

ADVOCATING FOR THE ARTS IN THE BAY OF QUINTE



Arts and culture workers are major drivers of economic development and community well-being in Ontario, and in the Bay of Quinte region. **In the lead-up to the February 2025 provincial election, County Arts (the Prince Edward County Arts Council) surveyed local candidates** to ensure that the needs and perspectives of the local arts sector and arts and culture workers are on the radar of Bay of Quinte candidates, and are **sharing the results to help voters make an informed decision at the polls.**

See our [2022 Election Package](#) for more information on the resident survey referred to in the survey questions. Please note that candidates from the following parties did not respond by the deadline: Ontario Party, New Blue Party.

1

98% of respondents in our 2022 resident survey believed that our local MPP should vote in support of a budgetary increase to the Ontario Arts Council. If elected, would you vote in favour of such an increase?



Amanda Robertson (NDP) - The Ontario New Democrats recognize the importance of the arts and culture sector, not just for economic reasons but for community development.

- We'll create a Provincial Arts Strategy that centres artists and supports arts, culture, and heritage community-based institutions.
- Increase funding to the Ontario Arts Council: We'll support new and experienced Ontario artists by restoring and providing additional funding to the grant program.
- Restore the Indigenous Culture Fund: We'll bring back this vital program, which supports First Nations, Inuit and Métis community-based and cultural projects, creates jobs for Indigenous people.



Lori Borthwick (Green Party) - Yes, Greens believe that a stronger arts and culture sector makes for a stronger Ontario. We support increased investments in both the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



Tyler Allsopp (PC) - During my time as a Belleville councillor, I routinely voted in favour of increased support for the arts. The arts play an important role in community building and economic development for our region. I would be open to supporting increased allocations to the Ontario Arts Council in an upcoming budget.



David O'Neil (Liberal) - I am an advocate for, and supporter of, arts in the Bay of Quinte. I have, in the past, supported the Quinte Arts Council by attending luncheons and exhibitions. If elected, I would vote in favour of a budgetary increase to the Ontario Arts Council, as I view organizations like PEC Arts Council and Quinte Arts Council as important organizations, vital to keeping our communities alive and vibrant.

2


89% of respondents in our 2022 resident survey believed that our local MPP should support provincial, or joint provincial-federal efforts, to implement a Basic Income Guarantee model. If elected, would you support such efforts?




Tyler Allsopp (PC) - Universal basic income legislation would represent a shift in the way social services are delivered in Ontario and would likely be a larger program than a provincial government could implement on its own. The federal government had previously discussed considering this type of proposal. Our government has stated it would be open to participate in further discussions. I would seek more information on a potential program's structure and impact before commenting on whether it could be supported.




David O'Neil (Liberal) - I would, as our MPP, support provincial or joint provincial-federal efforts to implement a Basic Income Guarantee model. The current Ford government wound down the Basic Income Research Project and cancelled it as of March 31, 2019, a move which I disagree with, as the program was showing [signs of success](#). The Ford Government's early cancellation of the program resulted in [further waste of taxpayers money](#).


 **Amanda Robertson (NDP)** - The ONDP has a commitment to lifting people out of poverty. We will establish a system that raises people out of poverty no later than the end of our first term. We'll immediately begin to work with all stakeholders on delivering an evidence-based approach to setting rates at a level that recognizes the real costs of essentials like food and rent. An ONDP government would restart the basic income pilot prematurely canceled by Doug Ford and continue to weigh innovative approaches to social support.

 **Lori Borthwick (Green Party)** - Greens support a basic income model for Canada. Our most recent election platform called for the phasing in of a basic income, with the first step being to double Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works rates.

3

The primary obstacle facing artists and arts business respondents in our 2022 resident survey was Income Stability, with 74% of respondents ranking this as their number one concern. If elected, what measures would you take to address these obstacles and help support artists and arts organizations?

 **David O'Neil (Liberal)** - I would, as our MPP, support efforts to implement programs that ensure income stability. Under the leadership of Bonnie Crombie, the Ontario Liberal Party would [revive the Basic Income pilot program](#), and seek to expand that program.

 **Tyler Allsopp (PC)** - I would continue to promote local tourism and visitation by supporting the regional marketing organizations and actively use my reach as an MPP to spread information about this important sector. I would also continue to support targeted grant and training programs through the Small Business Centre and programs like Digital Main Street, which assists in developing e-commerce presence. Through initiatives like continued gasoline and fuel tax reductions and electricity bill rebate supports, we will continue to promote affordability measures for all Ontario residents.



Lori Borthwick (Green Party) - Ontario Greens have a plan to support the long-term stability of the arts and culture sector by:

- Decreasing land taxes for buildings where there are below market rent opportunities for creative and social enterprises
- Affirming the arms-length operations of the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Trillium Foundation and increasing investment in both
- Reinstating support for the Indigenous Culture Fund, to encourage artists of Indigenous backgrounds

These planned supports for artists would work in combination with government support programs that aim to end poverty and provide Ontarians with economic security. These include:

- Phasing in a basic income as outlined above
- Addressing inequalities in education, healthcare and housing to support racialized, LGBTQ+, disabled and other marginalized people
- Addressing the housing crisis by building more affordable housing, ending homelessness, protecting renters, and making homeownership more accessible

We believe that implementing these changes would provide all Ontarians with adequate economic support to ensure that they can pursue careers in the arts without sacrificing economic stability.



Amanda Robertson (NDP) - An Ontario NDP government has a plan to ensure our arts, culture, heritage, and media industries get back on track and thrive now and into the future, with restored funding and direct support for organizations and workers.

Some of our commitments to support Arts and Cultural organizations with adequate funding include:

- Restore the Indigenous Culture Fund
- Film and TV tax credits to support our local talented creators
- Increase festival funding
- Increase funding for the Community Museum Operating Grant
- Increase provincial funding for brick-and-mortar libraries and digital library services
- Prioritize Ontario's authors and publishers in school curriculum.
- Improve the Ontario Computer Animation and Special Effects Tax Credit