



RESOURCES

Hack the Bells Guide

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Introduction

In 2014, Sarah Stierch developed the Hack the Bells contest model as “the world’s first carillon remix competition” during her term as Susan B. Miller Fellow at the Berkeley Center for New Media at UC Berkeley. As she recounted in *The Culture Feed* blog, “In July, I announced the call for submissions for Hack the Bells, the first international carillon remix competition. Over the course of two months, we received over 30 international submissions. The works, all freely licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 license, range from poetry to paintings. Our esteemed jury of cultural visionaries, academics, and talents had quite a challenge on their hands: a challenge to decide who would be the grand prize winner of Hack the Bells, and the recipient of \$700 USD and have their work acquired by the University of California Berkeley and Anton Brees Carillon Library.” (December 13, 2014)

Objective

Carillon towers are iconic and beloved landmarks, and many people value them deeply and think about them regularly. To invite really innovative, out-of-the-box ideas for carillon, reach out to those people! The trained artists who play and compose for carillon tend to have similar educations, backgrounds, and jobs, and thus come up with similar ideas. The general public, which has always assumed that they can only passively listen to the carillon, will be thrilled when you ask them, “What would *you* do with a bell tower?” We have been astonished at the amount of creativity and energy that non-carillonists will put into such an opportunity.

The entries to our inaugural 2014 contest came from incredibly varied disciplines, ranging from theater to digital media to textiles. As you can see, the contest leads to multiple benefits:

- New, freely shareable ideas for the carillon
- Renewed community excitement about the carillon
- Publicity for the carillon, including the dissemination of accurate information about how the carillon is played

Your team

- Contest organizer
- Outreach specialist



RESOURCES

Hack the Bells Guide

- Recruit an odd number of jurors to avoid ties
- Ensure each juror represents different specialties (e.g. technology, art, poetry, social justice, etc.) so that entries in any discipline have a fair chance of being understood and advocated for by at least one person
- Recruit a gender- and culturally-diverse jury to ensure that values represented in the works of entrants from diverse backgrounds are considered equally
- Jurors do not need to have prior involvement with the carillon! We have run successful contests with non-carillonist jurors, as long as they have a history of creative, open-minded projects.

Contest website

We recommend developing an attractive website with the following elements:

- Contest description, making it clear that entries from any discipline are welcome and must be CC-licensed.
- Contest rules
- Deadline
- Submission requirements (CV, artist statement, whether entries should be made with anonymous identifiers, etc.)
- A meaningful introduction to how the carillon works (videos, composition primers, a schedule of introductory workshops, etc.). This prevents the submission of misguided projects based on incorrect assumptions.
- Examples of innovative projects for carillon to open entrants' minds to the variety of possibilities
- A bank of CC-licensed resources (see partial list at the end of this document)
- Information about the range of your carillon, etc. (It's helpful to notate the range using treble and bass clef, highlighting any missing notes and emphasizing the transposition.)
- Information on visiting the carillon, if possible.

Technical specifications

Since contestants will be both submitting and downloading large content, we recommend the following strategies to minimize costs, maintenance, and upkeep while providing a submission system that is flexible to contestant needs.



RESOURCES

Hack the Bells Guide

bandwidth to more cost-effective file storage costs. Dropbox File Request allows you to drop a link onto your website and allow contestants to submit materials directly into your Dropbox. Content can similarly be downloaded via Dropbox/Google Drive/Box links. Be prepared for a surge in storage closer to the deadline. We recommend adding a requirement that submitted files should not exceed 200MB and should be compressed if necessary. It is recommended that you specify participants name their files in a uniform way to distinguish materials (e.g. Portfolio, Bio) and make it easier for jurors to navigate. Incorporate a Twitter presence and timeline on your page to provide help, support, and motivation to potential participants.

The 2014 contest website was archived and available to you under open source here. The website can be viewed here.

Tools for jurors

- Use DropBox, Google Drive, or another collaborative file-sharing resource to organize and share all entries with the jury
- Use a master spreadsheet to compile and tabulate juror ratings
 - View sample master spreadsheet
- Provide jurors with a unified set of criteria (ex. potential for realistic implementation)
- Send individual spreadsheets to each juror with information about each entry and a column for them to enter their rankings and comments. (At the University of Michigan, we provided summaries of juror comments to non-winners so they knew what to improve in the future.)
 - View sample individual juror spreadsheet

Best practices

- *Open license*: Ask entrants to agree, if they win, to make their entries available under a Creative Commons license. The CC website contains educational materials to help entrants learn about the CC model.
- *Intentionally inclusive publicity*: Be creative in reaching out to all local populations, including populations the carillon normally has little contact with. Conceptualize diversity in terms of discipline and training as well as identity. (Examples: Participants in local maker spaces may have never thought about the carillon but propose great ideas for digital fabrication projects. The Arab American population in Michigan has little contact with the carillon but may bring the newest



RESOURCES

Hack the Bells Guide

event and/or a way to make the winning project(s) publicly accessible. For example, the winners of the inaugural contest had their entries archived at the Archives of the Guild of Carillonneurs of North America in addition to receiving a cash prize.

Previous contest links

- Website and winners announcement, 2014 international contest at Berkeley Center for New Media
- Call for projects, 2016 contest at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Freely downloadable carillon resources (by no means a complete list!)

- Sample set of UC Berkeley’s carillon
- Sample set of the University of Michigan’s Lurie Carillon
- 2014 UC Berkeley image and audio sample library for Hack the Bells
- Elliot Kermit Canfield-Dafilou and Kurt Werner’s tools for “Modal Analysis and Synthesis of the University of Michigan Lurie Carillon”
- Romain Michon’s “Faust Physical Modeling Toolkit,” a collection of bell physical models using mesh2faust

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