**Kol HaOlam VIII (2018) Competition Policies**

Kol HaOlam is a Jewish collegiate a cappella competition. Each participating group must consider itself to be a “Jewish” a cappella group, but this requirement does not mandate that all members of the group be Jewish. Your group should explain how it meets this definition in the group bio that your group submits.

***NOTE: the Kol HaOlam website is currently down for technical reasons. We hope to restore it within a week or two. Until then, some of the items referred to in this policy document may not be available.***

**Competition Date:**

The Kol HaOlam live competition will be held on March 10, 2018, at Adas Israel Synagogue in Washington, D.C. All groups applying to participate in Kol HaOlam must be available to compete on that date.

**Application Deadlines:**

The deadline for submitting audition packages is noon on November 10, 2017. Groups will be notified of the decision prior to Thanksgiving, which should provide time to make plans to travel to DC in March (and to fundraise for that if needed).

Groups chosen to compete must email the names and composers of the songs they will sing in the competition to Kol HaOlam by December 22, 2017, on the official Song List form that will be provided. Kol HaOlam will notify any group that is planning to sing a song that was also listed by another group so that groups can change a duplicate song if they desire, although that is not required.

**Group Membership Eligibility Criteria:**

1. Kol HaOlam accepts Jewish collegiate a capella groups of all styles. Groups auditioning for and competing at Kol HaOlam must have a minimum of four members and a maximum of 18 members singing on the audition video. If the group is selected to compete, the same minimum and maximum apply for the competition. A group competing at the live competition event may have up to four more or four fewer performing members there than were on the group’s audition video (e.g., if 10 were on the video, the group performing at the live event can be up to 14, subject to the overall minimum and maximum requirements).

2. All members of a group participating in Kol HaOlam, including those performing in the application video and the live competition, must be, at all times of their participation, not older than 23 years old. Kol HaOlam will allow exceptions to the age requirement for up to two individuals per group, provided such individuals are regular members of the group and attend the school(s) with which the group is affiliated.

3. All members of a group participating in Kol HaOlam, including the Music Director or other named leader of the group, must be undergraduate students enrolled at the school(s) 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. Students who go to a different school other than the college or university with which the group is officially affiliated may perform on the audition video and at the live competition, as long as these performers are regular members of the group and are not just joining for the purposes of the competition.

We will occasionally make exceptions to these group member eligibility criteria on a case-by-case basis. All requests for an exception, including an explanation of the reason for the request, must be received by Kol HaOlam by November 10, 2017, along with the audition package. Decisions on requests for exceptions will be made at the discretion of Kol HaOlam. Groups should contact Kol HaOlam with membership questions promptly if questions arise after that deadline.

5. Groups are required to submit accurate lists of their participating members to Kol HaOlam with their audition package. Failure to keep this list updated, or a group’s inclusion of unapproved members in any performance, may be grounds for disqualification.

**Limitation on Winning Consecutive Competitions:**

The Reigning Champion, which is the group that has won First Place in the previous year’s Kol HaOlam competition, is ineligible for the following year’s competition. There is no such limitation for groups that won other categories. The Reigning Champion may compete again the following year.

**Song Requirements:**

1. Each group competing at the live competition will sing two songs on stage during the competition, and will prepare a third song to be performed at the close of the competition if the group is selected as the First Place winner.

2. Each group’s set is limited to eight minutes. Timekeeping begins when the group’s performance begins and ends when the last note is completed. If a group introduces a song(s) before singing begins, time begins when the group’s representative begins the introduction. Otherwise, time begins with the first note sung. Applause does not count toward the eight minutes. However, any time speaking between songs counts toward the eight minutes. There will be point deductions if a group exceeds eight minutes.

3. Kol HaOlam's emphasis is on Jewish and Hebrew music. For the two main competition songs:

* 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 can have either religious or secular content. In the Hebrew song, the 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 voices or background sing Hebrew words every second of the song.
* The other song must be Jewish, defined for this competition as a song with Jewish content of any type or a song in Hebrew, Yiddish or Ladino, which can be a mash-up with an English song. The Jewish song may be liturgical, folk, rock, hip-hop, rap, jazz, parody, etc., and can be from any time period.

Any group having a question about whether either song it intends to sing meets the Kol HaOlam criteria is responsible for contacting Kol HaOlam officials as soon as possible before the competition. Your two competition songs may be sung in any order you wish. Groups’ encore selections must also be Jewish as defined above.

4. The Kol HaOlam audience includes many children and lyrics or choreography inappropriate for a family show are prohibited. If there is a question about appropriateness, please contact Kol HaOlam officials as soon as possible.

5. This may go without saying, but no musical instruments of any kind are allowed.

**Set and Sound Information:**

Groups will perform on the stage/bimah of the Smith Sanctuary at Adas Israel Synagogue. The floor level of this central performance area is raised, so no risers will be provided or allowed. 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; no special requests for lighting will be considered.

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. No private recording of the event is allowed. The sound enginners will record the competition and make it available to each group in the competition.

**Application Information:**

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:

* Completed Kol HaOlam application form and member form from the Kol HaOlam website.
* A biography or description of the school’s a capella group.
* A link to an audition video of the group, which should be a live, unedited, unmixed video. For a group that cannot post its video on the web, the group may email the video to the Kol HaOlam staff. The songs on the audition video must match the competition criteria (one Hebrew, one Jewish as defined above). However, the video songs do not have to be performed at the competition if your group is selected. Performers on the video must all be current members of the group, but the video does not have to be recorded after the application announcement is sent out, provided that all the member eligibility criteria are met by those performing on the video.
* The entry fee of $100.00. This fee will be refunded to groups that are not accepted to the competition.

**Competition Prizes:**

Kol HaOlam will select first, second and third place winners. Kol HaOlam will also award prizes for Audience Favorite (selected by the audience), Best Soloist, Best Beatboxer, and Best Original Arrangement winners. Best Original Arrangement is for a vocal arrangement done by a current member of your group who meets Kol HaOlam's member eligibility criteria, even if s/he is not performing at the competition (e.g., an arrangement can be by a junior who is a regular member of the group but who will be out of the country for the semester).