

TISMIR special collection - Call for Papers

Language-Centric Music Information Retrieval

Deadline for submissions: 01.09.2026

Scope of the collection

This special collection focuses on Music Information Retrieval (MIR) research informed by language-centered modeling. It explores how concepts and methods from Natural Language Processing (NLP) and large-scale language models can support the analysis, representation, retrieval, and generation of music. We invite contributions that address core MIR tasks such as music processing, music generation, recommendation, music tagging, and information extraction, while leveraging or critically examining language-based approaches.

Building on ongoing exchange within the [NLP4MusA](#) (NLP for Music and Audio) and [LLM4MA](#) (Large Language Models for Music and Audio) communities, the collection brings together two complementary directions:

- Language processing for text-based MIR domains, including lyrics, metadata, music tagging, and semantic description.
- Transfer of language modeling principles to symbolic and audio-based MIR tasks, including tokenization, sequence modeling, instruction tuning, and in-context learning.

The goal is to sharpen the notion of Language-Centric MIR as a coherent research direction grounded in MIR methodology and rigorous evaluation, and to encourage reflection on the impact of these models on musical analysis, creativity, and human-music interaction.

Topics

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Tokenization and representations for symbolic music and audio in language-model-style architectures
- NLP for music-related text, including lyrics, metadata, reviews, and music journalism
- Language-informed approaches to core MIR tasks such as tagging, classification, information extraction, and semantic understanding
- Retrieval and recommendation, including query-by-description and conversational search
- Music generation and co-creation, including text-conditioned generation and iterative editing workflows

- Language-guided audio and music production, such as mixing, mastering, and sound design
- Knowledge resources for MIR, including ontologies, knowledge graphs, and entity linking
- Evaluation and human factors, including quality assessment, human feedback, creativity, bias, and cultural representation
- Trust, ethics, and transparency, including synthetic content detection and copyright-related considerations
- Long-context modeling of musical structure and form
- Multimodal methods involving text, symbolic music, and audio (as relevant to the collection's focus)

Guest Editors

- Anna Kruspe, Munich University of Applied Sciences, Germany – (Lead Editor)
- SeungHeon Doh, KAIST, Republic of Korea
- Elena Epure, Idiap Research Institute, Switzerland
- Yinghao Ma, Queen Mary University of London, UK
- Arthur Flexer, Johannes Kepler Universität Linz, Austria
- Li Su, Institute of Information Science, Taiwan
- Ruibin Yuan, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong

Submission Guidelines

Please submit through <https://transactions.ismir.net>, and note in your cover letter that your paper is intended to be part of the Special Collection "**Language-Centric Music Information Retrieval**".

Submissions should adhere to the formatting guidelines of the TISMIR journal. Specifically, articles must be no longer than **8,000 words**, including references, citations, and notes.

Please note that if the paper extends or combines the authors' previously published workshop research (e.g., from NLP4MusA or LLM4MA), a **significant novel contribution** is expected (as a rule of thumb, at least 50% of the underlying work—ideas, methods, results, and discussion—must be new).

[Pre-notification] **If you are considering submitting to this special issue, it would greatly help our planning if you let us know by writing to anna.kruspe@hm.edu**