

TOBAGO ROAD MARCH COMPETITION 2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1.**Artistes wishing to enter the Tobago Road March Competition 2026 must complete the official registration form issued by Tobago Festivals Commission Limited (“the TFCL”).
- 1.2.**Registration opens on Wednesday, 21 October 2026 and closes at **8:00 p.m.**, Trinidad and Tobago time, on Friday, 23 October 2026. Completed forms and recordings must be submitted through the **registration link** by that deadline.
- 1.3.**The competition is open to artistes who have been resident in Tobago for at least five consecutive years immediately preceding the registration deadline. Collaborations involving artistes who do not meet this requirement are permitted subject to Rule 2.5.
- 1.4.**Artistes may enter more than one song, using a separate registration form for each song.
- 1.5.**Each entry must include:
 - a. the full legal names and stage names of all credited lead artistes;
 - b. the entrant’s telephone number and email address;
 - c. the artistes’ communities or villages of residence;
 - d. the song title;
 - e. the names of the songwriters and producers; and
 - f. the date of the song’s first public release.
- 1.6.**Late entries will not be accepted. Any extension must be announced before the registration deadline and apply equally to all prospective entrants.
- 1.7.**The Adjudication Management Committee (“the AMC”) will verify eligibility and notify entrants of acceptance or rejection before judging begins. Rejected entrants must receive written reasons and information on requesting a review. Entrants must provide reasonable supporting evidence of residence if requested by the AMC.
- 1.8.**Where a credited lead artiste is under eighteen years of age, their parent or legal guardian must countersign the registration and acceptance of these Rules.

2. SONG REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1.**Each entry must include a complete, clearly audible recording in MP3 or WAV format, identified by the song title and artiste or artistes.
- 2.2.**Any alternative version submitted for consideration must accompany the entry and be clearly identified. Accepted versions of the same song will share one total.

- 2.3. Songs must be original compositions and must not depend on adaptations of existing melodies.
- 2.4. Entrants confirm that they are authorised to submit the song and recording and grant the TFCL a non-exclusive licence to copy and share the recording with competition officials solely for competition administration. Copyright remains with the respective rights holders. Supporting evidence must be provided if requested by the AMC.
- 2.5. For collaborations, more than half of the lead vocal performance must be undertaken by artistes who qualify under Rule 1.3.
- 2.6. Only songs first released to the public on or after 18 February 2026 are eligible. Remixes, re-recordings and re-releases of songs first released before that date remain ineligible. Evidence of the first release date must be provided if requested by the AMC.

3. ROAD MARCH TABULATION

- 3.1. The winning entry will be the eligible registered song with the highest total number of verified valid plays across the designated judging points. Each song will be counted separately, including songs entered by the same artiste.
- 3.2. A play qualifies when the registered song is clearly identifiable as being played by a qualifying musical unit accompanying a participating masquerade band through a judging zone during the published judging period.
- 3.3. Each orchestra, music truck, music-playing band or stage-side Disc Jockey accompanying a participating masquerade band will be treated as a separate musical unit.
- 3.4. Each song will count once per musical unit during a single authorised passage through a judging point. Repetition during that passage will not generate additional counts.
- 3.5. Only plays recorded and verified through the official tabulation process will contribute to the result.
- 3.6. Tabulation is based on play counts. No marks will be awarded for lyrics, performance or crowd response.

4. DESIGNATED JUDGING POINTS AND PERIODS

- 4.1. Tabulation will take place at the designated Tobago Road March judging zones:
- a. **Carnival City:** Market Square Car Park, Scarborough;
 - b. **Scarborough Esplanade:** Bar Code; and
 - c. **Claude Noel Highway:** (Branded Tobago Road March Zone)

4.2. The competition dates and judging hours at each point are **Saturday 31st October, 2026 from 4am to 11:59pm and Sunday 1st November 2026 from 9am to 9pm, Trinidad and Tobago time.**

4.3. The TFCL must clearly identify the boundaries of each judging zone before judging begins.

5. ADJUDICATION AND TABULATION PROCEDURES

5.1. The AMC will oversee the recording, verification and consolidation of competition results.

5.2. Each judging point will have two Tabulators, one Coordinator and one Designated Supervisor.

5.3. All officials must familiarise themselves with the eligible songs and tabulation procedures before judging begins.

5.4. Tabulators must maintain independent records on the official Score Sheets and Tally Sheets, identifying the song, masquerade band, musical unit, judging point and approximate time of each qualifying play.

5.5. At the end of each judging period, the Coordinator must compare the records, investigate discrepancies and record the reasons for any corrections. The records must be reconciled into one tally; the Tabulators' totals must not be added together. Tabulators must sign their records, and the Coordinator must countersign the reconciled tally.

5.6. The Designated Supervisor must check the completed records and submit them to the Chairman of the AMC within one hour after the judging period closes.

5.7. The AMC must check the consolidated totals against the verified records from each judging point before submitting the results to the TFCL.

Interruptions and missing or disputed records must be documented and reported to the AMC. Counts must be supported by verifiable records and must not be estimated.

6. CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICIALS

6.1. All officials must act fairly and impartially and follow these Rules and the procedures issued under them.

6.2. Any interest or relationship that could reasonably affect an official's impartiality must be declared to the AMC. A conflicted official must not record, verify or decide a review concerning the affected entry.

6.3. Officials must not disclose unpublished tallies or confidential competition information except as authorised under these Rules or required by law.

- 6.4. Suspected interference, misconduct or recording irregularities must be reported promptly to the Designated Supervisor or the AMC, as appropriate.

7. DETERMINATION OF THE WINNER AND REVIEWS

- 7.1. The credited lead artistes on the winning entry determined under Rule 3.1 will be declared Tobago Road March Champion 2026. A winner will be declared only where at least one eligible entry records a valid play, and the result can be verified in accordance with these Rules.
- 7.2. The TFCL will publish provisional results showing each song's verified total at each judging point.
- 7.3. Entries sharing the highest total will be declared joint winners.
- 7.4. An entrant may request a review of an eligibility or disqualification decision within forty-eight hours of receiving written notification. A review of provisional results must be requested within forty-eight hours of publication.
- 7.5. Review requests must be submitted to the address in Rule 10.2, identifying the decision or result challenged, the grounds and any supporting information. Grounds may include an eligibility concern, a recording or arithmetic error, or a breach of these Rules.
- 7.6. Reviews will be considered by a person or persons appointed by the TFCL who have no conflicting interest and were not involved in the decision under review. Affected entrants must have a reasonable opportunity to respond, and the decision must be communicated in writing with reasons.
- 7.7. Reviews of registration refusals must be concluded before judging begins. The final result must not be declared until the applicable review periods under Rule 7.4 have expired and all timely review requests affecting the result have been decided. Review decisions conclude the internal competition process without affecting any rights available under law.

8. PRIZES AND AWARDS

- 8.1. The competition carries a total cash prize of **Seventy-Five Thousand Trinidad and Tobago Dollars (TT\$75,000.00)**.
- 8.2. Where entries are declared joint winners, the prize will be divided equally between those entries.
- 8.3. No second-place or third-place cash prizes will be awarded.
- 8.4. The TFCL will pay the prize following the final declaration and receipt of the required payment details and any joint instructions under Rule 8.5.

8.5. For a collaborative entry, all credited lead artistes must provide joint written payment instructions. A parent or legal guardian must sign for any recipient under eighteen years of age.

9. GENERAL CONDITIONS

9.1. Entrants must acknowledge acceptance of these Rules on the registration form.

9.2. An entry may be disqualified for materially false or misleading information, a material breach of these Rules, or falsification or improper interference attributable to the entrant or a person acting with their authority.

9.3. Before disqualification, the AMC must notify the entrant of the alleged breach and relevant supporting material, allow a reasonable opportunity to respond, and issue a written decision with reasons. The entrant may request a review under Section 7.

9.4. Subject to Rule 9.5, necessary administrative changes must be communicated promptly and applied fairly. Such changes must not alter eligibility, the counting method, tie arrangements or prize entitlements.

9.5. Where an event beyond its reasonable control prevents safe or reliable judging, the TFCL may suspend, postpone or cancel the competition or an affected judging session. Entrants must be notified promptly. Cancellation will not affect any prize entitlement already established under these Rules.

9.6. These Rules are governed by the laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

10. ADMINISTRATION

10.1. The TFCL will administer the competition in consultation with TUCO and declare the final results after verification and completion of the review process.

10.2. Competition enquiries and review requests must be submitted in writing to **Tobago Carnival Secretariat: Email: secretariat@welcometobago.com**

10.3. Personal information will be used for competition administration and prize payment, accessed only by authorised persons, and retained only as long as necessary or required by law. Artistes' credited names, song titles and results may be published.