USC Discovery Scholars
Thornton School of Music
Submission Criteria

Eligibility

Discovery Scholars will:

- Have a minimum 3.5 overall GPA upon graduation
- Complete an undergraduate degree within five years
- Complete and submit an online application, letter of recommendation, and senior project as explained below by the annual deadline.

Online Application

Submit an online application via the Discovery Scholars website:
http://ahf.usc.edu/scholars/discovery/apply/

Letter of Recommendation

All Discovery Scholar submissions must include a letter of recommendation from a USC faculty member. Whenever possible, the letter should come from the faculty member who has supervised or mentored the student on the project being presented for consideration. The letter of recommendation should provide context for the student's work relative to: the student's overall achievement and performance in the program; the scope and quality of the student's contribution to the submitted project; the merit of the project relative to both the quality of work typically presented at the undergraduate level and the highest standards of the discipline; and the value and implications of the project in the field of study and beyond.

Project Criteria

Discovery Scholar candidates in the Thornton School may demonstrate exceptional accomplishment in several ways, which include:

- Composition
- Performance (solo or small ensemble)
- Recording and technology projects
- Songwriting
- Traditional scholarship

Artist's Statement

Candidates in the composition, performance, and songwriting areas should also submit a brief artist's statement (no more than 3 pages; single or double-spaced) in which the candidate reflects upon the experience(s) that inspired the project being submitted for consideration. This statement may also reflect on how the work being presented has had an impact on plans for post-graduate study, research, or employment. An abstract or other written narrative is required in place of the artist's statement for submissions in traditional scholarship or recording and technology.

Composition
Candidates should submit a score or a portfolio of at least 30 minutes of original music composed while enrolled at USC. The portfolio must include PDF scores of the composition(s) plus digital files of corresponding live audio and/or video recordings.

Performance
The portfolio for performance should include digital files of audio and/or video recordings of one or more performances that took place while enrolled at USC. In some rare cases, when the student has performed in an extremely prestigious venue, and a recording of the actual performance is not available, the student may submit a comparable recording accompanied by a written explanation of the significance of his or her appearance.

For each performance area below, submissions must consist of at least 30 minutes of music.

> ### Chamber Ensemble, Jazz Combo, or Popular Music Band
> Members of a small ensemble may file a joint submission. Only members of the group who satisfy the 3.5 GPA requirement are eligible for the Discovery Scholar designation. If the work of a small ensemble is recognized by the awarding of a Discovery Scholar Prize, the eligible group members will receive equal shares of the $10,000 prize.
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> ### Classical Instrumentalists
> The performance recording for classical instrumentalists should include a portfolio of music or a full-length concerto performance with orchestra.
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> ### Classical Vocalists
> The performance recording for classical vocalists should include a portfolio of music or a full principal role from a staged opera production.
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> ### Jazz Soloists
> The performance recording for jazz soloists should include a portfolio of music roughly equivalent to 5 or 6 charts.
>
> ### Popular Music Soloists
> The performance recording for popular music soloists should include a portfolio of music in the popular music idiom.

Recording and Technology Projects
Candidates in recording and/or technology should submit at least three recording or technology projects produced while enrolled at USC, preferably involving a variety of musical genres and ensemble sizes. The three projects combined should be at least 12 minutes in length. A substantial written narrative should also be included which explains the significance of the project.

Songwriting
Candidates in songwriting should submit a portfolio of at least 6 original songs, written while enrolled at USC. The portfolio must include a lead-sheet and digital files of audio and/or video recordings for each of the 6 songs.

Traditional Scholarship
Candidates should submit one or two substantial paper(s) on a topic that is either a focus of traditional music research (e.g., musicology, music teaching and learning, music theory and analysis, the music industry), or an interdisciplinary topic that explores music's relationship to other fields of study. The expected total length is a minimum of 50 double-spaced pages, not counting bibliography. This can be one 50-page paper or two papers of roughly 25 pages each.

School Contact
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