

# LIONS OF VIRGINIA



## BLAND MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION, INC.



## BLAND CHAIRPERSON'S HANDBOOK

**January 2, 2026**

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## FORWARD

This handbook is designed primarily to provide the rules, regulations and other information for Bland Chairs at the Club, Zone/Region, District, and State levels, and for club presidents. All information contained herein supersedes all previous rules and regulations and goes into effect on July 1, 2018. Any questions or requests for additional information should be addressed to the Bland Foundation Chair as listed on the front page of this handbook.

## GOAL AND PURPOSE

Lions Clubs International is the largest service organization in the world. Since 1917, Lions have been meeting the needs of local communities and the world. Currently, 1.4 million men and women in 210 countries and geographic areas conduct vision and health screenings, build parks, support eye hospitals, award scholarships, assist youth, provide help in time of disaster, and muchmore.

The goal of the Lions of Virginia Bland Music Scholarship Foundation, Inc. (Bland Foundation) is to promote cultural and educational opportunities for musically talented young people in Virginia (primarily of high school age). This goal is achieved through progressive music competitions beginning in February at the local Lions club level, and culminating in a state competition in which twelve (12) finalists (2 per district) from the three (3) Lions districts in Virginia compete during the State Convention in May. The Bland Foundation oversees these competitions, and also provides music scholarships to the top twelve finalists. The scholarships must be used for college tuition, music lessons, summer music programs or other music education endeavors. This program has been providing scholarships to gifted music students, both vocal and instrumental, since 1948. As tuition and lessons are extremely expensive, the Bland Foundation provides needed assistance to these talented, hard-working music students and their families.

Many of the scholarship winners in the program, upon graduation from high school, have been accepted into the top music schools, conservatories and colleges in the United States. Finalists from the 2017-2018 state contests have enrolled in the Peabody Conservatory of Music of the John Hopkins University, the Juilliard School of Music, Oberlin School of Music, Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, Columbia University, Manhattan School of Music, Carnegie Mellon Musical Theater Program, Yale University and the Earl V. Moore School of Music at the University of Michigan and Princeton.

The **purpose** of the Lions of Virginia Music Scholarship Foundation, Inc. is to provide a living memorial to James A. Bland, an African-American who was a popular composer in the late 1800's. In 1940, the Lions of Virginia were instrumental in having Bland's composition, *Carry Me Back To Old Virginia*, adopted as the official state song. In 1948 they established the Bland competition to honor this prolific writer of America. *Carry Me Back To Old Virginia* is now the state song emeritus, but the Lions of Virginia still honor James Allen Bland and his place in American musical history through this successful, well-established program for encouraging and supporting musically gifted youth in Virginia.

## MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the corporation consists of those individuals who are members in good standing in their respective Lions Clubs. Honorary, non-voting members may be appointed from within or outside the Lions organization. There are no dues required by any member.

## DIRECTORS

The Directors of the Foundation consist of: (a) six (6) LOVF Bland Music Scholarship Foundation Chairs representing the three (3) districts (L,C,I); that are appointed by their respective District Governors and (b) Lions, not to exceed five (5), appointed for a term of one (1) year, by the Chair of the Foundation. No one District shall have more than three (3) representatives on the Board. The Foundation shall have no fewer than eight (8) Directors and no more than eleven (11).

The duties of the Board of Directors are to:

- transact such business of the Foundation as shall be necessary
- approve all expenditures and contributions consistent with the purposes of the Foundation
- report to the Foundation on the activities and financial status
- prepare and submit to the Foundation a budget for the fiscal year
- appoint any committee

Regular meetings of the Directors are held when needed at such time and place as the Directors shall determine.

Special meetings of the Directors are held when called by the Chair, or when requested by a majority of the Directors, at such time and place as the Chair shall determine.

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Directors, except as otherwise specifically provided in the Bylaws.

## OFFICERS

The Officers of the Foundation are a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair assumes the duties of Chair of the Foundation.

## DONATIONS

Scholarship sponsorships by an individual or a club should be sent directly to the LOV Bland Music Scholarship Foundation, Inc. at 6213 Settlers Trail Pl, Gainesville, VA 20155- 1376. The Foundation Treasurer will notify the contributor's district treasurer of the amount that the club (or club's member) contributed so that proper credit will be given for their President's 100% Award.

**Clubs sending donations other than scholarships to their districts should send these checks directly to their district treasurers.** The district treasurer, after deducting the expenses of the District Bland Contest only, will forward the balance to the Bland Foundation Treasurer at the end of the year. Club/Zone and Region contests should be financed solely by the participating clubs themselves.

*Each district treasurer should send his District's Bland Chair a list of all contributions received by the district that year for the Bland Scholarships. This will enable the District Bland Chair to compliment those clubs contributing, and to encourage the other clubs to participate in this unique LOV project.*

The Bland Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization. Federal ID # is 11-3789354.

## BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

It is recommended that when a club is budgeting for the Bland Foundation that the budget be divided into two (2) categories: Bland Foundation Contribution Budget, and Bland Competition Budget.

The **Bland Foundation Contribution Budget** is the \$3-per-member contribution (we really would appreciate \$5) from all clubs whether they sponsor a competition or not. It is this contribution that helps finance the scholarship program and should be sent directly to your District's Treasurer, marked for the Bland Foundation. Money left over after the District's Bland Contest expenses have been paid should be forwarded to the Bland Foundation's Treasurer.

The **Bland Competition Budget** is designed for clubs that are holding Bland Competition and should include the following:

- The amount of rent for the location in which the club's contest will be held
- The amount needed for the judges' compensation; investigate the going rate in your area
- The amount to have the piano tuned, if necessary
- The amount to have programs and certificates printed
- **The club's share of the expenses of the Zone/Region competition.** Funds left over after this competition must be returned in a pro-rated share to the clubs that contributed to the Zone/Region competition unless they have all agreed to use the funds in another manner, such as forwarding it to the next level of competition.
- **The Bland Foundation will now pay for the out of town contestants' hotel rooms.** If possible, sponsoring clubs are encouraged to provide some funds for other expenses, such as meals and gas. This is solely at the discretion of the club, and not a requirement.
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners should be awarded official Bland certificates ([www.blandfoundation.org](http://www.blandfoundation.org)). The club may use their discretion in awarding additional honorariums (cash, bonds, gift certificates, etc.). **Moderation at the club level is strongly encouraged, as Zone, Region, District, and State competition need to be funded, as well.**

All questions concerning budgeting should be addressed to the Bland Foundation's Chair or Treasurer.

# Lions of Virginia Bland Music Scholarship Foundation

## REGISTRATION AND RULES OF THE COMPETITION FOR VOCALIST OR INSTRUMENTALIST

The Annual Bland Music Scholarship Program was established in 1948 to assist and promote cultural and educational opportunities for the musically talented youth of Virginia. The program consists of elimination contests starting at club level and continuing through "State Final Contest" and is administered by the following rules:

1. Any student, vocalist or instrumentalist, of elementary, middle or senior high school age, or home schooled, must be properly sponsored by a Virginia Lions Club. Any student who resides in or attends school in Virginia (or within a club's jurisdiction) is eligible to participate.
2. **Contestants**
  - a. Are allowed to enter only one club contest annually and may participate in either the vocal or instrumental division but not both. Students who enter more than one contest may be banned from future participation.
  - b. **Shall render only one composition and are allowed only eight (8) minutes to present it.** In order to keep within the 8-minute time limit, contestant may eliminate part of his or her composition. The part eliminated shall be marked on the score for the information of the judges. A one-point penalty (per judge) for every five seconds exceeding the eight-minute limit, with a grace period for the first five seconds, will be assessed at the state level. The point penalty may be enforced at the district, zone/region, or club level at the discretion of the Competition Bland Chair. In case of a tie, the judges shall determine a winner.
  - c. Must memorize his or her composition.
  - d. **Shall furnish the required number copies of his or her composition** as defined by the club, zone/region, district and state chair.
  - e. Lions of Virginia shall provide no instrument for contestant other than a piano. Instrumentalists other than pianists, and vocalists, must have an accompanist, if dictated by the composition. **Accompaniment must be provided with musical instruments played by live performers, other than the contestants themselves. No prerecorded accompaniment or amplification is allowed.**
  - f. All contestants must compete on the date and at the place and time of the scheduled club, zone/region, district or state contest.
3. **Judges**
  - a. Judges for the competition shall be competent teachers or performers of music not connected with the contestant or the sponsoring club.
  - b. When appropriate, there should be 2 judges for each division of music (vocal and instrumental). **Two judges for each division are required at the District and State levels.**
  - c. Shall score the contestant on his or her musical performance.
  - d. Score sheets shall be given to the contestant after the contest.
4. **Awards shall be furnished by the State Bland Foundation Committee as follows:**
  - a. Official certificates (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places, and participation) at the club, zone/region, district and state levels.
  - b. State Scholarships for BOTH Vocal and Instrumental WINNERS are:

▪ First Place SCHOLARSHIPS	\$3,000 each
▪ Second Place SCHOLARSHIPS	\$2,500 each
▪ Third Place SCHOLARSHIPS	\$2,000 each
▪ Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Place SCHOLARSHIPS	\$1,500 each
  - c. Scholarships are not transferable, and those not claimed within five (5) years of the date of State Competition will be forfeited.
  - d. State first place winners are NOT eligible to compete again.
  - e. Scholarships are payable only to a college or school of music, summer music program or to a private/public music teacher. Requests for payment to a college or school must be accompanied by the winner's course curriculum, which must include a music course, and a statement from the school indicating an outstanding balance of at least the payment amount being requested. Requests for payment to private and public teachers must include a signed statement for lessons given the student, showing the dates, the number of lesson hours, and fee per hour. **Scholarships cannot be used for expenses incurred prior to the competition date.** In order for scholarships to be disbursed, the aforementioned information must be submitted to the Bland Foundation, c/o PCC Clark Vandergrift, 3226 Bromley Road, Roanoke, VA 24018.

All participants are required to SIGN a copy of the "Registration Form" certifying their familiarity therewith and their acceptance thereof.

The contest will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date & Time) \_\_\_\_\_ (Location & Address)

Complete Registration Form and mail to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Contact Email Address / Phone Number)

Please return Registration Form on or before \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Lions of Virginia Bland Music Scholarship Foundation**  
**REGISTRATION FORM FOR VOCALIST OR INSTRUMENTALIST**

Please enter me in the competition to be held on \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Date & Time)

at \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Location & Address)

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(First, Middle, Last)

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State) \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip)

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Voice \_\_\_\_\_

Composition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer \_\_\_\_\_

Accompanist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Music Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to be photographed at the competition for publicity purposes: YES    NO (circle one)  
I have read and I accept the rules and regulations of the competition:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Contestant, or if under 18, Parent's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date signed)

## CHECKLIST FOR CLUB BLAND CHAIRS

- **District Governors** shall appoint a District Bland Chair to serve for a period of one year. Each **Club President**, at the beginning of his/her term of office, shall appoint a Bland Chair, (should they choose to hold a competition), and immediately furnish the appointee's name, address, phone number, and Email address to the Zone/Region Chair, and to the District Bland Chair. Zone/Region Chairs and District Bland Chairs will oversee the organization and running of their own competition.
- Start your planning early (September-October). Refer to "Budget Considerations" on page 4.
- Set a competition date in February. (Zone and Region contests are held in March, District in April, and State at the convention in May).
- The supply of official Bland forms, including certificates, judges score sheets, Registration and Rules of the Competition forms, winner reports, etc., are available on the Bland Foundation website ([www.blandfoundation.org](http://www.blandfoundation.org)). Review these documents and perhaps hold a meeting to familiarize your committee with these items.
- Obtain a place to hold your competition. Suggested places: high school band or choral room or auditorium; area churches. Most important is to make sure a good piano that is in tune is available—preferably a grand or baby grand piano. Ask if the cost of the venue could be donated to the Lions.
- Obtain judges. Four judges (2 vocal and 2 instrumental) are required at the district and state levels. At all other levels, chairs should simply use their best judgment for determining the number and type of judges. For example, if there are 3 vocal and 8 instrumental contestants, 1 vocal and 2 instrumental judges would suffice. If there are 8 vocal and 8 instrumental contestants, you may wish to secure 4 judges- 2 for each category. Suggestions for judges: music teachers/directors from schools, churches, colleges, members of military bands (individuals with degrees in music education or performance). Secure your judges a month or even more preceding your competition date, or when you get a feel for how many vocalists and instrumentalists will be participating. If you feel more comfortable hiring way ahead of time, judges who play piano or violin are a good bet, as we get many contestants who play those instruments. Judges may not be Lions, nor have students participating in the competition. Conflicts of interest are to be avoided.
- Promotion of the competition should begin early (possibly in October). Contact private music teachers as well as band, orchestra, choral directors, church choir directors and furnish them with "Registration and Rules of the Competition" forms. **NOTE:** So that students can get a head start in preparing themselves, make calls to teachers/directors as soon as possible (least by October and early November). Check also to determine dates for state music contests and local school musicals to avoid conflicting with them. Distribute competition information to all area teachers/directors whether they have responded in the past or not. **Also, contact past contestants if they have not yet graduated from high school, their teachers and their accompanists to "spread the word".** Your competition will be more successful if you work closely with the local music teachers.
- Set a deadline for having the applications in your hands. (Suggest 2 weeks before competition. Refer exceptions to the District Chair). If competition is not filled to capacity, accept late registrations at your discretion. Make contact with each contestant as soon as registration is received.
- Advertise your competition in local newspapers, and as widely as possible. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and Email address in the ads.
- Prepare a program for your audience. It is a good idea to include the program as part of a club newsletter, if available. Suggest you have your competition in conjunction with a Club meeting making the Bland competition your program. This will automatically provide an audience. If you wish to provide a program, have it printed advance. Suggestions: You may list contestants according to age, beginning with the youngest, or have a random drawing to determine order, or alternate type of instruments and voices. Alternate contestants –instrumental, vocal, instrumental etc.
- Fill in the contestant data on the "Judges Score Sheet", timing sheets, tally sheets, and certificates **prior** to the competition. May use Participant version of certificate for everyone. After winners are determined at the competition, affix 1st and 2nd place ribbons or seals on the winners' certificates (e.g. Avery Notarial Seal 5868).
- Make multiple calls or emails to the contestants to remind them of the competition date and to make sure you have a commitment from them. Check to make sure the spelling of their names and pieces of music are

correct for the program (use Google or Youtube for this). Inform them of the warm up times, time to arrive, what to wear, etc.

- Keep records for future reference. Keep applications to help build next year's competition.
- **District Bland Chairs are responsible for reserving 4 rooms in March for their contestants at the state convention hotel.**

#### DAY OF THE COMPETITION:

- Have contestants and judges come 15-30 minutes before the stated time for the competition to begin.
- Brief judges once more on the rules (contestants may skip certain parts to stay within the time limits, judges may erase and change scores, etc.). Instruct judges to total score sheets after each contestant has performed, prior to giving them to the Tally Committee. They are encouraged to adjust scores as needed to arrive at the best results. Judges must hold the score sheets until the contest is completed.
- Most important, judges should try to be consistent. **Judges may confer to have a better outcome (only if they wish to do so) but may not collude.** The goal is to give constructive criticism and praise.
- At the conclusion of the competition, have the judges complete their score sheets. The tally committee will determine that the score sheets have been completed and added correctly.
- It is extremely important that the total points scored for each contestant correspond to his or her placement. Advise the Tally Committee to determine that the "Judges Score Sheet" totals are correct and complete, subtract time penalty points where applicable (when a contestant has an accompanist, the time is measured from the contestant's first note to the final note of the piece) and to summarize the scores before the winners are declared. The tally committee must confirm the placement results with the judges.
- **TIES:** In the event of a tie, the category "Complexity of Composition" is the tiebreaker. It stands to reason that if two students perform equally well, the one playing the more difficult piece should win. Judges should be given an opportunity to deliberate and make a decision. Every effort should be made to choose the winner based on the musical performances, rather than age - that is the reason you have hired the judges!
- Present certificates and publicize winners in the local paper. Emphasize that the 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner is the alternate in the event that the winner is not able to participate at the next level.
- Fill out the "Bland Music Winner Report Form" indicating the first place and second place winners of the club competition to the Zone/Region Chair and to the District Bland Chair ASAP (no later than February 28); (Club chairs clearly indicate that this is a club competition when sending the report to your District Bland Chair.) Winner Report Forms from the Zone/Region competition should be sent to the District Bland Chair ASAP (no later than March 31); and Winner Report Forms from the District Bland Chair should be sent to the District Governor and to the Foundation Bland Chair ASAP (no later than April 30). **These dates are intended to assure orderly progression of competition and not to serve to disqualify any contestant whose sponsoring Club, Zone/Region or District finds it necessary to make reasonable exceptions.**
- For more information, refer to the audiotape posted on the Bland Foundation website.
- **NOTE:** It is the duty of the sponsoring club to see that its winners have the information necessary to appear at the next level to which they have advanced, especially District winners. **The Bland Foundation will now pay for the out of town contestants' hotel rooms.** Sponsoring clubs are encouraged to provide some funds for other expenses, such as meals and gas. This is solely at the discretion of the club, and not a requirement.

Example of workforce needed at the competition (volunteers can certainly perform more than 1 job)

Greeter/Handing out programs

Checking in contestants and their music

Overseeing the warm-ups

Judges' assistant

Emcee (practice pronunciation of names of students and composers)

Stagehand to adjust piano lid, setup chairs

3 timekeepers (if needed)

2-4 talliers (as needed for number of contestants)

Photographer (if desired) Refreshment committee (optional) Cost of competition can vary greatly. Judges may volunteer their time and venues may be found that are free. Refreshments and printing costs may be donated. Refer to "Budget Considerations" on page 4. **It is vital for a club/zone to have funds available to share the cost of the next level of competition (zone or region).**

Lions of Virginia Bland Music Scholarship Foundation, Inc.

JUDGE'S SCORE SHEET

District \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Club \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Voice \_\_\_\_\_

Composition \_\_\_\_\_ Composer \_\_\_\_\_

Judging For	Max. Score	Contestant's Score	Comments
<b>FAITHFULNESS TO SCORE</b> Accuracy of pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and articulation.	<b>25</b>		
<b>TECHNIQUE</b> Coordination, tone, control, intonation, support, diction, fluency, bowing and pedaling.	<b>25</b>		
<b>INTERPRETATION</b> Style, balance, sensitivity, phrasing and vitality.	<b>25</b>		
<b>STAGE PRESENCE</b>	<b>5</b>		
<b>*COMPLEXITY OF COMPOSITION</b> (simple, difficult, complex)	<b>15</b>		
<b>MEMORY</b>	<b>5</b>		
<b>TOTAL POINTS (maximum)</b>	<b>100</b>		

**General Comments:** \*As this mark will be used to break any ties, judges should be discriminating when awarding these points. Note: Judges must hold these sheets until the contest is over or as long as is necessary to make a fair decision.

## Tally Sheet: Instrumental Contestants

## Instrumental Winners

## 1<sup>st</sup> Place

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

## Tally Sheet: Vocal Contestants

## Vocal Winners

## 1<sup>st</sup> Place

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

# Timing Sheets

**Don't forget - Time starts when the SOLOIST begins, not the accompaniment.  
Time ends when the piece ends.**

Name

Total Time  
(mins:secs)

Lions of Virginia Bland Music Scholarship Foundation

**WINNER REPORT FORM**

District \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Club \_\_\_\_\_

**VOCAL DIVISION**

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parents or  
(First, middle, & last) \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Club Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Voice \_\_\_\_\_

Composition Rendered in Competition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer \_\_\_\_\_ Accompanist \_\_\_\_\_

Composition to be Rendered in Next Competition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer \_\_\_\_\_ Accompanist \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

**INSTRUMENTAL DIVISION**

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parents or  
(First, middle, & last) \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Club Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

Composition Rendered in Competition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer \_\_\_\_\_ Accompanist \_\_\_\_\_

Composition to be Rendered in Next Competition \_\_\_\_\_

Composer \_\_\_\_\_ Accompanist \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Date of Competition	No. of Clubs Participating	Number of Vocalists	Number of Instrumentalists	Total Audience
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

\*\*\*\*\*

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Vocal \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Instrumental \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

COPY TO:

\*Zone or Region Bland Chairperson

District Bland Chairperson

State Bland Chairperson (District results only)

CERTIFIED BY:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Regional contests are held in some areas in lieu of Zone contests.

The Lions of Virginia Multiple District 24  
Bland Foundation Music Scholarship Competition

*Certificate to recognize musical excellence*

*Awarded to:*

For

Level

Date:

Title:

Title:

