



PASO is a Coalition of Provincial Arts Service Organizations that strives to strengthen the environment for the individuals and institutions that create and disseminate the arts in this province and for public access to the arts. Our collective memberships are made up of individual artists as well as the performance and exhibition organizations that create and support artistic expression.

In the interest of providing the sector with answers to make informed decisions in the upcoming provincial election we would like to know your party's platform regarding arts and culture in Ontario, if available. We also have five key questions below that are directly related to the priorities the arts community has articulated.

FIVE QUESTIONS FROM THE ARTS COMMUNITY FOR THE 2014 ONTARIO PROVINCIAL ELECTION *The arts community would like to know:*

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

Young people in Ontario — especially in Toronto — are among the least employed in the country, according to a report prepared by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. It shows the province's unemployment rate is higher than the national average. In addition, for those under 24 years of age, joblessness is more common in Ontario than anywhere in Canada, aside from Atlantic Canada.

In light of this, the arts community provides a fertile training ground for countless recent graduates. This occurs within the many arts-oriented facilities that operate throughout the Province be they artist-run centres, galleries, performance venues or studios.

Would you consider working with the educational sector to create a comprehensive apprenticeship program for real-world arts training that will help launch Ontario's next generation of arts professionals to the forefront of the creative industries?

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 -- to bring Ontario to the national average, a minimum of \$89 per capita?

Ontario has nearly twice as many artists as any other province. Artists represent 0.81% of the overall provincial labour force, slightly higher than the Canadian average (0.77%).

In 2009-10 Ontario had the second lowest per capita provincial government expenditures on culture. At \$62 it was \$27 less than the \$89 per capita national average, with only British Columbia dedicating less resources to culture.

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?

Artists are independent entrepreneurs and small business generators, hugely important to the vital creative economy. In 2007, the Ontario government took the bold step of introducing legislation that hoped to better recognize artists in this Province. The time has come for the next government to commit to consulting with the arts community and updating the Act so that it better guarantees reasonable compensation for the professional services that artists provide.

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

In 2013, a report by *People for The Arts* showed strong evidence that arts education fosters student engagement and achievement. Arts programs in school help children learn to express themselves, to work with others, to take risks, and to learn about cultural traditions— their own and others. When publicly-funded schools are adequately resourced, they are the best place to ensure *every* child has regular access to the arts, both through curriculum and enrichment.

An interesting example of how arts funding is being eroded in schools can be gleaned from looking at music education. In 2013, in elementary schools:

- 44% had a specialist music teacher, compared to 49% the year before ; the lowest level since 2005, and far from peak levels of 58% in the late 1990s.
- 40% of music teachers were part-time.
- 32% of schools had neither an itinerant, nor a specialist music teacher.
- 62% of schools in the GTA had music teachers, compared compared to 26% of elementary schools in northern Ontario, and 32% in eastern Ontario.

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

With increasing costs for the rental and purchase of space across the province, particularly in urban centres, what is your plan to support adequate and affordable facilities including housing for artists and arts organizations?

IMPACT OF ARTS AND CULTURE ON THE ONTARIO ECONOMY

The impact of arts and culture on the Ontario economy is significant. Recent research has produced the following metrics:

- **252,300 Ontarians are directly employed by the cultural sector.** This represents 4.1% of total Ontario employment
- **Ontario's cultural sector contributes \$19.7 billion to the province's Gross Domestic Product,** or 4.2% of our total GDP
- **4.5 million Ontarians participated in arts education activities** offered by organizations funded annually by the Ontario Arts Council (OAC). Of these 4.5 million, 2.1 million were children and youth
- 43% of Ontarians, 15 years or older, attended a performing arts event; 36% visited a museum or gallery

Arts and culture are a key driver of Ontario's tourism industry. In 2010:

- Arts/culture tourist spending generated:
 - \$3.7 billion in GDP province-wide
 - 67,000 jobs and \$2.4 billion in wages
 - \$1.7 billion in taxes.
- 9.5 million overnight tourists participated in arts/culture activities during their trips. This is 22% of all of Ontario's overnight tourists.
 - 66% were Canadians, 23% were Americans, and 11% were from overseas.
 - 39% of all American overnight visitors to Ontario were arts/culture tourists.
 - 63% of Ontario's overseas visitors engaged in an arts/culture activity during their trip.

If you could please send your responses to the following address: kc@carfaontario.ca by June 2, 2014, it will give us an opportunity to send to our various constituents in advance of the June 12th election.

We look forward to hearing from you. What follows is a list all of the Coalition members.
Submitted by:



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PASO Coalition 2014

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