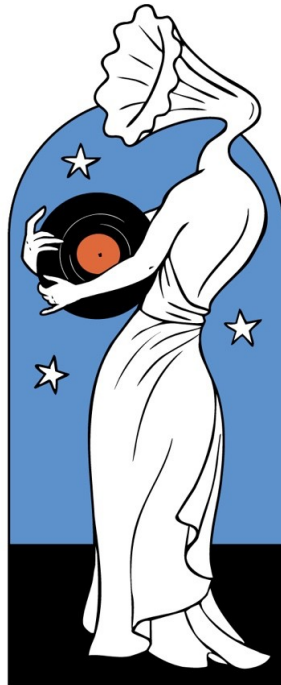


CERTIFICATION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Certificate of Embodied Production

the Musical Form Institute



**Musical
Form
Institute**

Operated by Muse Foundry LLC

Version 2.2 | Effective August 6, 2026
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musicalform.org | certifications@musicalform.org

1. Purpose and Scope

This document establishes the governance framework for the Certificate of Embodied Production, a certification mark for sound recordings owned by Muse Foundry LLC and administered by the Musical Form Institute. It defines the authority, rules, constraints, rights, and accountability structures that govern all certification activity under this mark.

The Certificate of Embodied Production certifies the production process of a specific sound recording against the applicable version of the published standard. It does not certify artists, labels, studios, producers, engineers, or other persons or entities. It does not evaluate artistic quality, genre, technical polish, audience appeal, or commercial merit.

This framework applies to all certification decisions, all personnel and contractors involved in certification review, and all applicants regardless of any commercial, educational, or programmatic relationship with the Musical Form Institute.

Document hierarchy

The CEP Public Standard controls substantive eligibility. This framework controls how certification decisions are administered. The Terms of Use govern use of the Musical Form Institute websites and certification marks. The Privacy Policy governs collection, use, and retention of personal information. The Musical Form Institute will correct any material inconsistency among these documents when identified.

2. Certifying Authority

2.1 Institutional Identity

The Musical Form Institute, operated by Muse Foundry LLC, is the sole certifying authority for the Certificate of Embodied Production. Certification decisions are made exclusively by the Musical Form Institute and its authorized reviewers. No external party, including detection vendors, commercial partners, distributors, or digital service providers, holds authority over any certification determination.

2.2 Role of the Director

The Director of the Musical Form Institute holds final authority over certification governance, standards publication, reviewer qualification, revocation decisions, and appeals. The Director may delegate review authority to qualified reviewers but retains institutional responsibility for all determinations issued under the mark. The Director may correct a clerical error or return a

case for documented additional review, but may not reverse an eligibility determination for commercial, reputational, or promotional reasons.

2.3 Institutional Role

The Musical Form Institute is a certification body. It does not produce, distribute, or release music. Production work, consulting, or training activities undertaken by Musical Form Institute personnel are organizationally separate from certification decisions. This separation is a structural requirement of the institution's role as an independent certifier.

3. The Certification Standard

3.1 What Is Certified

The Certificate of Embodied Production certifies that a specific sound recording was produced without grid-based timing correction, pitch correction, or generative AI, with foundational tracks recorded together. It is a process certification. It does not evaluate artistic quality, genre, or commercial merit.

3.2 Unit of Certification

The Certificate of Embodied Production is awarded to individual sound recordings. It does not certify artists, producers, engineers, studios, labels, or any other person or entity. Each recording is evaluated independently, including when multiple recordings are submitted as an album, catalog, or batch.

3.3 Published Standard

The certification standard, including all production criteria, definitions, eligibility requirements, and submission procedures, is maintained as a separate published document with its own version number and effective date. Recordings are evaluated against the version of the standard in effect at the time of submission. Amendments are published with an effective date and revision note. If a material amendment takes effect while a submission is pending, the Musical Form Institute will notify the applicant and permit additional evidence or withdrawal before a final decision. Changes do not retroactively affect previously certified recordings. The current version of the published standard is available at musicalform.org.

3.4 Current Criteria

Under CEP Public Standard v1.4, effective August 5, 2026, a certified recording must satisfy all of the following requirements. Performed timing remains free of post-performance grid correction. Performed pitch remains free of post-recording pitch correction. Generative AI was not used to create, supply, replace, or reconstruct musical or lyrical content. Foundational ensemble tracks were recorded together where present. Instrumental performances were not assembled from multiple takes to construct an idealized composite. Punch-ins are permitted, and vocal performances may be comped across full takes, as specified by the public standard.

Compatible production practices

The full public standard permits multitrack recording, DAWs, overdubbing, punch-ins, click tracks, effects, signal processing, mixing, mastering, and cleanup editing that does not alter the performed timing or pitch or otherwise violate the standard. This summary does not replace the definitions and examples in the CEP Public Standard.

4. Decision Independence

4.1 Basis of Determinations

Certification decisions are made based solely on whether the submitted recording complies with the published standard on the evidence available. No commercial relationship, including label partnerships, promotional agreements, distributor integrations, fee arrangements, prepaid capacity arrangements, sponsorships, training enrollments, or any other business relationship, affects the certification outcome. Payment, where charged, purchases review and administrative services. It does not purchase certification.

4.2 No Modifications During Review

The reviewer does not request changes to a recording during the review process. The recording either meets the standard as submitted, or it does not. This prevents the review process from becoming a consultative or editorial function. A materially changed audio file is treated as a new submission and receives a new case record.

4.3 Decision Outcomes

Every submission that completes the review process receives one of the following determinations:

Outcome	Meaning
Certified	The recording meets the published standard. A unique CEP ID is

Outcome	Meaning
	assigned, the recording is published to the public registry, and mark usage is authorized.
Not Certified	The recording does not meet the published standard, or the evidentiary basis is insufficient to support certification. The applicant receives a written decision letter explaining the basis. The decision remains confidential and does not appear on the public registry.
Pending or Incomplete	The case is not final because review is underway or additional information is required. The applicant normally has 30 days to provide requested information unless the Musical Form Institute grants an extension.

5. Evidentiary Basis and Review Process

5.1 Submission Requirements

A complete submission includes an attestation from an artist, rights holder, producer, label, or authorized representative; access to the final sound recording through an accepted master file or authorized public source; and the identifying metadata required to create a case record. The Musical Form Institute may request production notes, session screenshots, workflow descriptions, or other supporting documentation where warranted.

5.2 Evidentiary Basis

The primary evidentiary basis for certification is the signed attestation provided by the applicant. The attestation places legal responsibility on the applicant for the accuracy of the claims made about the recording's production process.

The Musical Form Institute supplements the attestation with analytical verification methods. These methods are documented internally, validated against certification outcomes, and subject to periodic review. Analytical tools serve as a consistency check, not as the sole basis for a decision. Where analytical results and attestation claims conflict, the reviewer may request clarification from the applicant before making a determination. If the evidence remains insufficient or materially inconsistent, the recording is Not Certified.

The Musical Form Institute does not claim that any analytical method can establish production history with absolute certainty from a finished recording alone. The Musical Form

Institute may request session files, production notes, or a description of the workflow used during and after the recording session as part of the evaluation process.

5.3 Review Methodology

Review combines attestation, metadata verification, analytical evaluation of the submitted or publicly available recording, AI content screening, and examination of supporting production documentation when warranted. Third-party services are used where applicable under the current methodology. Analytical tools supplement but do not replace expert judgment. Internal thresholds, fraud indicators, detector configurations, and evidence-weighting procedures are maintained as controlled operational materials and are not published in this framework.

5.4 Confidentiality and Access

Nonpublic submission materials are used only for certification administration, integrity review, appeals, disputes, and legal compliance. Reviewer access is limited to assigned cases and to the materials necessary for the review. Data is handled under the Musical Form Institute's published Privacy Policy and its current security and data-handling procedures.

5.5 Review Timing

The Musical Form Institute currently strives to complete review within seven calendar days after a complete submission is received. This is an operating target, not a guarantee. Complex, incomplete, disputed, or batch submissions may require additional time. Any expedited service changes queue priority only and does not change the applicable standard or evidentiary requirements.

6. Conflict of Interest

6.1 Disclosure and Recusal

Any individual participating in a certification decision must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest related to the recording under review before reviewing the case. Conflicts include financial interest in the recording, personal or professional relationships with the applicant or production team, prior participation in the recording, or any other circumstance that could reasonably call impartiality into question. A conflicted reviewer must recuse and may not access or influence the determination.

6.2 Certifier Production and Ownership Prohibition

The Musical Form Institute will not certify a recording that Muse Foundry LLC, the Musical Form Institute, its owner, or a controlling person has produced, co-produced, performed on, engineered, marketed, distributed, or owns in whole or in part. The Musical Form Institute also will not certify a recording in which any of those parties holds a royalty, revenue, recoupment, or other direct financial interest. Assignment to an external reviewer does not cure this institutional prohibition. Such recordings may be used as clearly identified demonstrations, but they may not carry the Certificate of Embodied Production mark.

6.3 Reviewer Assignment

When multiple reviewers are available, the reviewer assigned to a submission must have no prior relationship with the applicant, the recording, or the production team involved. When an otherwise eligible recording presents a reviewer-specific conflict, the Musical Form Institute assigns a different qualified reviewer or an independent external subject-matter expert. As the reviewer network grows, assignment will follow a rotation protocol that prevents any single reviewer from handling all submissions from a given label or artist.

6.4 MFI Programs and the LSRI

Participation in a Musical Form Institute educational, research, planning, or workforce program, including the Local Sound Recording Initiative, does not by itself determine eligibility. A recording for which the Musical Form Institute materially directed production, provided production services, marketed the release, or acquired an ownership or revenue interest is ineligible under Section 6.2. If the Musical Form Institute provided financial or program support without production involvement or a financial interest in the recording, review must be assigned to an independent reviewer and the relationship documented in the case file.

6.5 Partner and Training Independence

Labels, distributors, platforms, sponsors, and program partners receive no preferential treatment in the certification process. Commercial partners have no role in setting standards, establishing case-specific evidence thresholds, assigning reviewers, or influencing certification decisions. Completion of any Certificate of Embodied Production-related training does not create preferential treatment. Training participation is excluded from reviewer materials unless it is necessary to identify a conflict or understand submitted evidence.

7. Nondiscriminatory Access

Certification is available to any sound recording that meets the published standard, regardless of artist, label, genre, commercial affiliation, commercial status, training history, reputation, distributor, or relationship with the Musical Form Institute. The certifying body does not discriminate in access to the certification process. This is a requirement of certification marks under the Lanham Act. The Musical Form Institute will not discriminatorily refuse certification or continued certification to a recording that maintains the published conditions.

Any promotional offer made to a specific group, such as members of a trade association, must be simultaneously available to the general public on the same terms during the same period.

8. Public Registry and Verification

8.1 Registry Function

The Musical Form Institute maintains a public registry of all certified recordings at registry.musicalform.org. The registry provides third-party verification that a specific recording has been certified under the published standard. Each certified recording receives a unique public entry displaying the CEP ID, artist name, track title, certification date, applicable standards version, and other identifying metadata such as release title, label, genre, ISRC, artwork, and public source links where available.

8.2 What the Registry Guarantees

A registry entry confirms that the Musical Form Institute evaluated the recording against the published standard and determined, on the evidence available, that the recording met the requirements in effect at the time of certification. Certification is an independent governed determination, not a guarantee that an attestation can never be false or that new evidence will never emerge. The applicant remains responsible for the truthfulness of submitted representations. A registry entry does not constitute an endorsement of the recording's artistic, commercial, or technical quality.

8.3 Authoritative Status and Enforcement

The registry is the authoritative public record of certification status. Downloading a badge does not authorize its use. Authorization ends upon withdrawal or revocation and is paused during suspension as provided in Section 10. Unauthorized or misleading use may result in corrective notice, suspension, revocation, withdrawal of authorization, or other enforcement available under the Terms of Use.

8.4 Public Transparency

The Musical Form Institute publishes the current CEP Public Standard, this governance framework, a standards revision record, and a public registry. Operational materials that would compromise fraud prevention, security, or the integrity of analytical review remain controlled and nonpublic.

9. Use of the Certification Mark

The Certificate of Embodied Production certification mark is owned and controlled by Muse Foundry LLC. Authorization to use the mark is granted on a per-recording basis only and remains subject to the applicable CEP Badge Usage Guidelines.

The mark may be used in physical album packaging, digital artwork, album credits, liner notes, digital metadata, and promotional materials that clearly reference the certified recording. The mark must not be used in connection with uncertified recordings, to describe artists, labels, studios, producers, engineers, catalogs, or other entities as certified, or to imply endorsement beyond certification of the specific recording.

Authorization remains in effect for the certified recording unless certification is revoked, suspended, or withdrawn. Unauthorized or improper use may result in corrective action or withdrawal of authorization. Separate badge usage guidelines are provided upon certification.

10. Corrections, Revocation, and Appeals

10.1 Corrections and Third-Party Challenges

Any person may report inaccurate registry information, unauthorized mark use, or credible evidence that a certified recording did not meet the applicable standard. A request should identify the recording and certification ID, describe the issue, and include supporting evidence where available. The Musical Form Institute acknowledges the request, records it in the case file, and conducts a preliminary review. A complaint does not by itself establish a violation.

10.2 Grounds for Suspension or Revocation

A certification may be suspended or revoked when credible evidence indicates that prohibited practices were used, the certification was obtained through a materially false or

misleading attestation, the mark was used in an unauthorized or misleading manner, or a material error affected the original determination.

10.3 Suspension

In cases where a potential violation is identified but not yet confirmed, the Musical Form Institute may suspend a certification pending investigation. During suspension, the public registry entry is updated to reflect the suspended status and the certificate holder must pause active use of the mark on new materials. Suspension ordinarily does not require removal of the mark from previously distributed physical products. Suspension is temporary and must be resolved by reinstatement, revocation, or voluntary withdrawal.

10.4 Notice and Response

Before revoking a certification, the Musical Form Institute will notify the certificate holder in writing of the specific grounds for potential revocation and provide 30 days to respond. The response period allows the certificate holder to present evidence or explanation. The final decision addresses the material response and is documented in the case record. A person with a conflict of interest may not decide the matter.

10.5 Effect of Revocation

Upon revocation, the recording's public registry entry is updated to reflect the revoked status. The certificate holder must cease all use of the Certificate of Embodied Production mark on the affected recording within 30 days of the revocation notice, subject to any timely appeal. The CEP ID remains assigned as part of the public audit trail but is marked as revoked in the registry.

10.6 Appeals

An applicant or certificate holder may appeal a certification denial, suspension, or revocation decision within 60 days of the decision date. The appeal must be submitted in writing to certifications@musicalform.org and must identify the claimed error with supporting evidence. Every appeal is reviewed by a qualified person who had no role in the original decision. If no eligible internal reviewer is available, the Musical Form Institute engages an independent external subject-matter expert. The appeal decision is final and documented in the case record.

10.7 Voluntary Withdrawal

A certificate holder may request withdrawal of a certification. The registry is updated to show the withdrawn status, and authorization to use the mark ends. Withdrawal does not erase the case record or prevent investigation of prior false attestation or unauthorized mark use.

11. Audit and Accountability

11.1 Case File Structure

Every submission that advances to review receives a case record containing the submitted materials, attestation, analytical and reviewer materials, decision record, certification ID where issued, conflict disclosures, applicant correspondence material to the determination, and any appeal, suspension, revocation, or withdrawal record. Case records are maintained for certified, Not Certified, and withdrawn submissions.

11.2 Retention Policy

Material	Retention approach
Master audio files	Deleted within 30 days after the final decision under ordinary operations. The public submission workflow is also designed around a 90-day maximum from upload. A documented appeal, dispute, quality review, security investigation, or legal hold may require temporary extended retention.
SHA-256 hash of reviewed file	Retained long-term as part of the case record to identify the file reviewed without retaining the audio.
Attestations, submission records, review notes, analysis, and decisions	Retained long-term to support certification integrity, appeals, disputes, and defense of the public record.
Applicant correspondence and contact information	Retained for the business relationship plus three years, unless the material forms part of a formal case record or must be retained longer for a dispute or legal obligation.
Registry records	Retained as a long-term public record. Status changes are recorded rather than silently deleting the history.

11.3 Audit Purpose

The audit trail must be sufficient to reconstruct the basis for any certification decision without relying on the memory of the reviewer or the Director. It supports appeals, revocation inquiries, institutional review, security investigation, and credible third-party challenges.

11.4 Retention and Access Review

The Musical Form Institute periodically reviews retention practices and access controls, including after material system changes or security incidents. More specific public data-handling commitments in the Privacy Policy apply to personal information and are incorporated into certification operations.

12. Document Control

12.1 Authority and Amendment

Muse Foundry LLC, through the Director of the Musical Form Institute, maintains this framework and is responsible for its implementation. Amendments are issued with a new version number, effective date, and revision summary. Changes to substantive certification criteria are made through the CEP Public Standard, not through this governance document.

12.2 Application of Governance Revisions

A governance revision ordinarily applies to cases open on or after its effective date. If immediate application would materially prejudice an applicant's existing procedural rights, the Musical Form Institute will apply the earlier procedure to that case or provide notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond. Revisions do not retroactively change the substantive standard under which a recording was certified.

12.3 Certified Significant Form (Retired)

Certified Significant Form was a separate certification mark (USPTO Serial No. 99703109) administered by the Musical Form Institute. It certified recordings produced without generative AI only. The Certified Significant Form program has been retired. Previously issued certifications remain in the public registry as a matter of record, but no new Certified Significant Form certifications are being accepted or issued. Recordings seeking certification under the Certificate of Embodied Production are evaluated under the CEP Public Standard.

12.4 Version History

Version	Effective date	Summary
1.0	February 2026	Initial governance framework for the Certificate of Embodied Production.
2.0	April 2026	Expanded to twelve sections; added decision independence, evidentiary basis, nondiscriminatory access, public registry, mark control, revocation and appeals, audit, and relationship to Certified Significant Form.

Version	Effective date	Summary
2.1	May 2026	Refined institutional identity, reviewer assignment, and suspension provisions.
2.2	August 6, 2026	Aligned governance with CEP Public Standard v1.4 and current operations; added current criteria summary, submission requirements, review methodology, review timing, and confidentiality provisions; strengthened institutional production and ownership prohibition; added LSRI program separation, third-party challenges, voluntary withdrawal, and training independence; expanded retention policy with SHA-256 hash retention and detailed retention schedule; added document hierarchy and public transparency provisions; retired Certified Significant Form; added document control and version history.

Current version

The current governance framework is published through the Standards page at musicalform.org/standards. Questions and formal governance correspondence may be directed to governance@musicalform.org.

This document is a public governance statement. It does not disclose controlled analytical thresholds, detector configurations, evidence-weighting rules, fraud indicators, internal security architecture, or case-specific confidential information.