

# **2025 Manitoba Country Music Association Awards (MCMA Awards)**

## **Rules and Regulations**

There are currently twenty-three (23) MCMA Awards. The description of each award can be found in this document starting on Page Four. Award Category NO. 20 Janice Starodub Impact Award and Award Category NO. 21 Hall of Fame Inductee are voted on and determined by the Manitoba Country Music Association Board of Directors.

The selection of the remaining twenty-one (21) awards goes through a two-stage balloting process. Only MCMA Industry members can participate in the nomination process for Type 1 Awards and Second Ballot voting and must be registered with the MCMA as an Industry member before closing of the Second Ballot on September 30, 2025.

## **The Awards and Balloting Process**

### **FIRST BALLOT**

**Nominations open July 28, 2025**

#### **Type 1 Awards – Artist and Industry Awards**

For Categories NO. 1 Female Artist of the Year, NO. 2 Male Artist of the Year, NO. 3 Group or Duo of the Year, NO. 4 NCI-FM Indigenous Country Music Award, NO. 6 Roots Artist, Duo or Group of the Year, NO. 7 Emerging Artist of the Year, NO. 8 to NO. 11 All Star Band of the Year, NO. 13 Single of the Year, NO. 14 Album of the Year, NO. 15 Interactive Artist, Duo or Group of the Year.

Each eligible MCMA Industry member may nominate TWO AND ONLY TWO Contenders in each category. The six (6) Contenders receiving the most nominations in each category will appear on the Second Ballot as Nominees, providing they meet the eligibility requirements as determined by the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee. Each Contender must receive a minimum of three (3) nominations in any category on the First Ballot in order to be eligible to appear on the Second Ballot. Second Ballot Contenders (Nominees) are required to be Industry members of the MCMA in good standing by September 1, 2025.

#### **Type 2 Awards – Creative Content Awards**

For Categories NO. 5 Fay Walker Song of the Year (Songwriters) and NO. 12 Music Video of the Year

Each eligible MCMA Industry member who wishes to be considered for an award in Category NO. 5 must submit a song meeting the eligibility requirements as determined by the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee by August 2, 2025 to the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee. Submissions will be accepted by email only to [submissions@manitobacma.com](mailto:submissions@manitobacma.com). Submissions will be accepted in any audible audio format including (audio file attachments, YouTube links, Spotify link, Google Drive link, etc.) File or format submissions must be easily accessible and playable. Paid subscription-based submission links to be limited to Spotify only. Submissions must be accompanied by completed Submission Form provided on the MCMA website. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Each eligible MCMA Industry member who wishes to be considered for an award in Category NO. 12 must submit a music video meeting the eligibility requirements as determined by the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee by Aug 2, 2025 to the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee. Submissions will be accepted by email only to [submissions@manitobacma.com](mailto:submissions@manitobacma.com). Submissions will be accepted in any viewable video format including (video file attachments, YouTube links, Google Drive link, etc.) File or format submissions must be easily accessible and playable. Submissions must be accompanied by completed Submission Form provided on the MCMA website. Late submissions will not be accepted. The six (6) Contenders receiving the most nominations in each category will appear on the Second Ballot as Nominees.

### **Type 3 Awards – Fan Member Nominated Awards**

For Categories NO. 16 Radio Station of the Year, NO. 17 Radio On-Air Personality or Team of the Year, NO. 18 Festival or Event of the Year, NO. 19 Venue of the Year, NO. 22 Cover/Tribute Artist, Duo or Group of the Year, NO. 23 Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year.

Each eligible MCMA member (Fan or Industry) may nominate TWO AND ONLY TWO Contenders in each category. The six (6) Contenders receiving the most nominations in each category will appear on the Second Ballot as Nominees, providing they meet the eligibility requirements as determined by the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee. Each Contender must receive a minimum of three (3) nominations in any category on the First Ballot in order to be eligible to appear on the Second Ballot. Second Ballot Contenders (Nominees) are required to be Industry of the MCMA members in good standing by September 1, 2025.

The top six (6) Contenders receiving the most nominations in the Radio Station of the Year, Radio On-Air Personality or Team of the Year, Cover/Tribute Artist, Duo or Group of the Year and Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year will appear on the Second Ballot as well as an Online Public Voting Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot timeline.

In the event of a sixth-place tie, a weighted system will be used to determine the sixth place Nominee. Each Nominee in the final spot tie position will have an extra point assigned to their total count for each MCMA Industry member that had put the Nominee's name forward. If the weighted system results in a sixth-place tie, the MCMA Executive Team will vote on the final position Nominee.

## **SECOND BALLOT**

### **Voting opens September 12, 2025**

From the list of Nominees supplied, each eligible MCMA Industry member may vote for ONE AND ONLY ONE Nominee in each category. In order to vote in the Second Ballot, you must be a MCMA Industry member in good standing before the close of the Second Ballot on September 30, 2025.

For each category, the Nominee receiving the highest number of votes within that category will be announced as the winner at the Awards Presentation on Saturday, November 8, 2025. In the event of a tie, the MCMA Executive Team will vote to determine the Second Ballot winner.

### **Additional Balloting Information**

There must be three (3) Contenders after the First Ballot in any particular category in order for that category to remain in that current year. Categories with three (3) or more Contenders after the First Ballot will move directly to the Second Ballot. If there are less than three (3) Contenders, eligibility requirements may be reviewed and altered by the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee to allow for more Contenders or the category may be placed on hiatus for the current year only. Only those Contenders within a category placed on hiatus may be eligible for the year immediately following the hiatus.

The MCMA will open each stage of the balloting process with an announcement to members by email. By sending this announcement to the last email address provided to the Association by the member, the Association then considers the member deemed to have received their login information within the specified period of time after the mailing date. Voting rules are subject to change at the discretion of the MCMA Board of Directors by a majority vote at a scheduled MCMA board meeting or special meeting. It is the responsibility of the Contenders to notify the MCMA, in writing, of changes to ballot information prior to September 5, 2025.

Information as it appears on the Second Ballot is final. MCMA Award Nominees have the right, should they so desire, to have their name eliminated from any particular category. Nominees will be notified as to their nomination prior to the Nominee Announcement and the commencement of the Second Ballot (September 12, 2025). Please contact the MCMA Awards and Balloting Committee Chair by email at [manitobacma@gmail.com](mailto:manitobacma@gmail.com) prior to the commencement of the Second Ballot to remove your name, if so desired.

### **The Awards Eligibility**

The eligibility period for the 2025 MCMA Awards will be valid from June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. Recordings must have been commercially released to radio and/or available for consumer purchase during the eligibility period. Commercially released recordings include distribution through digital platforms (i.e. iTunes, Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, etc.), unless otherwise specified in individual category eligibility requirements. Where a Contender's/Nominee's eligibility is not based on the commercial release of a recording during the eligibility period, at least one in-person performance by the Contender/Nominee must take place during the eligibility period.

All Contenders/Nominees must meet one (1) of the following criteria of eligibility:

- A) Canadian citizen born in the province of Manitoba, OR
- B) Canadian citizen maintaining permanent residency in the province of Manitoba for a period of two consecutive years, of which one of those years was during the eligibility period, OR
- C) Have landed immigrant status maintaining permanent residency in the province of Manitoba for a period of two consecutive years, of which one of those years was during the eligibility period.

Exemption: On a collaboration of work at least one of the contributors must meet one (1) of the criteria of eligibility as stated above.

Exemption: Within a Group or Duo at least 50% of the contributors must meet one (1) of the criteria of eligibility as stated above.

All final Nominees are required to be Industry members of the MCMA in good standing by September 1, 2025. On a collaboration of work at least one (1) of the contributors is required to be an Industry member of the MCMA in good standing. Within a Group or Duo at least 50% of the contributing members are required to be Industry members of the MCMA in good standing.

**The awards description below are the eligibility criteria and additional details on each of the twenty-two (23) MCMA Awards:**

**CATEGORY NO. 1 FEMALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is based upon individual performance, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Artist. All Nominees must have a qualified “Single” or “Album” to hold a nomination in this category. The Artist must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 2 MALE ARTIST OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is based upon individual performance, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Artist. All Nominees must have a qualified “Single” or “Album” to hold a nomination in this category. The Artist must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 3 GROUP OR DUO OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

A Group or Duo is defined as an Act, composed of two or more people, who normally perform together. The Act may include an individual who has performed, or currently does perform, as a Solo Artist under a name different than that of the Group or Duo. A Group or Duo whose name capitalizes on the name of a Solo Artist is not permitted to stand for nomination in this category. This Award is based on the performance of the Group or Duo as a unit, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to each core member of the Group or Duo. All Nominees must have a qualified “Single” or “Album” to hold a nomination in this category. At least 50% of the Group or Duo must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 4 NCI-FM INDIGENOUS COUNTRY MUSIC AWARD (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is given to an Indigenous Country Act (Solo, Duo or Group) based upon the performance of the Act, either on record or in person, within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). The Solo Artist must be of Indigenous descent (First Nations, Métis or Inuit). The Group or Duo must be led by a person of Indigenous descent (First Nations, Métis or Inuit) or at least 50% of the Group or Duo must be of Indigenous descent (First Nations, Métis or Inuit).

**CATEGORY NO. 5 FAY WALKER SONG OF THE YEAR: (Songwriters) (Type 2 Award)**

This Award is not based on the Songwriter’s/Songwriters’ body of work, but rather an individual song released commercially during the eligibility period. A song from a *Greatest Hits* album is eligible if not previously nominated. The Fay Walker Song of the Year from the previous year is not eligible in the current year. A Songwriter(s) may receive multiple nominations determined by the release of their songs

within the eligibility period. Consideration should be given to lyrics, music and public acceptance of the song. A Manitoba Act need not have recorded the song. This Award is presented to (each of) the Manitoba Songwriter(s). All songs submitted as per the requirements as outlined in “The Awards and Balloting Process”, will be reviewed by a jury appointed by the MCMA Board. This jury shall consist of three (3) board members and three (3) Industry members in good standing to be selected by majority MCMA Board vote. If a board member is an Artist, they shall be prohibited from being on the jury. To qualify for the Second Ballot, the jury shall score the songs using a pre-determined and approved by majority MCMA Board vote scoring criteria to be as fair and free of subjective-bias as possible. The top six (6) highest scoring songs shall stand as Contenders for the Second Ballot. The Manitoba Songwriter(s) must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 6 ROOTS ARTIST, DUO OR GROUP OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is given to a Roots Act (Solo, Duo or Group) whose music is based on traditional country styles, but through innovations and originality, is different from what is considered mainstream country. The Roots category embraces a multitude of musical styles, including, but not limited to Alternative Country, Americana, Canadiana, Bluegrass, Celtic, Country-Blues, Folk, Gospel, Honky-tonk and Western Swing. This Award is based on the performance of the Act, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to a Solo Artist or each core member of the Group or Duo. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 7 EMERGING ARTIST OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This category is open only to those artists who have never before won the Emerging Artist Award and who have never before won the Female Artist of the Year, Male Artist of the Year, Group or Duo of the Year, Roots Artist, Duo or Group of the Year. Nominees in this category are eligible in other categories in the current year. This Award is based on the performance of the Act, either on record or in person within the eligibility period. One Award is presented to the Act. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORIES NO. 8 TO 11 ALL STAR BAND OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award recognizes four (4) individual Instrumentalists on recording or on stage. One Award is presented for each of the following: Guitar, Bass, Drums and Specialty (Banjo, Fiddle, Mandolin, Keys, Pedal Steel). The Instrumentalists must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 12 MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR (Type 2 Award)**

This Award is for an original audio-visual program not more than ten minutes in length featuring the performance of not more than one song or medley. The video should be judged on all audio and video elements, artistic performance, video concept and production. Lyric only videos are not eligible. Lyric videos with artistic performance are eligible. The video must have been first released for viewing by the general public, either on television or online, during the eligibility period. The Music Video of the Year from the previous year is not eligible in the current year. One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). All videos submitted as per the requirements as outlined in “The Awards and Balloting Process” will be reviewed by a jury appointed by the MCMA Board. This jury shall consist of three (3) board members and three (3) Industry members in good standing to be selected by majority MCMA Board vote. If a board member is an Artist, they shall be prohibited from being on the jury. To qualify for the second round of nominations, the jury shall score the songs using a pre-determined and approved by

majority MCMA Board vote scoring criteria to be as fair and free of subjective-bias as possible. The top six (6) highest scoring videos shall stand as Contenders for the Second Ballot. The video must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 13 SINGLE OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is for individual tracks and album tracks that have been released as Singles during the eligibility period. The Single of the Year from the previous year is not eligible in the current year. One Award is presented to the Act (Artist, Duo or Group). A Single Is defined as a song that was released digitally or to commercial radio during the eligibility period. Any nominations that do not meet the criteria shall be voided. In the event that the category is unable to obtain a minimum of three (3) singles to meet criteria the Board can vote to waive the criteria to open up further eligibility.

**CATEGORY NO. 14 ALBUM OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is for an album as a whole unit. An Album is defined as a piece of work that compiles five (5) or more songs and has a total running time of at least twenty (20) minutes. For the category of Album of the Year, an Album must meet the following requirements:

- A) The Album must have been commercially released during the eligibility period.
- B) The Album of the Year from the previous year is not eligible in the current year.
- C) The Album should be judged on all aspects including, but not limited to, artistic performance, musical background, engineering, packaging, design, art and layout.

One Award is presented to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group). If *Greatest Hits* albums do not qualify to meet both criteria points, the MCMA Board can vote to waive the criteria to open up further eligibility.

**CATEGORY NO. 15 INTERACTIVE ARTIST, DUO OR GROUP OF THE YEAR (Type 1 Award)**

This Award is presented to an Act (Solo, Duo or Group) who participates in meaningful digital interaction with fans within the current eligibility period. Voters will give consideration to all aspects of an Act's interaction with fans via social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat etc.) and website (content, graphic design, layout, etc.) including, but not limited to, quantity and quality, engagement and reach, total followers across platforms, total digital streams, intent or purpose of livestream(s), originality and the overall impact of the performance(s). One Award is presented to the Solo Artist, or each core member of the Group or Duo. A Solo Artist must meet all eligibility criteria and at least 50% of a Group or Duo must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 16 RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award recognizes a Manitoba Radio Station that exemplifies the development of Manitoba country music talent through the presentation of music on their stations as well as through, but not limited to community involvement, promotions, leadership and recognition. One Award is presented to the Radio Station. To be eligible, the Radio Station must be in operation from June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025.

**CATEGORY NO. 17 RADIO ON-AIR PERSONALITY OR TEAM OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award recognizes the Manitoba Radio On-Air Personality or Team that exemplifies the development of Manitoba country music talent through the presentation on-air as well as through, but not limited to: community involvement, promotions, leadership and recognition. To be eligible, the Radio On-Air

Personality or Team must be actively on-air for a period from June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The six (6) Contenders for the Radio On-Air Personality or Team of the Year will be determined by all MCMA member nominations. For MCMA member voting, the six (6) Contenders will appear as Nominees on the Second Ballot. For public voting, there will be an Online Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot. In order to qualify for the Radio On-Air Personality or Team of the Year, the nominated On-Air Personality or Team must have been in active broadcasting during the period of June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The public and MCMA Industry member vote tallies will be combined for a total number of votes to determine the winner of the Radio On-Air Personality or Team of the Year. One Award will be presented to the On-Air Personality or Team. The On-Air Personality or Team must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 18 FESTIVAL OR EVENT OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award recognizes a Manitoba Festival or Event that exemplifies the development and promotion of Manitoba country music talent through the presentation of Manitoba country music talent as well as through, but not limited to community involvement, promotions, leadership and recognition. The six (6) Contenders for the Festival or Event of the Year will be determined by all MCMA member nominations. For MCMA member voting, the six (6) Contenders will appear as Nominees on the Second Ballot. For public voting, there will be an Online Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot. In order to qualify for Festival or Event of the Year, the nominated Festival or Event must have taken place during the period of June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The public and MCMA Industry member vote tallies will be combined for a total number of votes to determine the winner of the Festival of Event of the Year. One Award will be presented to the Festival or Event. The Festival or Event must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 19 VENUE OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award recognizes a Manitoba Venue that exemplifies the development and promotion of Manitoba country music talent through the presentation of Manitoba country music talent as well as through, but not limited to community involvement, promotions, leadership and recognition. The six (6) Contenders for the Venue of The Year will be determined by all MCMA member nominations. For MCMA member voting, the six (6) Contenders will appear as Nominees on the Second Ballot. For public voting, there will be an Online Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot. In order to qualify for Venue of the Year the nominated Venue must have been in active operation during the period of June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The public and MCMA Industry member vote tallies will be combined for a total number of votes to determine the winner of the Venue of the Year Award. One Award will be presented to the Venue. The Venue must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 20 JANICE STARODUB IMPACT AWARD (MCMA Board Vote)**

This Award recognizes an Individual, Group, Business or Organization that is instrumental in the development and promotion of Manitoba talent. The recipient of this Award is determined at the sole discretion of the MCMA Board of Directors. The Award may not be presented annually.

**CATEGORY NO. 21 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE (MCMA Board Vote)**

The MCMA Board of Directors selects Inductees into the Manitoba Country Music Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame honours an Individual, Group, Business or Organization that have made long-term contributions to the growth and development of country music in Manitoba. The recipient(s) may be living or

deceased, an artist, builder, broadcaster, but must be recognized for his/her/their achievement in Manitoba. The Award may not be presented annually.

**CATEGORY NO. 22 COVER/TRIBUTE ARTIST, DUO OR GROUP OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award will be given to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group) that regularly performs in Manitoba music venues. Acts eligible for this category perform predominantly country music cover songs in their sets or perform as a country music artist(s) tribute act. This Award is based on the performance and contribution to country music in Manitoba. The six (6) Contenders for the Cover/Tribute Artist, Duo or Group of the Year Award will be determined by MCMA member nominations. For MCMA member voting, the six (6) Contenders will appear as Nominees on the Second Ballot. For public voting, there will be an Online Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot. In order to qualify for the Cover/Tribute Artist, Duo or Group of the Year, the nominated Act must have performed in Manitoba during the period of June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The public and MCMA Industry member vote tallies will be combined for a total number of votes to determine the winner of the Cover/Tribute Artist, Duo or Group of the Year Award. One Award will be presented to the Act. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.

**CATEGORY NO. 23 FANS' CHOICE ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR (Type 3 Award)**

This Award will be given to the Act (Solo, Duo or Group) who has made the greatest achievements in all aspects of the entertainment field within the eligibility period. All nominees must have a qualified "Single" or "Album" to hold a nomination in this category. Voters should give consideration not only to recorded performances, but also to live performances, videos, social media presence, staging, public acceptance, attitude, leadership and overall contributions to country music. The six (6) Contenders for the Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year will be determined by all MCMA member nominations. For MCMA member voting, the six (6) Contenders will appear as Nominees on the Second Ballot. For public voting, there will be an Online Ballot coordinated with the Second Ballot. In order to qualify for the Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year, the nominated Act (Solo, Duo or Group) must have commercially released a recording during the period of June 1, 2024 to July 15, 2025. The public and MCMA Industry member vote tallies will be combined for a total number of votes to determine the winner of the Fans' Choice Entertainer of the Year. One Award will be presented to the Act. The Act must meet all eligibility criteria.