



## 2025 RADIO MERCURY AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRY

### 2025 TIMELINE

- **Monday, January 6:** Call for Entry opens
- **Tuesday, April 1:** Entry Deadline
- **Early May:** Finalists announced
- **Thursday, June 5:** Radio Mercury Awards event
- **January 1, 2024 - April 1, 2025:** Entry eligibility period

### WHAT'S NEW IN 2025?

Several new and revised categories this year offer you more opportunities to win. See individual categories for details.

New for 2025, we are introducing four new categories:

- **Use of Directing in a Single Broadcast Radio Spot:** Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- **Single Spot Airing on a Podcast:** Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- **Single Streaming Spot:** Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- **Streaming Campaign:** Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network

## 2025 AWARDS SLATE

- Broadcast Radio Campaign: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company (Two awards)
- Broadcast Radio Campaign: Radio Station, Group or Network (Two awards)
- Single Broadcast Radio Promotional Spot: Radio Station, Group or Network
- Single Broadcast Radio Spot for Good: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company (Two awards)
- Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Radio Station, Group or Network (Two awards)
- Innovative Use of Broadcast Radio or Digital Audio: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- Single Locally Produced Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company
- Single Locally Produced Broadcast Radio Spot: Radio Station, Group or Network
- Multi-Platform Campaign with Broadcast Radio: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- Single Spot Airing on a Podcast: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network (New, showcase award)
- Single Streaming Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network (New, showcase award)
- Streaming Campaign: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company, Radio Station, Group or Network (New, showcase award)
- Single Spanish-Language Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- Student-Produced Radio Commercial (Showcase award)
- Use Of Directing in a Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network (New award)
- Use Of Humor in a Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network (Two awards)
- Use Of Original Songs/Music in a Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network
- Use Of Sound Design in a Single Broadcast Radio Spot: Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Radio Station, Group or Network

## 2025 ENTRY FEES

- Agency, Advertiser, Production Company, Audio Company:
  - \$180 for single/noncampaign entries
  - \$360 for campaign entries

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR ENTRY

Read through the categories and their individual guidelines to find the best matches for your work.

Have the following information ready before you begin the entry process. (Note: You can start your entry online and finish adding elements before the entry deadline.):

- Complete credits, including the people who produced the entry, e.g., writer(s), producer(s), talent, production company. We will use these credits if your entry becomes a finalist, so make sure the credits are complete and accurate before you finalize your entry.
- The actual audio/video file for your entry.
- A written description of the work and how you feel about it successfully using radio and/or audio to drive the main message. Note: Do not include your agency/company/station name or names of creative team in the description, as all work is judged anonymously.
- If your work is not in English, you must submit a separate English translation of the work.
- Payment information, e.g., credit card number, check or ACH.
- Please fill out the signed agreement form once you've finished your entry(ies) and email to [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com).
- **Important: In order to finalize your work and before the entry deadline**, you must provide substantiation as follows:
  - **Broadcast radio categories:** You must provide proof that the work was broadcast, aired or ran on a U.S.-licensed broadcast radio station(s) or group and/or its digital radio station components during the entry eligibility period. This substantiation could be a Proof of Air/Traffic Log from a broadcast radio station, an invoice from a radio station or a written and scanned letter from the media-buying agency with dates.
  - **Digital audio categories:** For categories open to digital audio, you must provide proof that the work aired, was released or transmitted during the entry eligibility period. This substantiation could be a Proof of Air/Release or a written and scanned letter from a media-buying agency with dates. Please email [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com) with any questions.
  - **Single Streaming Spot and Streaming Campaign categories:** You must provide proof that the work aired or ran on a U.S.-licensed digital streaming platform (music streaming service or streaming component of a

radio station/group/network) during the entry eligibility period. This substantiation could be a Proof of Air/Traffic Log from a digital streaming platform or streaming component of a radio station/group/network, an invoice from a digital streaming platform or a digital component of a radio station/group/network, or a written and scanned letter from a media-buying agency with dates. Please email [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com) with any questions.

- **Single Spot Airing on a Podcast and Innovative Use of Broadcast Radio or Digital Audio categories:** You must provide proof that a podcast or digital audio work aired or ran during the entry eligibility period. This substantiation could be a Proof of Air/Traffic log or a written and scanned letter from a media-buying agency with dates. For podcast work, send in a screenshot of when the podcast aired. Please email [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com) with any questions. with any questions.

**Note: Send your paperwork by our entry deadline to Madison Wright at [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com).**

# OVERALL ENTRY GUIDELINES

- **You can submit entries in any language.**
  - You can enter non-English language work in any category.
  - Non-English language entries should be originally produced in that language, and the final produced work should be predominantly in that language.
  - You will need to submit a side-by-side translation of the work included in the entry, and for any printed or visual copy that is not in English.
- **Definition of broadcast and nonbroadcast entries:**
  - **Broadcast:** For the purposes of the Radio Mercury Awards, “broadcast radio” means U.S.-licensed AM and FM radio stations owned and operated by U.S. radio stations and groups, along with any digital radio stations owned and operated by the stations and groups. The work ran on-air on a U.S.-licensed radio station(s). The work can also have run entirely digitally on a U.S.-licensed radio station or be a combination of on-air and digital on a U.S.-licensed radio station(s).
  - **Nonbroadcast:** For the purposes of the Radio Mercury Awards, “Nonbroadcast” audio means digital-only streaming services, e.g., Spotify and Pandora; satellite-only services, e.g., Sirius XM; CB, Ham and amateur radio stations.
  - Some categories are open to nonbroadcast audio entries, e.g., Branded Podcast and Multi-Platform Campaign with Broadcast Audio.
  - Note: If you produced a commercial or campaign that ran both on broadcast radio and nonbroadcast channels, you can enter the work in an eligible commercial or campaign category as long as the work ran on a broadcast radio station(s) in conjunction with the nonbroadcast channels. At the time of entry, you will be required to submit appropriate paperwork attesting that the work ran on a broadcast radio station(s), as defined above.
- **Definition of who can enter:**
  - Agency, advertiser, or production company submissions: Work that was produced by an agency, advertiser or production company.
  - Radio station or group submissions: Work that was produced by a radio station, group, or a radio station or group’s production/creative services department.
  - Student submissions: Work that was created by a student or group of students at a U.S. accredited college, university, college-level radio station or trade/specialty school.
- Entries that do not comply will be returned, and you will be asked to resubmit them in the correct format and/or length.
- Entry fees are nonrefundable.

# ENTRY ELIGIBILITY PERIOD AND WHAT TYPE OF WORK YOU CAN ENTER

## Eligibility period:

- Broadcast entries that aired on a commercial radio station or the station's/group's website/digital stream between January 1, 2024, and April 1, 2025, initially and primarily in the U.S. and its territories.
- Streaming entries that ran on a digital streaming platform between January 1, 2024, and April 1, 2025, initially and primarily in the U.S. and its territories.
- Digital audio entries that aired digitally, were released or transmitted between January 1, 2024, and April 1, 2025, initially and primarily in the U.S. and its territories.

## Entry version to submit:

- We accept entries in any language. If your work is not in English, you must submit a separate English translation of the work.
- Submit entries in their original release version, in their original language, with this exception: For certain categories, we may request that you submit an excerpt. We may return an entry and ask you to resubmit it if it exceeds the guidelines noted in a category.
- Audio entries: MP3 or WAV format - 256 kbps minimum 44100 hz stereo - no slate.
- Nonaudio Entries: One .mov or .mp4 file, 1280 x 720 resolution, H.264 video codec.
- Note: Should you be entering a campaign category, please put two to three spots together into one audio file with no more than two seconds in between each individual spot.
- Video case studies: If you submit a video case study, you must include two or three broadcast radio commercials from the campaign and place them at the beginning of your entry. Case studies that do not meet these criteria will be returned, and you will be asked to resubmit your case study to comply with our guidelines.
- If your entry does not comply with our guidelines, we will return the entry, and we will ask you to resubmit it to conform with our guidelines.

## Payment Methods:

- We accept payment via the following methods:
  - ACH. Email us and we will send you instructions.
  - Credit card: We accept all major credit cards. We will add a 2.5% credit card processing fee for all credit card payments.
  - Check: Check instructions can be found once your entry is completed.

- Important: **We must receive complete payment by entry deadline in order for your entry to be valid.**

## JUDGING AND PRIZES

- Judges will evaluate a single broadcast commercial/spot on its overall creative excellence in delivering the main message.
- Judges will evaluate a single streaming audio spot on its overall creative excellence in delivering the main message.
- Judges will evaluate a broadcast radio campaign on the overall creative excellence of all the spots in delivering the main message.
- Judges will evaluate a streaming audio campaign on the overall creative excellence of all the spots in delivering the main message.
- Judges will evaluate entries in the digital audio, podcast, use of humor, innovative use of broadcast radio or digital audio, use of directing, use of sound design and use of songs/music categories on the overall creative excellence of the work in delivering the main message.
- Judges will evaluate multi-platform campaigns on the overall creative excellence of the work in delivering the main message, along with the integration of broadcast radio as an essential component of the campaign.
- Please refer to individual categories for specific judging guidelines.
- Prizes:
  - Best of Show: The final round jury has the discretion to award a Best of Show, along with a trophy and \$10,000 prize.
  - Single-winner categories: The winner will receive a trophy and a \$1,000 prize.
  - Multiple-winner categories: The first winner will receive a trophy and a \$1,000 prize. The second winner will receive a trophy and a \$750 prize.
- In accordance with the original mission of the Radio Mercury Awards to encourage and reward the development of effective and creative broadcast radio commercials, only entries that include broadcast radio as an integral component of the work are eligible to compete for the Best of Show award.
- Entries that include other elements, e.g., podcasts, streaming spots/campaigns, TV and/or digital, are eligible to compete for the Best of Show award, as long as broadcast radio is an integral part of the overall submitted work.
- The Showcase categories Single Spot Airing on a Podcast, Single Streaming Spot, Streaming Campaign and Student-Produced Radio Commercial are not eligible to compete for the Best of Show. The winners in these categories will receive a Radio Mercury Awards trophy and prize monies.
- Final round judges have the discretion to split an award between two winners.
- Entrants will have the opportunity to win awards in multiple categories. However, a winner can only win one award in a multi-award category, e.g., one broadcast radio campaign award, one broadcast radio commercial award.

## **2025 RADIO MERCURY AWARDS ENTRY CATEGORIES**

### **AGENCY, ADVERTISER, PRODUCTION COMPANY, AUDIO COMPANY\***

\*Audio companies are eligible to enter the Single Spot Airing on a Podcast, Innovative Use of Broadcast Radio or Digital Audio, Single Streaming Spot and Streaming Campaign categories.

#### **BROADCAST RADIO CAMPAIGN**

Broadcast radio campaign that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value.

#### **SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value.

#### **SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT FOR GOOD**

Single broadcast radio PSA or spot created for an advertiser, organization or nonprofit that brings awareness of relevant social issues, e.g., poverty, justice, gender equality, health and well-being, the environment. The work can be created by an agency, production company, radio station/group on its own or in partnership with an advertiser, organization or nonprofit.

#### **SINGLE LOCALLY PRODUCED BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial created and produced by a local advertising agency or local in-house advertiser team for a local advertiser that creatively communicates the advertiser's services and value.

#### **MULTI-PLATFORM CAMPAIGN WITH BROADCAST RADIO**

Multi-platform campaign, in which broadcast radio is an essential and driving media of the campaign, that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value. Additional media channels can include digital audio, TV, social media, podcasts, branded content and experiential display. The campaign should deliver a consistent brand message across all the channels. The broadcast radio component should be able to stand on its own as a campaign.

Entry requirements:

- Include two or three broadcast radio commercials from the campaign within one file and position the broadcast radio commercials at the beginning of your entry.



- Submit the commercials, without slates and with no more than two seconds between spots.
- You can include a link to additional media used within the campaign in the section where you submit a description of the work.
- Case studies: If you submit a video case study, you must include two or three broadcast radio commercials from the campaign and place them at the beginning of your entry. If you have any issues uploading your video case study, please reach out to [mercury@rab.com](mailto:mercury@rab.com).

### **USE OF HUMOR IN A SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial or PSA that utilizes humor as a featured element to creatively communicate an advertiser's or organization's main message. Humor can be featured in one or more elements of the spot, e.g., the script, voice talent, sound effects or music.

### **USE OF DIRECTING IN A SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial or PSA that demonstrates outstanding use of directing as a featured element to creatively communicate an advertiser's or organization's main message.

### **USE OF ORIGINAL SONGS/MUSIC IN A SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial or PSA where song(s) or musical compositions are a featured element, that creatively communicates an advertiser's or organization's main message. Eligible entry examples include jingles, sonic branding, a song or a musical composition with or without lyrics. Songs or musical compositions can be original works, or they can be repurposed or rearranged through new lyrics and/or performances including vocals or style, e.g., a classical composition arranged in electronic dance style.

### **USE OF SOUND DESIGN IN A SINGLE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial or PSA where sound design is a featured element, that creatively communicates an advertiser's or organization's main message. Eligible entry examples include the use of sound effects, foley, live performances or remote recording, sonic branding, soundscapes and editing of previously composed or recorded audio.

### **SINGLE SPANISH-LANGUAGE BROADCAST RADIO SPOT**

Single broadcast radio commercial, in Spanish, that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value. Work should be primarily in Spanish, originally produced in Spanish and not a translation of an original English language spot or campaign. You must submit a separate English translation of the work.

## **INNOVATIVE USE OF BROADCAST RADIO OR DIGITAL AUDIO**

Innovative use of broadcast radio, digital audio or streaming that creatively communicate an advertiser's or organization's services and value. In addition, the work should successfully integrate within the broadcast, digital audio or streaming space. Examples include:

- Broadcast radio with visual and/or digital components
- Dual screen digital audio with audio/video integration
- Use of AI (Artificial Intelligence)
- 3D audio production
- Use of sound effects and soundscapes

Note: Audio companies are eligible to enter this category.

## **SHOWCASE CATEGORIES:**

### **SINGLE SPOT AIRING ON A PODCAST**

Single spot that aired primarily on a podcast and was created by an agency, audio production company, production company, radio station, group or network and produced for, or in partnership with, an advertiser or nonprofit organization. The work should creatively communicate an advertiser's or organization's service and value and integrate within the overall podcast format. The spot can be prerecorded or a live read.

Note: Audio companies are eligible to enter this category.

### **SINGLE STREAMING SPOT**

Single spot that ran primarily on a digital streaming platform (music streaming service or streaming component of a radio station/group/network) that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value and integrates within the streaming format.

Note: Audio companies are eligible to enter this category.

### **STREAMING CAMPAIGN**

Campaign that ran primarily on a digital streaming platform (music streaming service or streaming component of a radio station/group/network) that creatively communicates an advertiser's services and value and integrates within the streaming format.

Note: Audio companies are eligible to enter this category.