



#### UK qualifier, MCM Birmingham Comic Con, November 2024

The **Cosplay Central Crown Championships** is a global cosplay competition, organised by ReedPop, for solo cosplayers. Finalists selected at ReedPop events and selected independent partner events attend the “Crown Championship Final” at C2E2, Chicago. The competition is judged on the costume craftsmanship and design.

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November, one (1) cosplayer will be selected at MCM Birmingham Comic Con, organised and staged by MCM Comic Con, part of the ReedPop group of companies (“**ReedPop**”), to attend the championship final taking place in Spring 2025.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Prize

- £500 and Trophy
- Automatic entry into the Final of the Cosplay Central Crown Championships at C2E2, Chicago, USA, in Spring 2024
- Two (2) weekend tickets to any MCM Comic Con event within 12 months
- Travel costs for finalist and assistant from UK airports to Chicago and accommodation (arranged by ReedPop) to attend the Final of the Cosplay Central Crown Championships at C2E2, Chicago, USA, in Spring 2025

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize

- £300 and Trophy
- Two (2) weekend tickets to any MCM Comic Con event within 12 months

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize

- £200 and Trophy
- Two (2) weekend tickets to any MCM Comic Con event within 12 months

#### Rules

1. All participants must be 18 or older to compete in the Cosplay Central Crown Championships Qualifier at MCM Birmingham Comic Con.
2. Applications are open to registered citizens or permanent residents of the UK and the Republic of Ireland
3. Applications must be received between Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October and Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024.
4. Each applicant must submit a minimum of one (1) reference image of the design that inspired their costume, two (2) images of the hand crafted costume they wish to enter (with allowance for minor unfinished elements) and a written description which includes details about the design and construction process, materials and the choice of costume. A panel will assess the applications and select a number of participants to compete to ensure a balanced competition.
5. Participation in the Qualifier will be confirmed no later than Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
6. All selected entrants are responsible for all expenses related to competing in the Championships Qualifier at MCM Birmingham Comic Con including all lodging and travel to and from the convention centre. All contestants must have a badge valid for Saturday at MCM Birmingham Comic Con. Entrants are responsible for their own belongings. MCM Comic Con is unable to provide a secure area for personal items.
7. Group entries are not permitted.
8. Entrants must comply with the MCM costume, weapons and props rules and will be subject to security checks on entry to MCM Birmingham Comic Con.
9. Costumes for the Cosplay Central Crown Championships Final must represent an existing or recognizable character or element from the pop culture realm, including comic books, movies and television, video



games, anime, manga, theatre or fantasy. Characters or elements from bands, musicians and drag acts are not eligible.

- a. Costumes replicating published designs from comic books, movies and television, video games, anime, manga, theatre or fantasy, including derivative designs by well-known concept artists that have been publicly available for at least one year and not directly commissioned by the Finalist, will be judged on “Accuracy” i.e. the detail and steps taken to create a costume that is accurate to the given reference material.
  - b. Costumes inspired by existing characters but given an original twist, e.g. character mash ups or interpreting a recognizable character in an alternative style, will be judged on the “Design” choices and decisions taken to create a cohesive costume.
10. Entrants must have made the costume they are using in selection events and the Final by themselves.
  - a. All significant visible costume elements that can safely be made without assistance must have been constructed entirely by the competitor; If it is impossible or unsafe for a single person to make a costume element, assistance for simple tasks such as holding things in place is acceptable;
  - b. It is acceptable to use bought wigs, shoes, and accessories such as spectacles etc. Simple, largely insignificant base layers such as a leotard or pantyhose are similarly permitted. Any customisation such as styling a wig or modifying shoes must be the sole work of the entrant.
11. Costumes used for the Championships Qualifier or Final must not have been used for any previous international cosplay or costume contest final.
12. The costume should not exceed 2.5 metres in any one dimension, and the entrant should be able to safely move in the costume with limited assistance and the costume must not impede the finalist’s ability to get on and off stage. The MCM team reserve the right to intervene should they believe a costume is not safe to participate on stage.
13. All costumes should provide enough coverage to be worn in public and should be in good taste and appropriate for a family-friendly show.
14. Costumes cannot be obscene or offensive, including insensitive or unnecessary use of makeup, nor endorse any form of hate or any hate group. Gore, graphic violence or other objectionable elements may also be grounds for disqualification as determined by the judges or ReedPop.
15. Costumes cannot promote alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, firearms/weapons (or the use of any of the foregoing), any activities that may appear unsafe or dangerous or any particular political agenda or message.
16. Costumes must not defame, misrepresent or contain disparaging remarks about Cosplay Central, ReedPop and their products, or other people, products or companies, or communicate messages or images inconsistent with the positive images and/or goodwill with which Cosplay Central and/or ReedPop intends to associate the Competition;
17. Costumes cannot depict, and cannot themselves, be in violation of any English or other applicable law.
18. All accepted contestants must attend craftsmanship judging on the contest day. If accepted, MCM will notify entrants when and where the craftsmanship judging will take place. Entrants must appear in costume at the time of their judging. Construction or progress pictures should be brought by the entrant to their judging session; not supplied electronically. Failure to appear for judging will result in disqualification
19. The weighting for each of the judging criteria is as follows:
  - Accuracy or Design and Ambition- 30%
  - Construction – 70%
20. Finalists will present their costume on the Main Stage through a walk on and in character posing which showcases their costumes features
  - a. An introduction will be created from the information provided in the application submitted
  - b. The stage presentation will not be scored directly but may be taken into consideration if the presentation reveals flaws or benefits of the costume’s construction.



- c. Each Finalist will be on stage for a minimum of thirty (30) seconds and a maximum of two (2) minutes.
  - d. Presentations must be suitable for a family audience. No profanity is allowed on stage, including messages on signs or clothes.
  - e. ReedPop will provide background music. Background videos are not accepted.
21. The safety of the audience, staff, and other participants must not be compromised. This means that pyrotechnics, fireworks or any other methods of creating or causing a naked flame or explosion are forbidden; anything that may litter the stage (e.g. bubbles, glitter or confetti) or make it slippery or sticky is similarly banned. The use of lasers, regardless of strength, is not permitted by the venue.
- a. Self-generated vapor as part of a costume may be permitted for use on stage following assessment by the ReedPop team but must not be used elsewhere inside the convention halls.
22. The judges' decisions are final and no further negotiation is permitted. There is no obligation on ReedPop or the judges to provide feedback.
23. All entrants are expected to behave with good conduct and respect each other and the judges.
24. Selected Finalists are expected to wear the costume that they qualified in for the Championships Final; should a Finalist wish to compete in an alternative costume this may be permitted following discussion with the ReedPop team.
25. Travel for the final will be organised by the ReedPop Team with the following considerations
- a. The selected finalist must ensure that they will hold a valid passport with at least 6 month validity at the time of travel to the final in Chicago
  - b. Travel is provided from the airport that the Finalist departs to Chicago terminals on an economy basis for the selected finalist and chosen assistant, including 1 additional piece of hold baggage to assist with costume transportation if required.
  - c. A stipend of £150 will be provided towards the cost of ground transportation for transfers to and from the airport in Chicago
  - d. The hotel will be provided by C2E2. Checking in Thursday of the event and departing on Sunday (3 Nights). Any extension to this stay must be arranged by the finalist.
  - e. Any costs incurred due to changes made after travel is booked will be the responsibility of the selected Finalist. All other costs relating to travel are the responsibility of the selected finalist, including meals, insurance, transfers to and from departure airport and any visa/ESTA related costs.
26. Each entrant grants to ReedPop ("Management"), its employees, agents, and assignees, the absolute and irrevocable right and permission to photograph, film, reproduce, portray and/or otherwise exploit the name, voice, appearance, photograph, image and/or likeness of such Finalist at MCM Birmingham Comic Con and/or in the Competition (collectively, "Likeness"), and to use the results and proceeds, without limitation, in materials produced by Management in any and all media, in perpetuity. Competitor hereby waives any claim to compensation for use of such Likeness. Competitor agrees that Management owns the images and all rights related to them. The images may be used by Management in any manner or media without notifying Competitor, such as the Popverse website, publications, promotions, broadcasts, advertisements, and posters, for advertising or other related purposes. Competitor waives any right to inspect or approve the finished images or any printed or electronic matter that may be used with them
27. Release: By accepting a prize, each winner agrees to release and hold harmless ReedPop and its direct and indirect subsidiaries, suppliers, distributors, advertising/promotion agencies, and prize suppliers (if any), and each of their respective parent companies and each such company's officers, directors, employees and agents, from and against any claim or cause of action, including, but not limited to, personal injury, death, or damage to or loss of property, arising out of participation in the Cosplay Central Crown Championship or receipt or use or misuse of any prize.



28. MCM reserves the right to cancel, suspend and/or modify the Cosplay Central Crown Championship, or any part of it, if any fraud or technical failures or any other factor beyond MCM's reasonable control impairs the integrity or proper functioning of the Cosplay Central Crown Championship, as determined by MCM in its sole discretion. MCM reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any individual it finds to be tampering with the entry process or the operation of the championships or to be acting in violation of the Rules or in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner. Any attempt by any person to deliberately undermine the legitimate operation of the Crown Championships may be a violation of criminal and civil law, and, should such an attempt be made, MCM reserves the right to seek damages from any such person to the fullest extent permitted by law. MCM's failure to enforce any term of these Rules shall not constitute a waiver of that provision.
29. Limitation of Liability: MCM is not responsible for: (1) any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by entrants, typographical errors, printing errors or by any of the equipment or programming associated with or utilised in the Contest; (2) technical failures of any kind, including but not limited to malfunctions, interruptions, or disconnections in phone lines or network hardware or software; (3) unauthorised human intervention in any part of the entry process or the Crown Championships; (4) technical or human error which may occur in the administration of the Crown Championships or the processing of entries; or (5) any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from an entrant's participation in the Crown Championships or receipt or use or misuse of any prize (provided always that MCM or its employees or contractors are not negligent in any way in relation to such injury or damage). If, for any reason, an entrant's entry is confirmed to have been erroneously deleted, lost or otherwise destroyed or corrupted, that entrant's sole remedy is another entry in the Crown Championships, if feasible. If the Cosplay Central Crown Championships, or any part of it, is discontinued for any reason, MCM, in its sole discretion, may elect to hold a random draw from among all eligible entries received up to the date of discontinuance for the prize(s) offered herein.
30. Employees, staff, crew or guests of Reed Exhibitions or any associated company and their immediate families, and persons connected with the Championships e.g. prize sponsors or judges and their agents are not eligible to enter the Cosplay Central Crown Championship.
31. In the event of any dispute arising, these Rules are to be interpreted in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.

#### **APPENDIX A - Judging Criteria**

The competition will be judged by three independent guest judges who interview and closely assess the entrant's costumes in addition to assessing how the Entrants display their costume on stage.

The assessment of the entrants is as follows:

- Costume judging will take place before the stage presentation and assess the accuracy or design of the costume against provided source images and the quality and complexity of the construction. Each Entrant is given equal time with the judges.
- The Stage presentation will not be scored directly but may be taken into consideration if the presentation reveals flaws or benefits of the costume's construction.
- The weighting for each of the judging criteria is as follows:
  - Accuracy or Design and Ambition- 30%
  - Construction – 70%
  - Further detailed guidance on this weighting can be found in the appendix of [The Rules for Finalists](#)

Note that in recognition of the wide variety of costumes possible and the judge's knowledge and experience, the elements considered within each category are not intended to be exhaustive and the weighting among the elements of the scores is left to the discretion of the judges on a costume-by-costume basis. Ultimately ReedPop, Partner events, entrants and Entrants must respect the judges' decision, the judges' interpretation of the rules and guidance and the judges' assessment of the costume.



### **Accuracy or Design & Ambition**

This is an assessment of how closely the costume matches the source material (accuracy) OR the design and interpretation skill employed by the Entrant to create original costume designs inspired by pop culture icons. Judges will also consider the ambition or complexity of the design.

It is the responsibility of the Entrant to provide high quality reference images which clearly depict as much of the character they are representing as possible, at a suitable resolution that detail is clearly visible. Original designs should also be supported by concept sketches and inspiration references.

If an entrant with an original concept has commissioned a professional artist to render their design, this will be judged under the Design category, providing the Entrant is able to discuss in detail the background research and concept choices to arrive at the final design. Where there has been a more intensive collaboration and input from the commissioned artist, this may be judged on accuracy or a blend of the two categories, at ReedPop and the judges' discretion.

Entrants are expected to make use of makeup and shaping for their costumes where appropriate, but it is not a modelling contest, accuracy extends to the costume itself not the physical traits of the cosplayer wearing it. The spirit of the competition allows people to choose who or what they want to portray, according to their cosplay skills.

Each judge will provide a total score out of 20 for either ACCURACY or DESIGN; this score has a weighting of 20% for the final score. Each judge will provide a score out of 10; Ambition has a weighting of 10% for the final score.

### **Construction**

The construction score reflects how well made the costume is. The variety and difficulty of the techniques used to craft the costume and the mastery of those skills thereof is key to this score. Appropriate use of materials and how the Entrant takes advantage of their characteristics should also be considered, as should their resourcefulness. It is also important that the costume can withstand being worn and moved around in- this is not to say it cannot be delicate.

Note that deliberate weathering and distressing is itself a technique and should not be considered as 'wear and tear' when evaluating the robustness of the costume unless it has adversely affected the costume's integrity beyond the judges' expectations.

Each judge will provide a Construction score out of 70; Construction has a weighting of 70% for the final score.

### **Stage Presentation**

The stage presentation not only creates an incredible show for the audience but also allows the judges to properly assess the durability and movement of the costume in motion. All entrants must present their costume on stage while the host reads facts about the costume. The presentation will not be scored directly but may be taken into consideration if the presentation reveals flaws or benefits of the costume's construction.

While not directly scored, we encourage the entrants to consider how to make use of the whole stage, showcase all of the costume's features and bring some characterization to their presentation for the audience.

### **APPENDIX B – Other costume considerations**

#### **3D Printing and other automated production tools**

The use of 3D Print and other automated production tools is becoming increasingly accessible for cosplayers. These notes provide guidance for entrants and judges on how to approach these technologies uses in the Crown Championships.

All automated manufacture is accepted but significant costume pieces created in this way **will only be judged on the steps that the entrant takes themselves.**

- e.g. if the entrant presented a significant part of their costume that was a purchased and finished 3D print with no additional work done by themselves, this would be treated as a purchased item and not considered for scoring by the judges

If the model has been created by the entrant they should include details of the modelling process in their progress book for the judges to review and verify. These items will score more highly than purchased models due to the additional work carried out by the entrant.

Much like the use of commercial sewing patterns, it is permitted to use models created by someone else provided the original creator is disclosed and credited. It is also accepted that the creation of the item might be completed by an individual that owns the relevant tool (or in a maker space or similar). The finishing and final construction of such pieces must be completed by the entrant and they must be able to detail how this was done in order for the piece to be eligible for judging.



Passing off other creator's work as the entrant's own will be grounds for disqualification.

#### **Notes on costume 'Accuracy'**

With the explosion of pop culture in our everyday lives, the growth of social media and competitions such as the Cosplay Central Crown Championships existing on a very global scene it is important for prospective Entrants, and Partner Event organizers, to consider that the costumes will likely be seen by people from a vast range of cultures, both inside and outside the pop culture community. This appendix aims to help advise where difficulties can arise.

As outlined in Appendix A: "Entrants are expected to make use of makeup and shaping for their costumes where appropriate, but it is not a modelling contest, accuracy extends to the costume itself not the physical traits of the cosplayer wearing it. The spirit of the competition allows people to choose who or what they want to portray, according to their cosplay skills."

Judges are considering the craftsmanship put into the costume, not how much the Entrant looks like their chosen character. So, for example, it is not acceptable to penalize a Entrant if their body shape is different from their chosen character but they could be rewarded for sensible choices made in costume design and construction to better emulate the proportions of the character e.g. the use of padding underlayers or clever tailoring. Similarly, good use of makeup for age or gender transformations can be rewarded but not penalized if these techniques are not employed.

The use of makeup, including prosthetics, to change your natural skin tone or features to that of another realistic race has been a contentious topic for a number of years in the global cosplay community. While not usually intended to cause offence, using makeup in this way carries connotations of historical practices that were inherently racist and it contributes to an environment where people of color are made to feel uncomfortable to portray characters outside their race, and it is not appropriate for the competition.

By understanding that costume accuracy does not include skin color, age, gender or body shape, we include and invite everyone to portray any character that they love.

Prospective Entrants are invited to seek advice at the earliest moment from the ReedPop team if they are at all concerned that their choice of character or costume design could be considered offensive in any way.