

Frequently Asked Questions

A. About Us

1. What is the purpose of Trans USA?

Founded by Gerardo Chavez and Luis Perez, The Trans USA National Pageantry System strives to celebrate and promote the development of transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming leaders as visible advocates and role models for the community at large.

The primary function of any Trans USA titleholder is to serve as an active representative of the transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming community; maintain visibility as a positive role model for trans youth and the community at large; and engage in opportunities that promote productive discussions at multiple and often intersecting levels. Trans USA is not a drag pageant, and performances are not required. Each representative should aim to embody these roles in the ways most appropriate to their personal and professional life.

2. I've read that Trans USA is not a drag pageant. What exactly is it then?

While it is true that many of our national titleholders have found success in the drag industry as well, Trans USA emphasizes the real person and their contributions outside of the entertainment industry. Although many contestants chose to compete using their stage names and represent their titles within the drag community as well, our fashion categories are not "drag" categories, and there is no talent category. Performances are not a requirement of our titleholders, but being a representative and engaging with the community absolutely are! We recognize that there are numerous ways in which this can be done and the value that each perspective brings to the national community.

3. What does the reigning national do?

The most important thing during your reign as Mr., Mx., or Miss Trans USA is being visible! Whether you choose to entertain, volunteer, conduct workshops, engage in public speaking tours, attend major national events, or some combination, you are given the responsibility and honor of making your reign your own. The sky's the limit, and you will likely become an integral part of shaping the growth and expansion of our system over the next year.

4. Who is eligible to compete?

Miss Trans USA is open to United States citizens or lawful permanent residents assigned male at birth and identifying as transgender/non-binary. Mr. Trans USA is open to United States citizens or lawful permanent residents assigned female at birth and identifying as transgender/non-binary. Mx. Trans USA is open to United States citizens or lawful permanent residents identifying as non-binary regardless of sex/gender assigned at birth. Contestants must be 21 years of age to compete. There are absolutely no requirements for surgery, HRT, or changes to legal documentation with Trans USA.

Note: The Trans USA Board reserves the right to refuse registration in exceptional circumstances involving severe misconduct, irreconcilable offenses, or patterns of behavior that fail to meet the professional standards specified in the most recent version of the handbook.

5. When and where is the national competition?

Nationals is typically held over Veterans' Day Weekend in Milwaukee, WI. The tentative dates for Trans USA 2025 are November 6-9, 2025.

6. What is the prize package?

Our prize package will grow throughout the year as we gain sponsors. The minimum prize package includes \$2,000 cash, our official crown/medallion, the national sash, the national pin (Lewks), crystal plaque, travel and lodging for Milwaukee Pride, a cash bonus for each contestant at national registration, travel and lodging for the next year's national competition, graphic design and printing services for promotional flyers twice during the reign, a holiday bonus, and a number of additional paid/supported opportunities throughout the year. Our national team works hard throughout the year to develop partnerships that can increase this prize package and enhance the experience for everyone involved!

National titleholders also have access to a professional Google workspace account, Streamyard account, and several elite non-profit tools to maximize their reach and impact.

7. What is the competition like?

The national event is not only a competition. It's a retreat in which dozens of like-minded trans folks get together to discuss their major goals and celebrate the diversity of the trans experience with one another. Our guests travel from across the country to watch the competition, and our team is committed to making this a rewarding, fun, and engaging experience that you'll want to relive year after year.

B. Registration

1. How do I apply?

Contestant handbooks and application packets can be found at transusanationalpageantry.com. In the application, you'll be asked to provide basic contact information, respond to open-ended questions designed to assess your fit for the organization and readiness to reign, submit a brief bio, and to select three states/regions you'd feel comfortable representing.

2. My home state is taken. Can I still register?

Absolutely! We do not have preliminary competitions at this time, and there are no residency requirements for state representatives. However, we encourage folks to select states in which they have some vested interest and would feel comfortable representing in various capacities. Many representatives choose their birth states, nearby states, or states in dire need of trans representation.

3. I've completed my application. What happens now?

Once the Board confirms that your registration fee and paperwork have been submitted, the review process will begin. Applications are reviewed and assessed by a panel of community leaders and experts. Selected representatives will be notified no later than March 7th, 2025, with the full registration fee of \$300 due by March 14th, and the full Class of 2025 will be announced on March 31, 2025, to coincide with International Trans Day of Visibility. Once the board has confirmed acceptance of a contingent offer, you will receive a welcome email from admin@transusanationalpageantry.com containing information concerning the next steps. You'll also be added to our official group for qualified contestants to receive official updates from the national titleholders and administrative team.

C. Concerns?

1. I don't have any experience/I don't feel qualified. Am I ready to compete?

If you're a trans human, you are qualified! Trans USA is about celebrating the immense diversity of the trans experience, and our team works hard all year to prepare contestants for what they can expect at nationals so there are no surprises. From guidance to virtual sessions to tips from other nationals and our former titleholders, you'll receive all the information you need to ensure that your first time looks like anything but. We're here to help you grow and succeed, and we don't believe that a lack of experience in pageantry will have any bearing on your ability to shine.

2. I don't feel like I have a "swimsuit body". Should I still compete?

First, all bodies are swimsuit bodies. Second, yes! Our swimsuit category is scored based on the quality of your garment, your modeling ability, your ability to convey your personality in the overall presentation of the category, and how your suit fits ON YOU. We do not score based on body type in any way!

3. Is the event okay for children?

Yes! Our national competition is an all-ages event. We encourage families and large groups to attend, and many of our contestants bring their whole families to cheer them on.

4. I don't have a lot of money right now. Can I afford to do this?

While a national pageant CAN be an expensive undertaking, it doesn't have to be astronomical. Our national representatives can help you navigate how to request sponsorship and provide guidance on what may work for your budget. Our entry fees include your sash mailed to your home, a covered catered meal at nationals, a welcome bag with snacks and beverages, and many more sponsored items to make your experience comfortable, enjoyable, and cost-effective.

5. I'm registered but would like to have an official in-person sashing ceremony. How much would this cost?

In-person sashing ceremonies are not required, but many contestants find that they are able to increase visibility and support in their communities with these events, all while helping to raise funds for their national package and local charities. At this time, the cost for an in-person event includes the \$250 national booking fee, in addition to travel/lodging for the national representative. Contestants are free to partner to hold joint ceremonies to reduce costs as well! However, the most cost-effective method for holding an in-person event while gaining access to a number of Trans USA essentials (banner, business cards, your dresser pass for the weekend, a national photo shoot, etc.) is to partner with a Trans USA promoter. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Trans USA promoter in support of one or more divisions, we encourage you to reach out browse our partner and promoter guides (www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Promote and www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Partner).

6. I am unable to bring the national representative. Can I still have my ceremony?

Unfortunately, the event cannot be considered an official ceremony without the national representative. However, contestants are free to hold celebrations, benefits, and other types of events throughout the year. For contestants wishing to use the Trans USA logo on fliers or

promotional materials, the final design must be sent to admin@transusanationalpageantry.com for approval.

7. Can I purchase a crown to go with my sash?

Yes! Contestants are permitted to purchase a SMALL crown of their choosing. The crown must be no bigger or more elaborate than the national crown, which can be viewed on our Facebook video page. We are working with a designer to release official Trans USA state crowns within the next year.

D. Registration Items

1 What is the closing statement/PSA video?

While Trans USA does not currently hold state prelims, our state representatives still need to complete a few things following registration. One of these tasks is to create an intro video of approximately 1-2 minutes that can be aired to promote throughout the year. Contestants are encouraged to introduce themselves, their state title, motivations for running for Trans USA. Contestants can choose to talk about any issue or goal that's important to them. You can discuss a major issue affecting trans people in your state (e.g., bathroom bills, access to medical care, etc.), your goals should you win the national title, or any topic you think people need to know more about (e.g., why it's important to use the right pronouns, how different people experience being trans differently, etc.). If you're stuck on your video, our national titleholders can also provide some direction and help you work through it!

8. What should I send for my registration photo?

High-resolution (300 DPI or better), waist up photos in any professional or business casual attire are required upon by March 14, 2025.

9. What's the video interview like?

Qualified contestants participate in an informal interview with one of our national representatives. Sample questions will be posted in our qualified contestant group, but the interview is meant to flow like a talk-show conversation, and the tone is quite casual even when discussing some of the more serious topics. Most contestants have stated that the interviews were quite enjoyable, and our goal here is not to scare you but to promote you in a way that makes our social media audience fall in love with you and want to follow you throughout the year! This is also an opportunity for the national titleholders to get to know you, your work style, and goals to be able to better guide you as you prepare for the national competition.

E. How to Support

1. How do I become a promoter?

At this time, Trans USA does not hold state preliminary competitions. Our promoter package is instead an opportunity to promote the individual representatives or region in supporting local non-profits, offering many of the same perks as traditional promotership without high franchise fees and unnecessary expenses.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Trans USA promoter in support of one or more divisions, we encourage you to reach out browse our partner and promoter guides (www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Promote and www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Partner).

2. How do I become a sponsor?

The Mr. and Miss Trans USA National Pageantry System is eager to discuss potential partnerships as we prepare for our next national competition.

As a registered 501(c)(3), we do not operate our system for profit, and all money earned each year goes directly to supporting the community projects and advocacy efforts of our national titleholders. For this reason, we hope to discuss options for full or partial event sponsorship that will allow us to devote more of our operational costs to promoting these advocacy initiatives. We believe that this is especially important given the increased backlash and violence against the transgender community in recent years, especially in rural areas and against transgender women of color.

Such sponsorships allow us to make the national contest more accessible to contestants with limited resources and to provide more opportunities for our reigning titleholders, as we believe that finances should not be a barrier for those wishing to serve their communities in this official capacity.

While there are several pre-determined sponsorship tiers available, we are eager to develop individualized packages that provide mutual benefits for all involved. If you'd like to discuss the details of the event itself, what potential sponsorship may look like, the benefits to be gained by both parties, and the arrangement that would be most appropriate for you or your organization, please reach out to National Director Dylan B Dickherson White for more information at ddrobish@transusanationalpageantry.com.

Ready to donate or sponsor right now? Visit www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Donate or www.tinyurl.com/TUSA25Partner for more information. For even more details on the benefits associated with your support, check out our partner guide in the Become a Sponsor section of our website (under About Us!).

F. Other

10. What is the Outstanding Advocate Award?

To be selected by the reigning nationals, Outstanding Advocate will be awarded to the contestant providing the greatest contribution to a charity of their choosing. Although the amount raised for the contestant's charity leading up to the competition will be a factor, other contributions such as time, labor, and promotion will be considered as well.

To participate, contestants may select any 501(c)(3) with an impact in the trans community, including Trans USA. Although participation is strongly encouraged, no additional points or favoritism in scoring will be shown to contestants based on the charity they have selected or whether they choose to participate in the running for this award.

To be considered for this award, contestants should submit an official letter from their selected charity during registration at the national competition, which should detail the contributions provided by the contestant.

Tip: Contestants choosing to raise funds for pageant expenses are often successful when selecting a charity to highlight during the process. Most often, contestants raising funds in this manner will contribute 50% of the donations to their selected charity and the remaining 50% to pageant expenses.