THOMAS & DORIS AMMANN FOUNDATION

LUZERNER SINFONIEORCHESTER
1805
RESIDENZORCHESTER KKL LUZERN

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Luzerner Sinfonieorchester

Thomas and Doris Ammann Prize for Young Conductors: A new international conducting competition in Lucerne

At the initiative of the Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation, the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester is launching a new international competition for young conductors. The inaugural Thomas and Doris Ammann Prize for Young Conductors will take place in Lucerne from 24 to 27 June 2027 and will be held every two years thereafter. The Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation is providing funding for the first ten editions through to 2045.

With this new competition, the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester is expanding its commitment to young conducting talent from around the world. The competition was established at the initiative of the Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation and is organised in partnership with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester.

The competition complements the orchestra's annual Conducting Week, which leads to an assistant conductor position with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester each year, and creates a new international platform for young conductors. The Thomas and Doris Ammann Prize for Young Conductors ranks among the world's most generously endowed conducting prizes. It is also the only international conducting competition in Switzerland established on a long-term basis. At the same time, the competition strengthens Lucerne's position as a city of music and a centre for nurturing musical talent.

Fabio Luisi to chair the jury of the inaugural edition

Italian conductor Fabio Luisi will chair the jury in 2027. The internationally renowned conductor brings extensive experience of conducting competitions and of supporting young conductors.

Numa Bischof Ullmann, Artistic and Executive Director of the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester, and Chief Conductor Michael Sanderling will also serve on the jury alongside other specialists. The remaining jury members will be announced at a later date. A screening jury will select the candidates in advance.

A maximum of 14 candidates

A maximum of 14 conductors will be admitted to the inaugural edition. Selected in advance by the screening jury, they will compete with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester before an international jury in Lucerne from 24 to 27 June 2027.

The competition comprises three rounds: a first round, a semi-final and the final. The competition repertoire will be announced at a later date.

The final will take place as the closing concert at the KKL Luzern on 27 June 2027 at 11:00.

Total prize money of CHF 90,000

The three prizes, with a total value of CHF 90,000, are intended to support the career development of young conductors. The first and second prizes also include performance opportunities.

The first prize comprises CHF 50,000 and an invitation to conduct a concert with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester at the KKL Luzern in the following season.

The second prize is endowed with CHF 25,000. In addition, the runner-up will have the opportunity to conduct a concert at a special venue in Lucerne or the surrounding area within 18 months.

The third prize is endowed with CHF 15,000.

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"For three decades, I have devoted myself to working with conductors. I grew up in the era of the great maestros who shaped my generation. They painted the great scores on a monumental scale. At the same time, I have always sought out the figures of the future. The wonderful thing is that they are out there. They simply need to be discovered and supported. With the Thomas and Doris Ammann Prize for Young Conductors, we can make a significant contribution to this."

Numa Bischof Ullmann, Artistic and Executive Director, Luzerner Sinfonieorchester

"For Thomas and Doris, art and music were far more than expressions of aesthetic beauty. They were a source of inspiration, of human connection and of humanity. As a foundation, we care deeply about preserving the siblings' cultural legacy, keeping it alive and passing on their enthusiasm for art and music to future generations. It therefore gives me particular joy that this new competition offers young conductors from around the world a stage on which to develop their exceptional talent, their passion for music and their individual artistic personalities, and to share them with an international audience."

Georg Frei, President of the Thomas and Doris Ammann Foundation

"I am delighted and honored to be part of the jury of the inaugural edition of this competition dedicated to young conductors. I firmly believe in the importance of initiatives like this, which offer emerging talents valuable opportunities for growth, visibility, and artistic exchange. Supporting and promoting young talent means investing in the future of music and helping nurture the next generation of artists."

Fabio Luisi, President of the Jury

Applications

Applications for the Thomas and Doris Ammann Prize for Young Conductors may be submitted via the Muvac platform from 30 October 2026 to 28 February 2027. Applicants must be under 37 years of age on 24 June 2027.

Information on eligibility, the required application materials and the application procedure, together with access to Muvac, is available on the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester website.

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Further information: **Competition website**