

**Questionnaire Response:
Provincial Arts Service Organization of Ontario**

1. How will your party support youth employment in the province through a robust community-driven training/internship strategy?

Ontario Liberals are committed to ensuring that youth in Ontario are able to find meaningful employment by equipping them with the skills that will prepare them to join Ontario's workforce. Created in our 2013 budget, the Youth Jobs Strategy has a two year commitment of \$295 million dollars, helping to bring 30,000 opportunities to youth across Ontario. Within this plan, the Youth Skills Connection provides grants to young people facing multiple barriers so that they may find a job, become more employable and remain employed.

The Youth Jobs Strategy has two specific funds which help bridge the gap between education and the job market.

- 1) The Ontario Youth Innovation Fund includes an internship program that increases opportunities for innovative post-secondary students to enhance their skills in real-world environment.
- 2) The Youth Skills Connections promotes partnerships among business, labour, educators, not-for-profit organizations and youth to identify and solve skills development issues. This fund is being implemented in two streams:
 - a. Industry stream: trains youth to respond to skill gaps identified by industry with priority on certifiable, industry-recognized and transferable skills.
 - b. Community stream: trains vulnerable youth to build their capability and capacity to find jobs they want.
- 3) The Youth Employment Fund is aimed at placing youth directly with employers. By the end of May 2014, over 14,000 youth had found jobs through this program. Our plan commits to add \$38 million to the Youth Employment Fund in 2014-15 and extend the Strategy to September 2015, placing 30,000 young people in jobs that will move them into future careers.

The Ontario Liberals have also supported postsecondary institutions drive for more experiential learning through a number of grants and programs, including the start-up incubators and accelerators at campuses across Ontario through our \$20 Million Campus Link Accelerator Fund, as well as Ryerson's Digital Media Zone and Waterloo's VeloCity. Internships, co-ops, placements and practicums are an important part of many programs based on experiential learning and are an important tool for students to utilize. We will continue to support our institutions and partnerships with industry to provide the best opportunities for students to succeed.

2. Can you confirm your party's commitment to the arts sector by increasing investment in the arts through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport--and key agencies such as the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) and the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) – to bring Ontario to the national per capita average of \$89?

We are committed to continuing our significant investments in the arts and to continuing our close collaboration with artists and cultural organizations to ensure the power of the cultural sector continues to grow, that our artists are able to thrive and we continue to create diverse and exciting creative content.

Since 2003, we have invested over \$6 billion in this sector through the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport, including:

- More than \$ 600 million in the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) to support artists and arts organizations. We are committed to continuing our annual support of the OAC in the amount of \$60 million (which represents a 140 per cent increased since 2003);
- More than \$1.2 billion in the Ontario Trillium (OTF), which we are also committed to continuing our investment in. The OTF plays an important role in the arts and culture sector. Last year, for example, it provided more than \$5.2 million in capital grants to arts venues and organizations, and more than \$17 million in project and operating grants to artists and artists' organizations; and
- More than \$100 million into the Ontario Media Development Corporation – this investment drives the production of content that supports and creates jobs for hundreds of actors, performers, musicians and other content creators across the province.

These investments do not include our ongoing support to our cultural attraction agencies such as the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the McMichael Gallery or our substantial tax credit supports for those engaged in the creative industries.

We have continued to expand our funding to the arts to embrace new opportunities: most recently, as part of our 2013 budget, we created the new Ontario Music Fund (a new investment of \$45 million over 3 years) and invested \$8 million to support Massey Hall's revitalization.

Based on our most recent complete year of data, our per capita expenditure was approximately \$85.

3. How will your party strengthen the Status of Ontario's Artists Act through a consultative process to better address the financial challenges of artistic creation?

Ontario Liberals are proud of having introduced and passed Ontario's Artists Act which formally recognizes the contribution of Ontario's artists to our quality of life and our economy.

Some direct results of the investments through this fund include recent business skills seminars delivered to artists across Ontario in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development and ongoing annual support for Culture Days initiatives across Ontario. However, we recognize that there is more that must be done. If returned to government the Ontario Liberals would therefore commit to continuing the development of an Arts Policy Framework and initiating a joint working group with PASO members and key government staff. We will work collaboratively in exploring issues related to sustainability and financial challenges and developing policy proposals to address some of those challenges.

4. How will your party address the value of the arts through an on increasing arts education in schools?

Ontario Liberals have invested more in Ontario schools than any other party. Since 2003, we have increased funding by 56 per cent. That includes important new investments in elementary education, including: funding over 5,100 teachers to reduce class size in primary and intermediate grades, delivering full-day kindergarten to 265,000 children by September this year, and hiring 4,800 new elementary specialist teachers in subjects like art, music, drama, and physical education.

The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding formula allocates funding to boards, school boards should use to support programs in the arts. For example, the Ontario Liberals provided funding for the basic elements of a classroom education, including instruction in the arts, through the GSN's Pupil Foundation Grant (\$10.5 billion projected for 2014–15).

Funding for elementary specialist teachers was added to the GSN every year between 2005–06 and 2012–13, which has resulted in funding for an additional 4,800 elementary specialist teaching positions. Our students will continue to benefit from these teachers' expertise in the arts, literacy and numeracy and physical education.

Ultimately, the amount of funding that school boards choose to allocate for the arts, and the schools to which it chooses to allocate this funding, is a board decision.

Arts Funding outside of the GSN to support the implementation of the revised curriculum and build teacher capacity:

- \$3 million was provided to Arts organizations to support implementation;
- \$1 million was provided for teacher professional learning opportunities;
- \$1 million was provided to arts subject associations – the Ontario Music Educators Association (OMEA), the Ontario Society for Education through Art, and the Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators– to build capacity for arts education in Ontario schools through the development of curriculum-linked resources; and
- \$1 million was invested to develop a series of arts education focused video resources that demonstrate exemplary teaching and instructional approaches in Grades 1 to 12 in all disciplines in the arts, and support skill building, arts literacy, and accessibility to the curriculum for students with special needs.

In 2011, the Ministry of Education provided funding to support the expansion of the Ontario Arts Council Artists in Residence program in English-language and French-language boards.



The Ministry of Education has supported development of additional resources with connections to the Arts e.g., videos profiling learning about financial literacy through the arts, lesson plans highlighting the development of subject-specific literacy, including the arts.

Since 2009, the Ministry of Education has provided funding to REEL CANADA - a national not-for-profit organization made up of members of the film and television industry in Toronto, designed to bring Canadian films into Canadian classrooms.

When it comes to our education system, we believe that every child should have an education in the arts, including dance, drama, media arts, music, and the visual arts.

In stark contrast, Tim Hudak has clearly said that the PCs would fire almost 20,000 teachers and support staff. The NDP has no coherent plan for education.

5. How will your party invest in adequate and affordable facilities for artist and arts organizations?

We have made significant capital investments in recent years such as the \$12 million investment in the Regent Park Arts and Culture Centre. We will continue to provide some capital support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which assists with repair and renovation costs, enhanced accessibility and energy retrofits to buildings and venues and contributions to specialized equipment for qualifying applicants.