

Cosplay Central Crown Championships 2024 - Rules for the C2E2 regional qualifier & USA Final

The Cosplay Central Crown Championships are comprised of a series of competitions held at ReedPop events, selected global Partner Events, and the Championships Final. The Cosplay Central Crown Championships Final will be hosted at C2E2 in 2024.

There are 2 stages to the Cosplay Central Crown Championships at C2E2

Stage 1 – C2E2 Regional Qualifier

Entrants will be assessed by the judges in the following categories:

- **Needlework** – Cosplay constructed primarily through sewing, stitching, embroidery, etc.
- **Armor** – Cosplay constructed primarily by molding and shaping its outer layers using acrylic, EVA foam, Worbla, Wonderex, cardboard, etc.
- **FX** – Cosplay that primarily features animatronics, optical effects, mechanical effects, special effects makeup, prosthetics, etc.

The Judges will select the top entry in each category, each will receive a medal.

The top 3 overall competitors as determined by the judges, regardless of whether or not such Competitor was the chosen winner for their category award, will receive the following prizes:

1st Prize

- \$1000 and Medal
- Two (2) weekend passes for C2E2 2024

2nd Prize

- \$500 and Medal
- Two (2) weekend tickets to C2E2 2024

3rd Prize

- \$250 and Medal
- Two (2) weekend tickets to C2E2 2024

The 1st Prize winner progresses to Stage 2 – the USA National Final.

Stage 2 – USA Final

The judges will assess the 4 regional winners chosen at Florida Supercon, New York Comic Con, Emerald City Comic Con and newly selected winner of C2E2 to choose and overall winner of the national competition.

The winner of this stage will be the selected USA Finalist for the global Cosplay Central Crown Championships Final and receive:

- Return flight from to Chicago* to attend the Cosplay Central Crown Championships Final at C2E2 in April 2024, including up to 1 additional piece of hold luggage for costume transportation if required, and a ground transportation stipend (arranged by C2E2)

- Three (3) nights' accommodation (arranged by C2E2)
- All other costs are the responsibility of the winner, including the cost of any changes to booked travel, transfers to and from departure point and any Visa/ESTA related costs and assistant's travel costs.

**or equivalent cost for participants from Canada or Mexico*

Rules

This Competition is being held in connection with Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo at McCormick Place located at 2301 S. Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, Illinois taking place from March 31, 2023 through April 2, 2023.

1. All entrants must be 18 or older to compete in the Cosplay Central Crown Championships.
2. Applications are open to registered citizens or permanent residents of the USA, Canada and Mexico
3. Online registration will open from November 18, 2022 until February 17, 2023. Places in the competition will be confirmed no later than February 24, 2023.
4. At application each entrant must submit a minimum of one (1) reference image, images of the costume they wish to enter (with allowance for minor unfinished elements) and a written description which may offer details about the design and construction process, materials and the choice of costume.
 - At application the costume being entered should be 70% complete
 - If selected the costume description and facts provided will be used to create an introduction for the stage presentation. ReedPop reserves the right to edit introduction material for time and content.
5. All selected entrants are responsible for all expenses related to competing in the Championships Qualifier at C2E2 including all lodging and travel to and from the convention center. All contestants must have a badge valid for Saturday at C2E2. Entrants are responsible for their own belongings. ReedPop is unable to provide a secure area for personal items.
6. Entrants may participate in the Crown Championships only once per year. Applicants must not register multiple times with multiple costumes. A contestant can only enter once across all qualifier events and only wear one costume.
7. Group entries are not permitted.
8. Entrants must comply with the ReedPop costume, weapons and props rules and will be subject to security checks on entry to C2E2.
9. Costumes for the Crown Championships 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.
10. Entrants must have made the costume they are using in selection events and the Final by themselves.

11. 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.
12. 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 customization such as styling a wig or modifying shoes must be the sole work of the entrant.
13. Costumes used for the Championships Qualifier or Final must not have been used for any previous international cosplay or costume contest final.
14. The costume should not exceed 2.5m/8ft 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 ReedPop team reserve the right to intervene should they believe a costume is not safe to participate on stage.
15. All costumes should provide enough coverage to be worn in public and should be in good taste and appropriate for a family-friendly show.
16. 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.
17. 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.
18. 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; Costumes cannot depict, and cannot themselves, be in violation of any law.
19. All accepted contestants must check in to sign a waiver and attend craftsmanship judging on the contest day. If accepted, ReedPop will notify entrants when and where check in and the craftsmanship judging will take place.
20. 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.
21. Further information on what the judges will be looking for in these categories can be found in the appendix below.
22. Each Entrant will present their costume on stage. Music will be provided by the ReedPop Team. Stage dressing is not permitted
23. 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., 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. Self-generated vapor as part of a costume may be permitted for use on stage following assessment by the ReedPop team

24. Costumes in the qualifier will be judged on Accuracy or Design and Ambition (30% weighting) and Construction (70% weighting). The stage presentation will not be scored directly but may be taken into consideration if the stage presentation reveals flaws or benefits of the costume's construction.
25. The judges will assess all entries and make the following awards:
 - The top entry as determined by the judges in the **Needlework, Armor** or **FX** categories. *ReedPop reserves the right to adjust the categories or number of category awards given at any time in its sole discretion based on entries received.*
 - The top three (3) overall competitors of the C2E2 Regional Qualifier as determined by the judges regardless of whether or not such Competitor was the chosen winner for their category. The First place winner of this round will move forward as the selected C2E2 Regional Winner.
 - One (1) winner selected from the four (4) regional winners chosen at Florida Supercon, New York Comic Con, Emerald City Comic Con and newly selected winner of C2E2 will be the selected USA Finalist and progress to the Global Final at C2E2.
26. The judges' decisions are final and no further negotiation is permitted. There is no obligation on ReedPop or the judges to provide feedback.
27. Selected Finalists are expected to wear the costume that they qualified in for the global Championships Final; should a selected Finalist wish to compete in an alternative costume this may be permitted following discussion with the ReedPop team
28. Each entrant grants to Reed Exhibitions, a division of RELX Inc. ("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 C2E2 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 Cosplay Central 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
29. 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.

30. ReedPop 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 ReedPop's reasonable control impairs the integrity or proper functioning of the Cosplay Central Crown Championship, as determined by ReedPop in its sole discretion. ReedPop 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 Crown 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 ReedPop Comic Con Championships of Cosplay may be a violation of criminal and civil law, and should such an attempt be made, ReedPop reserves the right to seek damages from any such person to the fullest extent permitted by law. ReedPop's failure to enforce any term of these Rules shall not constitute a waiver of that provision.
31. Limitation of Liability: ReedPop 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 utilized 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) unauthorized human intervention in any part of the entry process or 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 ReedPop 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, ReedPop, 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.
32. Employees, staff, crew or guests of ReedPop 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.
33. These rules shall be governed by the laws of the state of New York, including, sections 5-1401 and 5-1402 of the New York general obligations law but excluding to the maximum extent permitted by law all other conflict of law provisions, and the obligations, rights and remedies of the parties hereunder shall be determined in accordance with such laws.

APPENDIX A

Detailed Description of Judging Criteria

The Championships are judged by three independent guest judges who interview and closely assess the Finalists' costumes in addition to assessing how the Finalists display their costume on stage.

This document provides greater guidance to the judges of what is expected in their marking, as well as greater clarity to Finalists, event organizers, and of course our audience as to the mechanics

and thought processes behind the judging.

The assessment of Finalists 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 Finalist 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%

This document examines these areas including standards for scoring bands and how the different elements of each of those scores may interact.

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, and Finalists 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 score is an assessment of how closely the costume matches the source material OR the design and interpretation skill employed by the Finalist 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 Finalist 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 a Finalist with an original concept has commissioned a professional artist to render their design, this will be judged under the Design category, providing the Finalist 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.

Finalists 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.

The following tables have suggested considerations for judges when assessing scores for this category:

For costumes aiming for **ACCURACY**

i.e. exactly replicating published designs

Score	Detailing	Proportions	Colors & Texture
1-5	Costume is lacking noticeable costume elements such as gloves, hats, jackets, etc.	The costume is awkward with sections heavily overlapping or too far apart.	Colors and type of surface do not match the reference.
6-11	Costume includes all noticeable costume elements, but detail is visibly different even at a distance	Costume is a cohesive whole but the ratios of most of the parts are far from those in the reference.	Colors are an approximate match and the texture appears to be a good match from a distance.
12-18	Costume includes all elements, but detail is somewhat different when close	All major parts of the costume are well proportioned with regards to each other and the reference but designs and detailing are not.	Colors are a good match and the textures meet expectations when closely inspected.
18-24	Costume includes all elements and is well detailed	The scaling of all major parts of the costume are perfect, and the designs and detailing are also a good reflection of the source.	Colors are an excellent match and textures are good choices considering the source material.
25	Costume is immaculately detailed, and all elements match the reference precisely	The scaling of all parts and detail of the costume are precise and correct.	Colors and textures are a perfect match.

For costumes of original **DESIGN**

i.e. inspired by existing characters but given an original twist, e.g., character mash ups or interpreting a recognizable character in an alternative style

Score	Interpretation	Fidelity/truth to source	Proportions
1-9	The costume is very simple, or has a disjointed design	Costume has very few visual clues or colors or is at odds with the source inspiration	The costume is awkward with sections heavily overlapping or too far apart.

10-17	The costume has several elements, with some variety of detail and makes some considered design choices but lacks originality	Costume takes some visual clues or colors from the source inspiration	Costume is generally cohesive with most parts appropriately scaled
18-24	The costume is impressive, well detailed with features included for aesthetic and function and makes well considered design choices to create a cohesive design	Costume makes very good use of visual clues, colors, and textures from the source inspiration	The scaling of all major parts of the costume are excellent
25	The costume is very complex, immaculately detailed with several features for aesthetics and function and a truly original, cohesive design	Costume is instantly recognizable, and materials, colors and textures are faithful to the source inspiration	The scaling of all parts and detail of the costume are precise and considered.

Each judge will provide a total score out of 25 for either ACCURACY or DESIGN with due consideration to each element above; this score has a weighting of 25% for the final score.

AMBITION

Score	
1	Costume is so simple that little detail is needed.
2	Costume contains very few elements and the detail lacks variety or is unchallenging.
3	Costume includes several elements and is moderately challenging in scale or level of detail
4	Costume is well detailed and an ambitious costume to have created.
5	Costume is incredibly detailed and is a daunting costume to have created.

Each judge will provide a score out of 5; Ambition has a weighting of 5% 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 Finalist 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.

The following table has suggested considerations for judges when assessing scores for this category:

Score	Variety & Difficulty	Use of Materials	Movement & Robustness*
1-10	The costume showcases few different techniques or very basic techniques, at a beginner level of mastery.	The costume has very limited materials or they have been used in a poor way	The costume falls apart with movement or has extremely limited movement due to construction choices or has excessive signs of wear and tear.
11-20	The costume showcases a fair number of techniques or a few more difficult techniques at a normal level of mastery.	The costume has some variety of materials but not all suitable for the intended purpose or not used in an appropriate way	The costume has pieces prone to coming loose when moving or has some restriction to movement due to construction choices or shows some signs of wear and tear.
21-44	The costume showcases a fair number of techniques at a good level of mastery.	The costume has good choice of materials, appropriate for the intended use and is resourceful	The costume can be moved in without any issues, all parts appear to be remaining in place and limited wear and tear
45-60	The costume showcases a fair number of advanced techniques perfectly, or a huge number of techniques at a good level of mastery.	The costume makes excellent use of materials and their characteristics and is resourceful	The costume can be moved in confidently, and shows negligible signs of wear
61-70	The costume showcases a huge number of techniques perfectly. The techniques used to construct the costume are mystifying to a layperson.	The costume makes excellent use of appropriate or resourceful materials, fully exploited to maximum potential	The costume is resistant to wear and tear and can be moved in very confidently.

Each judge will provide a Construction score out of 70 with due consideration to the elements above; Construction has a weighting of 70% for the final score.

*It is recommended that judges give lesser weight to robustness under most circumstances, and consider the stresses that are involved with transporting the costume to the Final.

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 Finalists must present their costume on stage. While not scored, we encourage the Finalists to consider how to make use of the whole stage, showcase all the features of the costume and bring some characterization to their presentation for the audience.

Penalties

Examples include, but not limited to:

- Failure to provide required finals information by the deadline set by ReedPop will incur a three (3) point penalty per item, waived at ReedPop's discretion if the Finalist has positively and proactively engaged in communication about the delay.
- Disrupting the schedule or running orders during the Final may incur a discretionary penalty of up to ten (10) points or disqualification depending on the circumstances, degree of changes, and proactive communication with ReedPop staff. Examples include not being ready for judging at the start of the allocated judging slot and not being ready to go on stage in a timely manner.

APPENDIX B

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 Finalists, 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: "Finalists 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 Finalist looks like their chosen character. So, for example, it is not acceptable to penalize a Finalist 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 Finalists 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.