



AWARDS POLICY GUIDE

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AVIDITY
AWARDS

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AWARDS CRITERIA

PRIMARY AWARD CATEGORIES

Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
New Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Emerging Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Male Contemporary Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Female Contemporary Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Male Traditional Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Female Traditional Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Gospel Rap Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
CHH Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Rhythm & Praise Artist of the Year	Awarded to Artist
Quartet of the Year	Awarded to Authorized Representative of Group
Emerging Quartet of the Year	Awarded to Authorized Representative of Group
Mixed Quartet of the Year	Awarded to Authorized Representative of Group
Male Quartet of the Year	Awarded to Authorized Representative of Group
Female Quartet of the Year	Awarded to Authorized Representative of Group
Group or Duo of the Year (<i>Group: 3-10 Voices</i>)	Awarded to Authorized
Representative of Group	

Evaluation criteria will encompass, but are not limited to: radio airplay success, streaming and sales performance, digital and social media impact, live concert ticket revenue, and the quality of vocal performances.

Nominees will be selected through a nomination ballot process, subject to final approval by the Executive Committee. The winner will be determined by a vote of the ARA's eligible voting membership.

Choir of the Year (<i>16+ Voices</i>)	Awarded to Choir
Traditional Choir of the Year (<i>16+ Voices</i>)	Awarded to Choir
Contemporary Choir of the Year (<i>16+ Voices</i>)	Awarded to Choir
Vocal Ensemble of the Year (<i>6-15 Voices</i>)	Awarded to Choir
Male Vocalist of the Year	Awarded to Choir
Female Vocalist of the Year	Awarded to Choir

Evaluation criteria will encompass, but are not limited to: digital and social media impact, live concert ticket revenue, the quality of vocal performances, radio airplay success (where applicable), and streaming and sales performance (where applicable).

Nominees will be selected through a nomination ballot process, subject to final approval by the Executive Committee. The winner will be determined by a vote of the ARA's eligible voting membership.

PRIMARY AWARD CATEGORIES

(cont'd)

Song of the Year	Awarded to Songwriter(s)/Publisher(s)/ Artist(s)
EP/Album of the Year	Awarded to Songwriter(s)/Publisher(s)/ Artist(s)
Producer of the Year	Awarded to Producer(s)
Mixing Engineer of the Year	Awarded to Engineer(s)
Mastering Engineer of the Year	Awarded to Engineer(s)

Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process for Song of the Year and EP/Album of the Year Awards

Consideration will be given to multiple factors, including but not limited to: radio airplay performance, overall consumption metrics, digital media success, the song, EP, or album's cultural and commercial impact on audiences and the gospel music industry, and, most importantly, its creative integrity.

A Professional Panel—comprising no fewer than twelve (6) and no more than twenty (10) members from the Artist/Musician/Producer/Engineer, Songwriter, Music Publisher/PRO, and Record Company sectors—will be appointed with the approval of the ARA Board of Directors. This panel will submit a shortlist of at least ten (10) songs, EP's, and/or albums to the ARA Board of Directors. The Board will vote to determine the final six (6) nominees. The winner will then be selected by a combination vote of the voting public, ARA's voting membership, and ARA's Executive Committee.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify, a song must have been released and reached a Top 50 position on either the Billboard Hot Gospel Songs chart or the Mediabase Gospel chart during the eligibility period. Songs released prior to the eligibility window are also eligible if they achieved their highest chart position within the current eligibility period—provided they have not previously appeared on a final ARA ballot in this category. "Best Of" compilations, "Greatest Hits" collections, and reissues of previously released albums are not eligible for consideration. Standard edition compilation albums are eligible.

Only the standard edition of an album, as designated by the record label, may be submitted for eligibility. Once an album has been nominated in its standard form during the final voting round, it cannot be re-submitted in any alternate configuration in subsequent voting cycles.

Producer of the Year Award, Mixing Engineer of the Year Award, and Mastering Engineer of the Year Award

This award honors an exceptional producer, mixing engineer, and mastering engineer as determined by a Professional Panel of judges approved by the ARA officers. The panel will nominate five (5) candidates, subject to final approval by the Executive Committee, for placement on the official ballot.

Eligibility is based on a commercially released single or album credited to the producer that achieves a Top 20 position or higher on the Billboard Hot Gospel Songs, Billboard Top Gospel Albums, or Mediabase Gospel charts during the current eligibility period.

Singles released prior to the eligibility window may qualify if they reached their peak chart position within the current period. Albums released during the two (2) previous eligibility periods may also be eligible if they attained their highest annual chart performance during the current period, as verified by Nielsen SoundScan.

The prior year's recipient is not eligible for nomination in three consecutive years.

RADIO & MEDIA AWARD CATEGORIES

On-Air Personality of the Year Radio Show Host of the Year

Awarded to On-Air Personality(ies) Awarded to Radio Show Host(s)

This award recognizes an exceptional Gospel music radio personality or show host who exemplifies excellence in representing the genre. The recipient is selected by a Professional Panel of Judges approved by the ARA Board of Directors.

Submissions will be evaluated based on the host's body of work during the current eligibility period, as demonstrated in a representative aircheck (not to exceed five minutes in length). Judging will also consider the host's distinctive brand identity, audience engagement, and role in promoting artist discovery within the Gospel music community.

To qualify, primary hosts must have hosted for a minimum of six (6) consecutive months and remain active on the submitted station or show at the time of entry submission. Each personality may only enter one station or show within a single market category—Major, Large, Medium, or Small—and must compete in the highest market tier for which they are eligible.

Previous winners may not receive more than two consecutive nominations in this category. Entries will be evaluated with consideration given to market size, as defined by Arbitron (Nielsen Audio) market rankings:

Markets 1-25 = MAJOR Markets 26-50 = LARGE Markets 51-100 = MEDIUM Markets 101+ = SMALL

Radio Announcer of the Year (All Markets)

Awarded to On-Air Personality

This award honors an exceptional Gospel radio personality who hosts a distributed daily show via terrestrial, satellite, or internet radio, and who best embodies the spirit and excellence of the Gospel genre. To qualify, entrants must have broadcast a minimum of 50 original shows within the calendar year. Finalists will be selected by a Professional Panel of Judges approved by the ARA Officers.

Judging will be based on the entrant's overall body of work during the current eligibility period, as demonstrated by a five-minute aircheck which demonstrates the host's brand identity, impact on listeners, and role in championing new and emerging independent and major label Gospel artists.

Principal host(s) must have been on-air for at least six (6) consecutive months and must still be employed by the submitting station at the time of entry. Winners from the previous year are not eligible for more than two (2) consecutive-year nominations in this category.

Radio Show of the Year (All Markets) Radio Station of the Year (All Markets)

Awarded to Station or Show Host Awarded to Station

This award is presented to an outstanding Gospel Music Radio Station who best represents the Gospel music genre, selected by a Professional Panel of judges, approved by the ARA Officers.

The Professional Panel shall evaluate submissions from the current eligibility period based on the Station's body of work, as represented in an aircheck (maximum length of 5 minutes), and an essay (maximum length of 500 words) defining the Station's unique brand, demonstrating impact on audience and exemplifying artist discovery. Judges shall consider daypart market share/in-market rank. The prior year Winner is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. Entries will be evaluated with consideration given to market size, as defined by Arbitron (Nielsen Audio) market rankings:

Markets 1-25 = MAJOR Markets 26-50 = LARGE Markets 51-100 = MEDIUM Markets 101+ = SMALL

RADIO & MEDIA AWARD CATEGORIES

(cont'd)

Best Gospel Media Publication

Awarded to Publication

This award honors an outstanding Gospel media publication—print, digital, or hybrid—that demonstrates exceptional dedication to promoting Gospel music, ministry, and culture. Recognizing excellence in journalism, content curation, and audience engagement, this accolade is given to a media outlet that consistently uplifts the Gospel community through impactful storytelling, thoughtful commentary, and creative coverage.

INDUSTRY AWARD CATEGORIES

Event Promoter of the Year

Awarded to Individual Event Promoter

This award honors an exceptional event and radio promoter who has demonstrated excellence in the promotion and execution of Gospel concerts during the eligibility period. Nominees must have successfully promoted a minimum of five (5) Gospel events, contributing significantly to ticket sales, audience engagement, and the overall visibility of Gospel music. Eligible candidates must be in good standing with artists, agents, and venues, and exhibit professionalism and integrity in all business dealings. Six (6) nominees will be selected by a Professional Panel of judges and placed on the ballot pending Executive Committee approval. The previous year's winner is not eligible for consecutive nomination in this category.

Radio Promoter of the Year

Awarded to Individual Radio Promoter

These awards are presented to an outstanding event and radio promoter, selected by a Professional Panel of judges. The panel will submit six (6) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Executive Committee. The promoter must have promoted at least five (5) Gospel concerts/dates during the eligibility period, be in good standing with all agents and help promote Gospel ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

Artist Manager of the Year

Awarded to Artist Manager

This award recognizes an exceptional Gospel music radio personality or show host who exemplifies excellence in representing the genre. The recipient is selected by a Professional Panel of Judges approved by the ARA Board of Directors.

DISTINCTIVE AWARD CATEGORIES

Best Gospel Performance

Awarded to Artist

This award recognizes an outstanding live or recorded Gospel music performance that exemplifies excellence in vocal delivery, stage presence, and spiritual impact. The recipient represents the highest standard of artistry and authenticity in presenting the Gospel message through performance.

Best Music Recording Package

Awarded to Graphic Designer

This award honors exceptional visual presentation and packaging of a Gospel music recording. Recognizing excellence in design, layout, and creative concept, this award celebrates those who enhance the listener's experience through compelling and culturally resonant visual storytelling.

DISTINCTIVE AWARD CATEGORIES

(cont'd)

Music Video of the Year

Awarded to Artist and Video Director

This award recognizes a Gospel music video that exemplifies excellence in visual storytelling, direction, and production value. The honored video powerfully conveys the message of the song through artistic expression and compelling imagery, representing the genre with creativity and impact.

Gospel Hip Hop Album of the Year

Awarded to Songwriter(s)/Publisher(s)/ Artist(s)

This award recognizes an exceptional Gospel Hip Hop album that exemplifies creativity, lyrical integrity, and spiritual impact within the genre. The honored project must reflect excellence in production, originality, and the effective communication of faith-based themes through hip hop

SPECIAL AWARD CATEGORIES

REVIEWED AND VOTED ON BY THE ARA ADVISORY BOARD

Avidity Recording Academy Icon Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award honors a Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, or industry leader whose career-long contributions have significantly elevated the visibility and impact of the genre. Recognition is based on meaningful influence across multiple dimensions of the industry, including—but not limited to—songwriting, recording, production, live performance, film, television, literary works, philanthropy, and other acts of goodwill that have advanced the reach and relevance of Gospel music.

Avidity Awards Milestone Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award is presented to a Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, or industry leader for a specific, unprecedented or outstanding achievement in the field of Gospel music during the preceding calendar year.

Avidity Awards Uplift Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award is presented to a Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, or industry professional who is devoted to improving lives through the music industry education, has a generosity of spirit, and is committed to serving independent Gospel recording artists.

International Industry Ambassador Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award is presented to a Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, or industry leader for outstanding contributions to the growth of Gospel music internationally.

Avidity CARES™ Service Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award is presented on behalf of Avidity CARES™ to an outstanding Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, or industry leader in recognition of years of dedication and charitable service to the community and/or the gospel music community.

Avidity Recording Academy Inclusion Advocate Award

Awarded to Recipient

This award recognizes a Gospel music artist, duo/group, choir, industry leader, or affiliate/partner who has played a transformative role in amplifying underrepresented voices within the Gospel music genre. Honorees demonstrate a commitment to diversity and equity, breaking barriers across demographics and geographic boundaries to expand the reach and inclusivity of Gospel music.

AWARDS POLICY GUIDE

AWARDS VOTING PROCEDURES SUBMISSION PERIOD

Each year, the **Avidity Recording Academy (ARA)** will open its Nomination Submissions period to accept entries for consideration in the following **Avidity Awards** categories:

Primary Awards Categories:

Artist of the Year, New Artist of the Year, Emerging Artist of the Year, Male Contemporary Artist of the Year, Female Contemporary Artist of the Year, Male Traditional Artist of the Year, Female Traditional Artist of the Year, Gospel Rap Artist of the Year, CHH Artist of the Year, Rhythm & Praise Artist of the Year, Quartet of the Year, Emerging Quartet of the Year, Mixed Quartet of the Year, Male Quartet of the Year, Female Quartet of the Year, Group or Duo of the Year, Choir of the Year, Traditional Choir of the Year, Contemporary Choir of the Year, Vocal Ensemble of the Year, Male Vocalist of the Year, Female Vocalist of the Year, Song of the Year, EP/Album of the Year, Producer of the Year, Mixing Engineer of the Year, Mastering Engineer of the Year

Radio & Media Awards Categories

On-Air Personality of the Year, Radio Show Host of the Year, Radio Announcer of the Year (Small/Medium Market), Radio Announcer of the Year (Large, Major Market), Radio Station of the Year (Small/Medium Market), Radio Station of the Year (Large/Major Market), Radio Show of the Year, Internet Radio Announcer of the Year, Internet Radio Station of the Year, Best Gospel Media Publication

Industry Award Categories

Event Promoter of the Year, Radio Promoter of the Year, Artist Manager of the Year

Distinctive Award Categories

Best Gospel Performance, Best Music Recording Package, Video of the Year, Gospel Hip Hop Album of the Year

Special Award Categories

Avidity Recording Academy Icon Award, Avidity Awards Milestone Award, Avidity Awards Uplift Award, International Industry Ambassador Award, Avidity CARES™ Service Award, Avidity Recording Academy Inclusion Advocate Award

SUBMISSION REVIEW FOR BALLOTS

In between the Nomination Submission Round and Public Voting Round, a contact update form will be sent to each nomination submitter requesting the contact details for the Nomination Candidate's label, management, and/or authorized representative.

A minimum of three (3) eligible submissions are required to award the category. In the instance there are not three eligible submissions within a category, the Avidity Recording Academy (ARA)/Avidity Awards Board of Directors may vote to allow additional considerations to meet the required minimum or terminate the category for the current year.

PUBLIC VOTING ROUND BALLOT

Once the Submission Review is completed and the Official Nominees are named, the Public Voting Round will begin. In the public voting round, only one (1) vote may be cast. If there are less than five (5) eligible submissions in any given category, the Executive Committee may elect to allow the category to proceed with at least three (3) nominees.

FINAL ROUND BALLOT - ARA MEMBERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTING

Once the Public Voting Round ends, the members of Avidity Recording Academy (ARA) will get their opportunity to vote. In this round, only one (1) vote will be cast per ballot, per member.

HOW WINNERS ARE DETERMINED

Once the VOTING ROUND concludes, the votes from all three phases will be counted for each category. For each of the three phases, the 5 nominees will be given points ranging from 1 to 5 (1 being the nominee with the highest amount of votes and 5 being the nominee with the lowest amount of votes). Each nominee's points will be totaled from all three phases, and the nominee with the LOWEST score (lowest in this instance is the highest vote getter) will be designated the winner.

20% - GENERAL PUBLIC VOTING ROUND (Results of General Public voting accounts for 1/5 of the final score)

20% - ARA MEMBERS VOTING ROUND (Results of voting by ARA Members accounts for 1/5 of the final score)

20% - ARA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Results of voting by ARA Executive Committee accounts for 1/5 of final score)

20% - NOMINEE'S ARA MEMBERSHIP (Nominee MUST be an ARA Member in order to get this 1/5 of final score added)

20% - AVIDITY AIRPLAY CHART - If Nominee appeared on the Top 30 of any 2024/2025 Avidity Radio Airplay Chart, they will receive this 1/5 of final score added. In the case of a tie, all winners will receive an award.

ARA Members must be in good standing in order to be eligible to vote in the Primary Awards, Radio & Media Awards, Industry Awards, Distinctive Awards, and Special Awards.

AWARDS & VOTING COMMITTEE

The Awards & Voting Committee meets annually before voting begins to review criteria, discuss updates and ensure information is current with the awards and voting processes. Any changes approved by the committee are presented to the ARA Executive Committee for ratification.

TELEVISION BROADCAST AWARDS

The following award categories will be televised: **Artist of the Year, EP/Album of the Year, Song of the Year, New Artist of the Year, Radio Announcer of the Year (Large/Major Market), Radio Station of the Year (Large/Major Market), Quartet of the Year, Gospel Rap Artist of the Year, Choir of the Year, Producer of the Year, Best Gospel Performance, Video of the Year**

OFF-CAMERA AWARDS

Off-camera awards will be presented prior to the main ceremony and television taping, with timing and location determined based on a combination of winner availability and as determined by Avidity Awards leadership. When applicable, these awards should be acknowledged during the main ceremony and television production.

All nominees for every award category will be listed in either the official awards program book or the Avidity Magazine's Avidity Awards issue, depending on the format chosen for that year. This publication serves as our official yearbook and primary historical archive of the event.

AVIDITY AWARD TROPHY POLICY

Avidity Award trophies may not be purchased under any circumstances except for replacement of either damaged or stolen trophies and in rare instances when award winners would like for contributing parties to obtain a trophy. In the case of a damaged trophy, the damaged trophy must be returned to the Avidity Recording Academy (ARA) along with payment for the replacement trophy. In the case of a stolen trophy, written notification of a request to replace a trophy must be submitted to the Avidity Awards Trophy Liaison along with a formal police report indicating theft of the trophy. In the case of obtaining an extra trophy(ies) for contributing parties, a written notification request must be submitted to the Avidity Awards Trophy Liaison along with payment. **Trophy Cost is \$200.00.**

- Avidity Award trophies for all awards are our standard purple except for Special Awards. Special Awards vary in color and style, depending on which Special Award it is.
- All trophies are shipped out within eight (8) weeks of the awards show ceremony barring any unforeseen circumstances beyond ARA's control.

All winners and Special Award recipients are subject to the following terms regarding the Avidity Awards trophy: The trophy remains the exclusive property of the Avidity Recording Academy and may not be sold, transferred, or otherwise used in any capacity without the prior written consent of the Avidity Recording Academy. Possession of the trophy is granted solely for the personal use and benefit of the recipient and their heirs.

ARA AWARD TROPHY POLICY - CERTIFICATES & COMMEMORATIVES

- Certificates are provided to (and/or may be purchased by) Avidity Award winners in recognition and appreciation of those individuals who materially contributed to the ARA Award-winning achievement.
- Commemorative Avidity Award trophies may be ordered on behalf of a record label, publisher, agency or management principally involved with the Avidity Award-winning achievement. This does not apply to artist only winner categories. Commemorative ARA Awards cannot be ordered for individuals. The intent of issuing Commemorative Avidity Awards is to give the record labels, publishers, agencies, and managers the opportunity to display, in a corporate public space, the Avidity Award for achievements for which their artists are recognized. All Commemorative Avidity Award orders are subject to the approval of the Avidity Recording Academy Board of Directors.

THIRD-PARTY AUDITOR POLICY

The Avidity Recording Academy shall engage a third-party auditor, selected and ratified by the ARA Board of Directors, to review and report the results of all voting periods for the Avidity Awards, based on a mutually agreed upon set of procedures. The responsibilities of the third-party auditor shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtain a password-protected database file from online voting vendor with final results and other voting metrics.
- Perform mathematical computations to determine accuracy of all voting information.
- Inspect the database file to identify potential voting anomalies.
- Prepare and present a list of results to the ARA Board of Directors, pursuant to the voting round criteria. Any potential voting anomaly identified as suspect, will be presented to the Chairman of the Board. Based on instructions from this individual, who is responsible for determining whether a vote should be disqualified, he/she shall exclude those votes that they have disqualified from the count of the database votes and perform mathematical computations to tabulate the totals of the votes by nominee by category.

In order to maintain the integrity of the Avidity Awards process, ARA Executive Committee members and administration shall have no access to specific voting metrics or email delivery data. Any inquiries about such metrics, shall be made to the Chairman of the ARA Board of Directors who will then engage third party auditor. As a matter of policy, third party auditor shall not disclose specific information about any voting metrics or email delivery metadata.

AVIDITY AWARDS CAMPAIGNING & SOLICITATION POLICY

To preserve the integrity and impartiality of the Avidity Awards voting process, nominees and their affiliates are strictly prohibited from directly soliciting votes from Academy members. This includes, but is not limited to, outreach via physical mail, email, text messaging, or any similar form of direct communication.

Permitted Promotional Activity:

- Trade advertisements are allowed and may promote the nominee's work.
- Any attempt to influence the voting process through unauthorized solicitation may result in disciplinary action, including disqualification.

These rules apply equally to nominees, their teams, labels, managers, publicists, and any third-party representatives acting on their behalf.

