



Cosplay Contest & Stage Rules at HeroFest 2025

Programm

- **Catwalk - Free for All** (daily):
 - Everyone is welcome to participate, including those wearing purchased costumes and original designs.
 - No prior registration necessary. Please meet 30 minutes before the show at the Main Stage.
 - Participation is individual or as a group.
 - Music cannot be provided by participants.
 - No judging or prizes – just fun and celebration of cosplay!
- **Saturday (Main Contest):** *This contest is for experienced cosplayers*
 - Costumes must be at least 80% self-made (no purchased costumes).
 - Only officially licensed characters with clear reference images are allowed.
 - Solo entries only (no groups).

Prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

- Best Armor wins CHF 450.- (Cosplay constructed primarily by molding and shaping its outer layers using acrylic, EVA foam, Worbla, Wonderflex, cardboard, and/or similar costume construction methods.)
- Best Needlework wins CHF 450.- (Cosplay constructed primarily through sewing, stitching, embroidery, and/or similar costume construction methods)
- Best Performance wins CHF 450.- (Best overall performance)
- Best In Show wins CHF 450.- (Doesn't matter what costume construction methods were used, overall winner)
- Stage time: Maximum 2 minutes.

Note: The contest requires at least 6 registered participants or it will be canceled without replacement.

- **Saturday (Qualification Polymanga Swiss Cosplay League)**
 - Costumes must be at least 80% self-made (no purchased costumes).
 - Only officially licensed characters with clear reference images.
 - Solo entries only (no groups).
 - Only cosplayers living in Switzerland are eligible for the Polymanga Swiss Cosplay League qualification.
 - Minimum age: 18 years.
 - Stage time: Maximum 2 minutes.

Judging: 80% costume quality, 20% stage show.

This contest will be integrated into the Main Contest!



Prize: The winner represents HeroFest at Polymanga 2026, with travel, hotel, and meals covered. Accompanying persons share the hotel room but cover their own travel.

- **Sunday (Cosplay Contest):**

- Both licensed characters and original designs are allowed, with illustrative reference pictures.
- Costumes must be at least **60% self-made**.
- Solo entries only (no groups).
- Stage time: Maximum 2 minutes.

Prizes:

1. Place wins CHF 150.-
2. Place wins CHF 100.-
3. Place wins CHF 50.-

Note: Minimum 6 participants required; otherwise, the contest will be canceled without replacement.

- **Sunday (Qualification AnimeS Cosplay World Stars Bulgarien)**

The winners of the qualification will be sent by us to Bulgaria and may represent Switzerland at the AnimeS Cosplay World Stars (ACWS) end of September / beginning of October 2026.

Note: Minimum 2 groups required; otherwise, the contest will be canceled without replacement.

Conditions of participation

- Groups of 2-3 people only.
- Only Swiss residents, minimum age 18, with valid passports for Bulgaria travel in September 2026.
- Cosplays that have been used in other competitions and/or have won a prize in other international competitions are not allowed. The costumes for the finals may be the same as those worn during the qualification for the ACWS
- Only officially licensed characters, all from the same medium/universe (e.g., Marvel, Dragon Ball).
- English is an advantage. If the performance is in a language other than English, participants must add subtitles in English.
- Performances must be 5 - 8 minutes.
- Costumes and/or performances of a racist, misogynistic, pornographic, homophobic or extremely violent nature are strictly prohibited.
- Costumes must be at least **70% self-made**. It is not permitted to use a model.
- Maximum of 3 bulky props allowed (max 2x2m size, or over 15kg), which must be transportable to Bulgaria and homemade.
- Props may be shown to the jury if they are homemade.



The exact judging criteria can be found here: [For Cosplayers](#)
Judging: **40%** costume quality, **60%** stage show.

[Here](#) you can find the rules which will be valid in Bulgaria in September 2026!

General Contest Rules

- Participants may enter only one contest per day, except on Saturday (where multiple contests are possible).
- Minimum participants are required for contests to proceed; entries may be limited.
- The jury's decisions are final and binding; no appeals or legal challenges allowed.
- Only winners will be announced; rankings of other participants remain private.
- One costume per contest only; no reusing the same costume in multiple contests (except Friday's catwalk).
- Reference pictures (front and back if possible) must be submitted and clearly labeled with cosplay and character names.
- Stage directions (lighting, prop placement) may be submitted; organizers will try to accommodate them.
- At least 80% of costume construction must be self-made (except for ACWS with 70% and Sunday contest with 60%). Small purchased parts like shoes are allowed if modified or weathered.
- Laser-cut and 3D printed elements must also be 80% self-made; use of purchased templates or files is prohibited.
- Costumes must be worn by the participant themselves — no models allowed.
- Costumes previously awarded at HeroFest cannot be reused for competition.
- Minimum age: 16 years (18 for ACWS and Polymanga qualifications).
- By participating, cosplayers consent to image and video use for promotion by HeroFest.



Allowed Cosplays during the contest

- Daily Catwalk: All costumes, purchased and originals. No judging by the jury, no prizes, just fun!
- Saturday (Main Contest): Self-made only, licensed characters only
- Sunday (Cosplay Contest): Self-made, originals and licensed
- Sunday (qualification ACWS): Self-made only, licensed characters only

Stage Rules

- Pyrotechnics or flammable materials are prohibited.
- Items like air snakes or flying paper must be used in a contained area within arm's reach.
- No liquids allowed that could soil the stage.
- Live animals are not allowed on stage; plush replacements must be used.
- Costumes must be tasteful; overly violent, offensive, or obnoxious appearances are not allowed.

For costume approval or questions, please send reference photos and inquiries to:
cosplay@herofest.ch

Last updated: 10.06.2025