note that Kol HaOlam draws a family audience, so inappropriate lyrics or choreography are prohibited in the competition songs (no restrictions for audition songs). If there is a question about appropriateness, please contact Kol HaOlam officials before the exception deadline for the competition. Generally speaking, this issue has only come up in the context of song parodies.

## **Application Materials**

Groups should submit the following materials to Kol HaOlam by the application deadline. Untimely receipt of any of the information requested below may be a basis for non-selection for the Kol HaOlam competition:

- A completed Kol HaOlam application form and membership form (found on the Adas Israel Kol HaOlam website).
- Links to two videos of the group's performances. These videos should be live, unedited, unedited videos, but within those criteria, the videos should be ones in which the group puts its best foot forward. The songs on the audition video must match the competition criteria described above, i.e., one should be a Hebrew song and the second should have Jewish content as defined above, but the audition songs do not have to be the songs performed at the competition if your group is selected.
- The entry fee of \$100.00. This fee will be refunded to groups that are not accepted to the competition.

## **Deadlines**

*The deadline for submitting application materials is November 5, 2019.* Groups will be notified of our decision by November 22, 2019, which should provide time to make plans to travel to DC in February. Groups should be prepared to accept or decline the invitation by November 26 at the latest.

Groups chosen to compete must email the names, composers, and arrangers of the songs they will sing in the competition to Kol HaOlam by December 13, 2019. Kol HaOlam will notify any group that is planning to sing a song that was also listed by another group so that any group can change a duplicate song if desired, although that is not required (groups have sung the same song, albeit with different arrangements, in the past).

## **Set Information**

Groups will perform on the bimah (stage) of the Smith Sanctuary at Adas Israel Synagogue. The bimah is raised above the audience seating, so no risers will be needed or permitted. There are a number of steps leading up to the central performance area, and groups may use these steps as part of their choreography. Groups may not venture into the audience during their set. Lighting will be standard and fixed throughout all performances.

## **Sound System Information**

Professional sound engineers will provide microphones and stage monitors. There will be an opportunity for each group to do a sound check during the weekend of the event; groups will need to have their members available during the time designated for sound checks. Groups may not bring or provide their own sound, microphones, headsets, processors, or sound technicians. The sound engineers will videotape the competition and post it on YouTube for use or linking by any of the groups.