

Canadian Conference of the Arts

Questions to our political leaders on their position on key issues for arts and culture in Canada.

Federal Government's Investment in the Arts and Culture Sector

1) Under a government formed by your Party, what priority would be given to the funding of the arts and culture sector? Does your Party have a strategy to replace expiring or cancelled programs and services? If so what is it? Please be as specific as you can.

The Green Party is committed to increasing funding to all of Canada's Arts and Culture organizations including The Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada, orchestras, theatres and publishers. The goal will be to make increases in this sector commensurate with increases in support over the years for other sectors of the economy such as transport, the auto industry, health care, and the oil and gas industry.

At a federal level, the Green Party would increase support for community arts programs and facilities across Canada by establishing stable base-funding at a set percentage of the federal budget. Moreover, the Green Party would implement the recommendations of Canadian Conference of the Arts in order to enable artists to access various social programs including Employment Insurance, Worker's Compensation and Canada Pension Plan.

2) Will your Party commit to engaging the arts and culture sector in the creation or review of programs and services provided by the federal government as is done in other sectors of activity?

The Green party of Canada is committed to engaging the all of the appropriate stakeholders when formulating policy that affects a given sector of the economy. This consultation will be conducted so as to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Canadian public.

3) Three years ago, a broad consensus was reached with all political parties on the need for a new museum policy supported by an increased budget to museums. Does your party intend to follow-up on this consensus and invest in our heritage institutions?

The Green party understands the importance of protecting Canada's cultural heritage. We are committed to adequately funding Canada's heritage and artistic museums to protect our cultural heritage from decay and neglect.

Advancing the Socio-economic Status of Artists, Creators and Arts Professionals

4) Much Discussion is taking place by governments around the world about the emergence of a creative economy and what is needed to ensure its continued growth and expansion. Does your Party have any policies regarding the creative economy? If so, what are they? If not, why not?

According to Statistics Canada, in 2003-4, with an investment of \$7.7 billion from three levels of government, the arts and culture sector directly employed 600,000 people and generated \$40 billion for the Canadian economy. Meanwhile, exports of Canadian cultural products increased by 80% between 1996 and 2005, reaching \$2.4 billion, with great potential for further growth. The Green Party understands the critical importance the Arts and Culture sector plays in not only the economy, but also the new sustainable economy. Therefore we have developed an extensive policy document to address the needs of this rapidly growing sector.

Our full policy can be found on our website at
<http://www.greenparty.ca/en/policy/artsandculture>.

5) Is your Party prepared to proceed with the revisions to the copyright act as a priority in the next parliament? What would be the approach of your Party regarding this important issue?

The Green Party recognizes that these interests are not always antagonistic: creators of intellectual property can, and have, benefited from controlled and well articulated levels of fluency with the public domain. Copyright legislation needs to be progressive in embracing technological evolution and permitting consumers to continue to exercise their fair dealing rights. We believe that Bill C-61 is not an effective way to protect and stimulate our cultural institutions.

Copyright legislation must evolve with the culture it is protecting, and the rapid evolution in technology has made it pertinent to revisit today. Tantamount to reforming copyright legislation is protecting the interests of Canadian producers and consumers of intellectual property. Responsible and reciprocal treatment of our international partners will follow from clearly defining our domestic interests.

In order to achieve these objectives the Green Party of Canada will:

- Establish a copyright registry that will facilitate tracking and protecting of copyrights where registration is optional for the original author, but mandatory upon the transfer of ownership or death of the author;

- Remove the Levy on Blank Audio Recording Media and replace it with private copying exemptions;
- Introduce a formal notice-and-notice mechanism for dealing with copyright infringement online, thereby affirming common carrier status for Internet Service Providers (ISPs);
- Renounce the Crown Copyright applied to all government produced documents, thereby immediately releasing them into the public domain;
- Hold consultations with music and movie industry artists, producers and distributors along with citizen's assemblies to address the issues of online peer-to-peer networks.

6) Does your party support the notion that the federal government has a responsibility to contribute to the training of creators, particularly in the audio-visual sector?

The Green Party sees the development of the Arts and Culture sector as critical to not only the economy, but to society as a whole. When we consider the contribution of arts and culture to the nation in terms of full cost accounting; the benefits in terms of increased physical and mental health; the reduced risk of social marginalization as well as the substantial economic offshoots of a vibrant arts and culture to a community it only stands to reason that the federal government will yield even greater returns for its citizens from well considered and generous support for arts and cultural organizations and practitioners in Canada.

7) Under a government formed by your Party, would foreign policy include a public diplomacy strategy where arts and culture have a role to play? Would you ensure that the staff in our embassies and missions abroad has the resources (human and financial) necessary to promote Canadian culture?

Canada has developed an international reputation built on among other things, a respect for cultural diversity, and this must continue in the 21st century. We will re-orient our foreign affairs policies and budgets to reflect the need for enhanced diplomatic and development priorities. This focus must include a consideration of, among other things:

- The recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to the basic means of their survival, both economic and cultural and acknowledgment of their contribution to the common heritage of national and global culture
- The recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities to develop their culture, religion and language without discrimination, and to full legal, social and cultural participation in the democratic process
- The equality between women and men in all spheres of social, economic, political and cultural life.

8) Is your party prepared to raise the question of cultural diversity in all international trade negotiations?

Canada has developed and international reputation by respecting cultural diversity, and this must continue in the 21st century. The Green party would propose reforms of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, placing these institutions under the authority of the UN General Assembly, and shift the direction of international trade away from "free trade" to "fair trade" focusing on the global protection of human rights, labour standards, cultural diversity, and ecosystems. We will also ensure that Canada's cultural identity is protected during trade negotiations.

9) Recommendations have been made to the outgoing government that the Broadcasting Act and the Telecommunications Act be merged into a single regulatory framework. How would a government led by your party address these recommendations and what priority would they be given?

The Green Party of Canada is open to the proposals and recommendations from the numerous stake holders involved in the Arts and Culture sector in Canada. A proper consultation process must underpin any development in the sector so that it benefits both the creators and consumers of culture in Canada.

10) Will your party commit to maintain the current level of 53% Canadian ownership rules in our media broadcasting and telecommunications systems? Will your party affirm the cultural objectives within the Broadcasting Act and ensure that they are respected and fostered in all distribution platforms?

The Green Party is committed to ensuring that Canadian arts and culture is fostered and promoted in the most effective ways. In order to preserve fair access to the cultural market place for Canadians, it is essential that Canadian control the means of distribution. Canadian content laws and ownership laws have allowed for the maintenance of a vibrant and growing arts and culture sector. Moreover other opportunities still exist to foster Canadian content. One such opportunity would be to enact legislation that requires cinemas and video chains to have at least 20 % Canadian content.

11) Does your party support the CRTC recommendation to the Minister of Canadian Heritage that the Canadian Television Fund be split in two streams?

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12) Does your Party support the notion of increased and stable funding in the context of a long-term Memorandum of Agreement with the public broadcaster as put forward by the CBC?

The Green Party would provide stable base-funding for the CBC so it can continue to provide quality Canadian content television and radio programming in both official languages to all Canadians.

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