New Rules for 78th Emmy® Awards

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS:

LEGACY AWARD: The Television Academy has created a Legacy Award, recognizing a television program that has made a profound and lasting impact on its audience through its storytelling and has continued or sustained its relevance to society, culture and the industry.

Candidates for the Legacy Award shall be selected annually by the Governors Award committee (to be renamed the Special Awards Committee) and presented to the Board of Governors for a vote. Entries may be made by the Board of Governors, the Special Awards Committee or individuals, who may suggest recipients in a letter to the Television Academy.

Criteria for the Legacy Award shall include:

- A minimum of 60 episodes aired across a minimum of 5 seasons
- Continued or sustained relevance, influence or inspiration:
  - To a genre of television
  - To an existing or new audience
  - To society and culture

- Preference given to shows celebrating some type of anniversary in the year awarded
- Franchise properties must be considered as a whole and awarded as such (e.g. *Law & Order*, representing all *Law & Order* series)
- Award may only be bestowed on a program once (also, programs previously awarded the Governors Award are not eligible, and no future Governors Awards may go to a program)

The award will be given to the creator(s) and up to 4 lead Executive Producers/Showrunners whose tenure on the production significantly contributed to its longevity and success (as determined by the Television Academy) and main network/studio partner airing the program.

Like the Governors Award, the award given shall be the Emmy statuette.

The award may be given out during the Creative Arts Emmy ceremonies, the telecast Emmy ceremony, or the Hall of Fame ceremony.

TELEVISION MOVIE CATEGORY: The name of the Outstanding Television Movie category has been changed to Outstanding Movie to more accurately reflect the evolving landscape of cinematic content created for broadcast or streaming.

AI STATEMENT: The following statement has been added to the Rules & Procedures.

The Television Academy reserves the right to inquire about the use of AI in submissions. The core of our recognition remains centered on human storytelling, regardless of the tools used to bring it to life.

SHORT FORM PROGRAM CATEGORIES: Outstanding Short Form Nonfiction or Reality Series and Outstanding Short Form Comedy, Drama, or Variety Series will now be tracked categories. Each category will recognize two genres: original series and series based on/derived from other programming. The number of nominees will be proportional to the number of submissions in each genre, with at least one nomination for each genre.

SOUND MIXING CATEGORY SPLIT: Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Nonfiction or Reality Program has been split into two categories, Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Nonfiction Program and Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Reality Program.

MUSIC:
- Outstanding Music Composition for a Documentary/Nonfiction **or Reality** Program (Original Dramatic Score) will now allow eligibility for reality programs that contain an original dramatic score.
- Outstanding Main Title Theme Music has expanded eligibility to include main-on-end themes. Both a *Main Title Theme* (appearing at the beginning of the program) and a *Main-on-End Title Theme* (appearing after the final act, before the end credits/crawl) are eligible.

PRODUCTION DESIGN: The submission threshold has been adjusted from 60% new sets to 40% new sets, with up to three episodes eligible for submission. Once the entry reaches the 40% threshold no other episodes can be submitted.

EMMY-ELIGIBLE TITLES: The following peer groups have expanded titles for eligibility.

- **Casting:** Associate Casting Director has been added as an eligible title for scripted series categories (comedy, drama, and limited or anthology series). Associate Casting Director entrants must have had meaningful creative impact. All eligibility is subject to final and definitive review by the PGEC to determine principal creative contributions.

- **Costumes:** Key Costumer has been added as an eligible title.

- **Lighting, Camera & Technical Arts:** Director of Photography has been added as an eligible title in the Technical Direction and Camerawork categories, if the following conditions are met:
  o They are not eligible in any other category of the competition.
  o They are not submitting a petition to be included in the Lighting Direction/Lighting Design categories.
  o The Technical Director has been notified and approves their inclusion. Note: If there is no eligible Technical Director, the Director will be responsible for approving the DP.

- **Reality Programming:** Line Producer has been added as an eligible title in all reality programming categories.

ENTRANT CAPS: The maximum number of entrants to be included on a submission has been expanded for the following peer groups.

- **Sound Mixing:** All sound mixing categories (except Sound Mixing for a Variety Series or Special) have increased the entrant cap from 4 to 6.
- **Special Visual Effects:** For both Special Visual Effects categories, the entrant cap has been increased from 9 to 12.
- **Motion & Title Design:** The Title Design award has increased the entrant cap from 6 to 8.

GOVERNORS AWARD: With the addition of the Legacy Award, the criteria for Governors Award consideration has been updated.

The Television Academy Governors Award recognizes an individual, company or organization that has made a profound, transformational, and long-lasting contribution to the arts and/or science of television.

Candidates for the Governors Award shall be selected annually by the Governors Award committee (to be renamed the Special Awards Committee) and presented to the Board of Governors for a vote. Entries may be made by the Board of Governors, the Special Awards Committee or individuals, who may suggest recipients in a letter to the Television Academy.

The main criteria to be considered when giving the Governors Award is the transformational impact a candidate has had on television or the industry.

Key questions to consider:

- How has the candidate changed television or the industry?
- How significant has been the candidate's contribution or impact on television or the industry?
- How enduring has been the candidate's contribution or impact on television or the industry?

The Governors Award is separate and distinct from a Hall of Fame induction, the Bob Hope Humanitarian Award, or the Legacy Award. Hence, the following criteria should not be used in its selection:

- An individual's overall body of work
- An individual's philanthropic endeavors
- A television program's endurability or its continued relevance

The award given shall be the Emmy statuette.

The award may be given out during the Creative Arts Emmy ceremonies, the telecast Emmy ceremony, or the Hall of Fame ceremony.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED CHANGES:

Casting: To streamline the number of reality casting titles that are eligible for Emmy consideration, the following titles will be eligible starting with the 2026 Emmy competition:

- Casting By
- Executive in Charge of Casting
- Supervising Casting Director
- Supervising Casting Producer
- Senior Casting Director
- Casting Director
- Senior Casting Producer
- Casting Producer
- Celebrity Casting By

Music: A Main Title Theme must appear in 50% or more of eligible episodes submitted for the 2026 Emmy competition. The Main Title Theme has been further defined as a musical fingerprint and calling card that is identifiable and unique to a show, thereby drawing an audience in by setting the show's tone and what is to come.

HOUSEKEEPING:

COLLATERAL MATERIALS: All program categories, and individual achievement categories that have nominations-round videos, will be required to upload an image of the program logo when the submission is made. Specifications: Adobe Illustrator Vector File (.ai or .eps) preferred or a high-resolution, 600x600 pixels minimum, JPEG or PNG.

COSTUME DESIGN AND SUPERVISION: Clarify entry and entrant instructions

- An individual or the identical team may enter multiple achievements in a costume category if the achievements are for different programs. **A program that submits in one genre/category may not submit an additional episode of the same program in another genre/category, unless the design teams are completely different.**
- Head of Workroom (AKA Cutter/Fitter) eligibility will be determined by the **submitted production's Costume Designer.** Contribution to the project will be weighed on a percentage basis as is done for all other positions. The HOW must be an individual, rather than a costume house or facility. However, the head of a facility workroom **who cuts, fits and alters under the Costume Designer's discretion** may be considered for **eligibility.**

EMERGING MEDIA: Clarification in award description for Innovation in Emerging Media Programming

- Emmy(s) awarded to producer(s), company(ies), and/or individual(s) responsible for the creation of EMP that demonstrates **storytelling with technical** innovation, significantly elevating the audience's viewing experience beyond traditional linear programming.

HAIRSTYLING: Clarify entrant eligibility rules

- In all cases, entrants will be vetted and verified by one or more of the following: on-screen credit, call sheets (a minimum of three and no more than five and for a variety special a minimum of one and no more than five), paystubs (if applicable) and entrant contribution statement to determine eligibility by the Television Academy and the Hairstylist Governor. **Call sheets that are labeled as camera tests, preliminary, or list the entrant as O/C will not be accepted. Production letters in lieu of the above approved methods of verification will also not be accepted.**

MAKEUP: Clarify entrant eligibility rules

- Eligibility clarification: Eligible makeup artist(s) must have been the makeup artist(s) most responsible for the overall look of the achievement being recognized and involved with hands-on application, on the performers, on the days of production. In all cases, entrants will be vetted and verified by one or more of the following: on-screen credit, call sheets (a minimum of three and no more than five and for a variety special a minimum of one and no more than five), paystubs (if applicable), and entrant contribution statement to determine eligibility by the Television Academy and the Makeup Governor. **Call sheets that are labeled as camera tests, preliminary, or list the entrant as O/C will not be accepted. Production letters in lieu of the above approved methods of verification will also not be accepted.**

MOTION & TITLE DESIGN: Clarify entry instructions for Motion Design Juried Award

- **For a series, movie, special, or limited or anthology series, including documentary and reality programming—originally aired during the current eligibility year.**
- **Eligible work must consist of one or more motion design pieces created specifically for use within a program. Accepted submissions include stand-alone motion sequences or multiple motion elements integrated throughout a longer show.**
- **Individuals or teams may enter multiple submissions, provided each entry represents a different piece or body of motion work.**

PRODUCTION DESIGN:

- Additional submission materials – in addition to the set breakdown, entrants must upload a photographic presentation. **ALL submission must submit a Photographic Presentation: This will include one .pdf file of all new sets designed for the episode(s) being submitted. You may include sketches, constructions drawings, set dressing details, mood boards, graphics, etc. All pages should be labeled with show name, episode, set name(s), names of entrants in the lower right corner of the page. Multiple set pictures can be on one page, no more than 4 pictures per page. No more than 20 pages per .pdf file.**
- Clarify Redesigned Sets: **The redesign must be significant to be considered a new set and is subject to approval by the PGEC. Entries need to include a statement that details the design changes and must be supported by before and after photos and/or drawings. Sets that are simply redressed for holidays or minor visual changes *do not* qualify as new sets.**
- Clarify Set Breakdown: **Provide a .pdf of the end credits for the submitted episodes and a set list for the submitted episodes indicating which sets are newly created for the episode and which are returning sets from previous seasons. Sets with vague titles such as "Ext. Street" or "John's Car" that are counted toward set count may be subject to the discretion of the PGEC to be eligible.**

SHORT FORM PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

- **Clarify descriptions for Outstanding Short Form Nonfiction or Reality Series:**

Eligible content in this category includes:

In-depth, investigational, **or historical** programs primarily comprised of documentary or produced nonfiction content; programs with a unified story and overall show arc; programs which are substantively told with documentary elements or produced nonfiction content.

Personality-driven programs, travelogues, segmented/magazine programs, **or** interview formats in which the host drives the show's narrative. These programs can include documentary and nonfiction elements that are supplemental to the show format.

Reality programs that contain story elements that mostly adhere to a recurring structured template. Storytelling may be self-contained within episodes or carry-over between episodes, and generally must be bound by specific, consistent benchmarks or prescribed templates within a standardized pattern of action. These might include presentations, regular tasks, evaluations, interviews, reveals, resolutions, discoveries, explanations, dialogue, etc.

Reality programs that contain story elements driven by the actions of civilian and/or celebrity participants and lacking a consistent, structured template and standardized pattern of action.

Unstructured elements generally depict the activities, desires, life journeys and goals of characters, highlighting personalities, relationships, occupations, tasks, projects, etc. **Storytelling may be self-contained within episodes or carry-over between episodes, but they may not be bound by specific, consistent benchmarks and/or prescribed outline.**

Reality programs **that include** a competition element **or a substantial** prize, award, or title, including game shows.

- **Clarify descriptions for Outstanding Short Form Comedy, Drama or Variety Series:**

Eligibility is for a series **of comedy, drama, talk, or scripted variety programming** which may have an ongoing theme, storyline, main characters, discrete scenes, satire, musical numbers, monologues, comedy stand-ups, sketches, audience, guest participation, unscripted interviews or panel discussions between a host/hosts and celebrities or personalities and are presented under the same title and have continuity of production supervision.

- **Video Uploads:** A video upload of an episode will no longer be required when the submission is made in the short form program or performer categories. Videos will be requested at the point of nomination. Entrants will need to provide a link to the eligible episodes at the time of submission.

SOUND MIXING: Entrant eligibility

Emmys may be awarded to a maximum of **six** mixers for all categories except OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A VARIETY SERIES OR SPECIAL, which allows up to twelve. Production and re-recording mixers are eligible. Entrants may appear on multiple entries if the team composition changes.

Submission options for Outstanding Sound Mixing For A Reality Program
An Emmy is an individual achievement award for up to **six** sound mixers, which must include the primary re-recording mixer(s) and lead production mixer. In cases where the number of credited individuals on the episode being submitted exceeds the cap guideline (**six** entrants), there are the following options:

- Multiple episodes per series may be entered if the list of entrants for each episode is different.
- Petition for a cap waiver for the episode being submitted.
- If more than **six** mixers are credited on each episode, submit for a body of work, which is limited to a single entry per series, with the episode chosen by the Lead Sound Mixers in consultation with the eligible entrants (those who were credited on 40% or more of the eligible episodes, and/or those who were credited on the episode chosen are eligible).

SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS: Clarification to descriptions and entry guidelines

- The Special Visual Effects Emmys are awarded to recognize outstanding achievement and innovation in the art of both digital Visual Effects and mechanical Special Effects**, including Virtual Production and "In-Camera VFX". Submissions including both Visual Effects and Special Effects is encouraged. A series shall be evaluated based on the current season being submitted, therefore a series**

can qualify for one category in one season and a different category in a subsequent season, based on the Special Visual Effects work executed in the specific season being entered.

- For Special Visual Effects In A Single Episode category, **shared assets or pipelines with other episodes are permissible, but the submitted episode must demonstrate a unique, completed body of work.**
- For series, two-hour pilots or special extended length episodes may be submitted as a single episode in Area 107 if they originally aired in one continuous time block with a single main title card and a single end credit roll. A two-parter, each part with its own main title and end credits, cannot be entered as a single, extended-length episode; rather, a **'single episode' refers to one self-contained broadcast or streaming installment under a single title card and end credit roll. Two-part or multi-episode events with separate main titles must be entered as part of a season entry.**
- The "before & after" section may demonstrate only the shots **and assets** which were shown in the submission's "as aired" section.

STUNT COORDINATION AND STUNT PERFORMANCE:

- Clarify that Reality, Reality Competition, and Game Show Programming are excluded from eligibility in the Stunt Coordination and Stunt Performance categories.
- Stunt Performance Category – Clarify entry requirements: An individual can submit either for their individual stunt performance or with a team, but not as an individual and a team for the same program. Team size is capped at four. If submitting as an individual, the performer must be actively engaged **on camera** in the performance of the stunt submitted. **Each name submitted for individual performance must specify what stunt(s) they did in the sequence. Reality and competition programming is not eligible for submission.**
- The stunts submitted for review **may not be completely AI or VFX generated. While a scene may use special effects or VFX enhancements,** the stunt(s) themselves must be practical performance(s) that were **actually aired.**