



Jury Assessment Preparation Guide 2025-2026

Professionals in the music industry volunteer their time as jurors to assess and score applications to the [Artist Development](#) and Juried Sound Recording programs ([Single/EP](#) and [Album](#)). FACTOR averages the juror scores and funds as many of the highest scoring applications as is possible within our budget. To learn more about our jury process, or apply to become a juror, see the [Become A Juror](#) page on our website.

General Tips

Start preparing early, especially if it's your first time applying to FACTOR. In order to create and submit an application, you must have an [artist profile and applicant profile](#). The artist profile tells FACTOR about your musical career; the applicant profile tells us who will receive funding if the project is approved.

The strongest applications have project plans that are specific and achievable. There are no tricks or secrets to being funded in our juried programs. Each application is scored on its merits alone.

Be professional. While creativity in your commercial art is essential, ensure your materials are also polished and factual.

Proofread your application. Double-check your submission, ensuring the material you submit can be easily read and understood.

Quality, not quantity. Present your best material for assessment and only materials which are relevant to your proposed project. Be clear and concise, as this will aid jurors tasked with reviewing multiple applications.

Choose your genre wisely. FACTOR uses genre to match applications with appropriate jurors. When selecting your primary genre, the only consideration to make is which specialized jury group would best understand your art and plans. We do not tell jurors which genre you selected – the place to communicate that is in your application materials.

Assessment Materials

Refer to this section if you have questions about the mandatory information you will need to provide in an Artist Development or Juried Sound Recording application. Some of these elements are not applicable to all three programs (as noted).

Artist Bio

Context. Your biography is your opportunity to give the jurors a quick foundation on your career to date. Assume the jurors have no prior knowledge and provide the essential information any juror needs to know.

Assessment Track(s)

Upload assessment tracks in MP3 format only. Maximum file size is 50MB.

Don't upload more assessment tracks than required. Submit one track for the Artist Development and the Juried Sound Recording Single/EP programs, two tracks for the Juried Sound Recording: Album program. Additional tracks will not be sent to jurors.

Which track should I upload? Choose eligible recording(s) that you feel are the strongest representation of your recent work. If you're not sure what an eligible track is, take a look at the program guidelines.

How good should the recording(s) be? The simple answer is as good as they can be within your resources. Jurors are advised not to judge tracks based on technical production quality as long as they can hear all of the musical elements. Jurors want to hear you at your best, so provide the best recording you can.

Instrumental tracks. If you submit an instrumental track, the jury will assess the lead melody instrument(s) by the same criteria they would for a lead vocal (see "Assessment Criteria" below).

Vocals. If you intend to include vocals on the final master of your assessment track(s), do not upload a recording that doesn't include vocals. One of FACTOR's scoring criteria is for vocals and lyrics.

Lyrics. Include lyrics for any non-instrumental assessment track(s) you upload, preferably in PDF format.

Artist Development Plan (Artist Development only)

The Artist Development Plan can be found under the Component Information section. Fill in the three main questions - detailing where you are in your career and what your strategy/plan for growth is in the coming year, estimating how much you will spend on each development activity, and describing how the development activities will contribute to your overall strategy/plan.

Marketing Plan (Juried Sound Recording: Single/EP and Album)

A strong marketing plan is essential. Concrete targets and projections are often a part of this. In this section you should be able to demonstrate recent market success and accelerating momentum in your career via quantifiable metrics in any applicable spheres of activity. Break down exactly how you're going to achieve your next goals and who you'll be working with.

New to marketing plans? Refer to our [sample marketing plan guide](#) available in the [Applicant Resources](#) page on our website.

Additional Materials

The following items could help improve your application:

- One or two professional photos.
- A producer or engineer biography if you're applying to make recordings. Limit the bio to one page.
- Letters of support from your team and extended network that will be assisting you with your project. If there are multiple letters, please combine them into a single PDF.
- Tour dates (past and upcoming): If you have many dates, summarize them. For example, it's sufficient to state you played 28 dates in Europe to rooms with capacities of 200 – 300 people instead of listing each date. Whenever possible, please group similar information into one combined PDF.

Assessment Criteria

Submissions are assessed on merits of:

- Song (writing, arrangement, composition, etc.)
- Vocals/Lyrics (style, range, *musical dynamic, *emotional impact, etc.)
- Musicality (performance, skill, technique, interpretation, etc.)
- Plan/Presentation (including additional materials)
- Team (consider organizational capabilities and support network if self-managed)
- Market Activity (audience engagement, live performance, airplay, and sales/streaming)

*If your assessment track(s) are instrumental or Jazz/Classical standards, the following elements will be considered in place of Vocals / Lyrics:

Instrumental tracks. Jurors will evaluate the lead melody instrument for the criteria listed under Vocals/Lyrics.

Jazz/Classical standards. Jurors will consider the artist's interpretation or arrangement where criteria would otherwise relate to original songs.

Resources

[Artist Development Program Guidelines](#)

[Juried Sound Recording: Single/EP Program Guidelines](#)

[Juried Sound Recording: Album Program Guidelines](#)

[Marketing Plan Guide](#)

[FACTOR's Glossary of Standard Terms and Business Policies](#)

[Guides & Tips for Applicants](#)