

How does SSC voting work?

1. Your Vote, Your Choice

SSC is all about the community—there are no judges, just you! Listen to the songs, dive into the stories behind them, and catch the live streams to hear everyone's perspectives. Then, show support by picking your 10 favorite songs in ranked order. Your vote shapes this celebration of music 🎵🎉!

2. The Evolution of the SSC Voting System

Our voting system has grown and adapted with each season:

SSC 1-4: Open Voting for Everyone

Early on, we voted with public Discord polls, where everyone could see who voted for whom. This led to:

- **Vote trading:** People often voted for others who'd voted for them.
- **Popularity voting:** Some people voted for every song to appear supportive, while others shifted votes based on who was leading.

This setup led to popularity-based voting rather than focusing on the music, so we started looking for something fairer.

Trivia fact: In SSC2, we briefly had a country-based vote, where people voted in countries first then every country gave points in order to the top 10 songs. This had its fair share of problems... so we dropped it.

SSC 5: Easypoll Voting

We switched to Easypoll, which hid votes and reduced some issues. However, new problems emerged:

- **Private vote-swapping:** Participants began DMing others asking to “vote for me, I’ll vote for you.”
- **Self-voting and over-voting:** Some people only voted for their own song, while others voted for nearly every song to avoid taking sides.

Easypoll improved things somewhat, but still allowed for vote manipulation.



SSC 6: Points-Based Voting

This season, we introduced a points-based system where you rank your top 10 songs from 1 to 12 points. Here's why it works:

- **Top 10 Limit:** Limiting votes to 10 songs makes you focus on the music to pick your favorites.
- **Ranked Points:** You assign different points to each song, making it harder to game the system with blanket votes or strategic choices.
- **Same weight:** Everybody votes for 10 songs in order with the same amount of points. Rather than some people voting for one song, and some for every song - now every participant has exactly the same amount of influence on the voting results! So your vote weighs just like everyone else's

This points-based voting requires you to think more about which songs you like best. It keeps things fair and lets the best songs shine.


3. Weekly and Playlist Orders


Submissions for SSC6 filled up fast, with all 200 slots gone in under 48 hours! Songs are split randomly across weeks, and we reveal each week's lineup at the start of that week to keep it exciting. The playlist order is also randomized, so everyone gets an equal shot regardless of submission timing.

4. Understanding Bias in Data

Bias is a natural part of any voting system. People may be influenced by the artist's name, emotional backstory, country, or even eye-catching album art. In other contests, like Eurovision, the research found "bloc voting", where nearby countries tend to support each other. Bias is part of human nature, and it's almost impossible to eliminate it entirely.

For SSC, we've taken steps to minimize these biases as much as possible, and our new points-based system is part of that. By making you rank your top 10 songs with varying points, we hope to encourage more thoughtful and genuine choices.





During Week 1, we heard concerns about [‘ballot order effect’](#) - where songs that appear first on the ballot may be more likely to get more votes. This is an often-studied effect, but it is case-dependent. There have been studies where the last candidates on a ballot got more votes.

We looked at our own data to try and identify any ballot order effect. It turns out we accidentally created a “natural experiment” in week 1. The voting sheet didn’t match the playlist order—some songs moved up, and some moved down. If the “ballot order effect” was at play, we’d expect songs that moved up to gain more points and those that moved down to lose points.

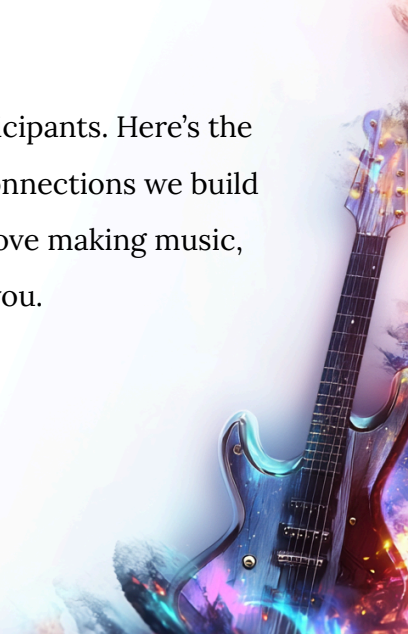
However, the data showed no correlation between the shift in a song’s position on the ballot and how many points it earned. Moreover, the finalists from Week 1 won by a clear margin, meaning their high scores genuinely reflected community love rather than any order-related bias.


We do think the playlist order can matter somewhat. Some studies of Eurovision showed that countries earlier in the running order are less likely to win. And we saw some signs in SSC5 that songs later in the playlist are maybe less likely to be heard. This is part of the reason why we went down to 40 songs per week in SSC6. We also decided to randomly assign songs to the playlist order instead of having it based on submission order as in the past. This gives all participants a fair chance.

Ultimately, we believe that the points-based system we’re using now is more robust to minimize these external influences. If we all take the time to listen to the songs, and think through the ones that meant the most to us, the vote will reflect our collective love for the music.

5. Why We’re Participating Too

Some of you have wondered why SSC committee members join the contest as participants. Here’s the thing: SSC isn’t just a competition—it’s a celebration of music, creativity, and the connections we build along the way. We’re not here for the title or the spotlight; we’re here because we love making music, sharing it, and experiencing the creativity of this incredible community alongside you.





The SSC committee is made up of volunteers who pour their time, energy, and passion into creating a space where everyone feels welcome to share their art. We're here organizing, planning, and troubleshooting—and we're also here as musicians, listeners, and supporters, just like you. By participating, we're able to fully engage, feeling the same excitement and vulnerability that every other creator feels.

When you join SSC, you're not just entering a contest; you're stepping into a community. Every song gets a spot on the playlist, a moment in the streams, and the chance to be heard and appreciated. Our participation is about standing shoulder to shoulder with everyone who puts themselves out there, knowing that what really matters isn't who wins, but the shared journey of creation, discovery, and friendship.

So yes, we're competing in SSC—but we're also listening, dancing, cheering, and supporting every other artist here. SSC is all about the music, the joy, and the connections we make, and we're grateful to be part of it in every way we can.

6. It's More Than Just Voting or Winning

At the end of the day, SSC is about much more than just votes and competition. It's about connecting, sharing, and celebrating music with friends from all around the world. We cross country, language, and genre barriers. We cross oceans and time zones. And we all come together to listen to the songs, react to each other, reach out to the creators to show our appreciation, form friendships, and dance in emojis on streams!

So go, listen to all the songs, tell someone you loved their song and why, make friends, enjoy the inspiration and the music - and then, don't forget to vote for YOUR favorite songs.

Let the music play 🎵!

From the SSC6 committee ❤️

