



# INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE

## Sacramento Blues Society 2027 International Blues Challenge Application Narrative

The Sacramento Blues Society (SBS) has a history of sending a band and/or solo/duo to the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis (January 2027). SBS is very excited to once again offer the opportunity to a member band OR a duo/solo artist for the 2027 Challenge with an award of \$1000 (band) or \$500 (duo/solo) artist.

The SBS IBC Competition this year will be held:

**Saturday, June 6, 2026**

**The Torch Club**

**904 15<sup>th</sup> St**

**Sacramento**

**2pm-6pm**

Artists must be a SBS member BLUES band/solo/duo act and pay the non-refundable entry fee of **\$35**. SBS membership must be valid through January 2027 and can be established along with IBC application.

The application and payment must be submitted by **May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026** to secure your place on the competition roster. **Please note:** We are accepting applications for six (6) acts. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis until those six slots are filled. A wait list will be compiled after the first six slots are filled. On-line form submission date or postmark will be used to determine acceptable applications. **INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

After receiving your application, the SBS IBC liaison will be your contact throughout the event process. If you have questions or concerns, please contact, SBS IBC Chairperson/Liaison Shirley McCoy:  
[shirley.sacblues@gmail.com](mailto:shirley.sacblues@gmail.com).

The competition will follow the rules of The Blues Foundation ([www.blues.org](http://www.blues.org)). Each set will be limited to 25 minutes, with a 10-minute set change.

To help off-set costs the winning band will be required to perform at a SBS-produced fundraiser at no charge AND a GoFundMe account will be established. Proceeds will be deposited into a SBS fund to help defray band travel expenses to and from Memphis, but we cannot guarantee an “all-expense paid” trip. **Proof of registration for the IBC will be required before any award and GoFundMe monies are distributed to the winning contestant(s).**

Changes to the members or the name of winning Acts, without just cause (SBS board approval), may result in forfeiture of prize monies and the right to represent the Sacramento Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge.

You will be given your position in the SBS competition one week prior to the event. Positions are determined by a random drawing. Performance slot times are approximate; actual times may vary if the event is ahead of or behind schedule. Acts must be ready to take the stage immediately after the scheduled preceding act, or the Challenge will proceed to the next scheduled act. Such acts may be allowed to perform later (at the Challenge Director’s discretion), but will incur a ten-point penalty to their Average Weighted Score.

You will be required to submit a playlist by email one week prior to the competition. Please list originals and covers. Original songs are encouraged.

The SBS will be the final arbiter of any disputes. Disputes must be received in writing at the SBS mailbox no later than seven days following the Challenge. The SBS IBC Committee will review all disputes and communicate its decision to the Act’s designated representative.

Good sportsmanship is a basic expectation of contestants. Overt acts of poor sportsmanship before, during, or after the event will result in the Act

being disqualified from the SBS Blues Challenge and may result in the Act being banned from future SBS Blues Challenges and other Sacramento Blues Society events.

All photos, videos and audio recordings taken by the SBS and/or SBS representatives in conjunction with the SBS Blues Challenge are the sole property of the SBS and the SBS owns the copyright of the performance media (pictures, videos, audio, etc.)

Each accepted applicant will receive advance notification of the competition's rules and judging criteria that is mandated by The Blues Foundation in Memphis, Tennessee.

Please focus preparations on the following criteria, established by The Blues Foundation:

- 1.) Originality
- 2.) Vocal(s)
- 3.) Blues content
- 4.) Stage presence
- 5.) Instrumental talent

A short biography of you and/or your band and a high-resolution (300 dpi) photo must be submitted by May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 for the competition program (this can be submitted along with your entry.) A stage plot and input list is required. This too can be submitted with your entry or emailed to SBS IBC: [shirley.sacblues@gmail.com](mailto:shirley.sacblues@gmail.com)

### **Day of Competition Production:**

Artists will be given passes when they arrive for entry. Due to the number of participants there will be no guest list.

Each band should be there two hours before their starting time. Lineups can change; be there early and be prepared to change positions if needed. You will only have 10 minutes to get on stage after the prior band is done.

Backline will be provided. (Bass amp, guitar amp, drum kit and microphones). Competitors are *prohibited* from bringing their own guitar amplifiers (harp amps and keyboard amps being the only exceptions). Musicians should bring their own DI boxes. Every effort will be made to provide suitable equipment. Exceptions to this prohibition may only be granted pursuant to a formal written petition submitted in writing and received via email by the IBC Liaison no less than 10 days prior to the competition. If you desire, you may bring your own microphone, but set-up time limits are still in effect. If you wish to bring any special equipment not included with the standard backline set up, such as a harp amp, please contact the IBC liaison (5 days) prior to the event.

Each band will check in with the stage manager upon arrival. The stage manager will direct you to start getting ready when the band prior to your slot is on stage.

There is a firm twenty-five (25) minute time limit for your set. Point deductions will be made if you exceed 25 minutes. Finishing 3 or more minutes prior to the allotted performance time also incurs a penalty. When done with your set, each band will be directed to leave the stage immediately.

A panel of judges will decide the overall winner. These judges are local and regional experts in the music industry and are chosen based on their experience, integrity, and ability to be impartial. A copy of each completed judging sheet will be forwarded to you after the competition (minus the judge's names) for you to assess your performance.

**OFFICIAL RULES & SCORING CRITERIA** can be found on The Blues Foundation website under the International Blues Challenge tab: [www.blues.org](http://www.blues.org). It is STRONGLY advised to review these rules and criteria.

The winning band will be announced at the end of the evening.

