

## Federal Election 2019

This bulletin provides a brief overview and analysis of the place of arts and culture in Federal party platforms. Orchestras Canada will provide further updates throughout the campaign.

### Platform analysis

#### **Bloc Québécois**

##### *Platform*

The Bloc Québécois [platform](#) is available online.

Note: The Bloc Québécois platform is available in French only.

##### *Costing*

The Bloc Québécois has not provided a detailed costing of its platform.

The Bloc Québécois has not requested any costing analysis by the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

##### *Culture*

Culture is front and centre in the BQ's platform. More specifically: distinctive, francophone, Québécois culture. Indeed, cultural policy is presented second overall in the BQ platform, after a series of measures designed to assert Québec's sovereignty. The platform contains a range of commitments – or more correctly, in keeping with the BQ's situation as the only Federal party that does not aspire to form government: demands – pertaining to digital strategy, broadcasting and telecommunications, local-media, publishing, film production, promoting Québécois culture abroad, etc. The BQ has not provided a detailed costing of its platform. The platform contains no measures specific to orchestras, though it does target the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts, among others.

##### *Specific commitments*

- The BQ asserts that culture, as a provincial competency, is Québec's competency vis-à-vis the world.

- The BQ proposes a 3% tax of web giants (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, Spotify, Netflix, etc.) and of all their activities in Canada. They also propose the creation of a working group on the protection of francophone cultures on web-based platforms.
- In response to the ongoing local-media crisis, the BQ proposes:
  - That GST be charged for online advertising
  - That a fund be created in support of written media, using the proceeds of a tax on online advertising
  - That *États généraux* be convened regarding the future of medias.
- The BQ believes the CRTC is ill-equipped to serve Québécois and proposes that the Federal government cede powers to regulate broadcasting and communications to the province.
- The BQ will – in collaboration with the cultural sector – undertake a review of copyright and demand that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage study the issue.
- The BQ will table a bill recognizing Québécois culture and compelling the government of Canada to promote it in its dealings with platforms such as Apple Music, Spotify or Netflix.
- The BQ asks that Telefilm Canada’s budget be increased to support the production of more robust online content.
- The BQ asks that funding for the Canada Council for the Arts be maintained, and indexed from year to year, with a new base budget of \$300 million, including support for international promotion.
- The BQ proposes that books be exempt from GST and that the Federal government provide reduced postal fares for book stores – as it already does for periodicals.
- The BQ is committed to respecting the administrative autonomy of indigenous communities with regards to culture.

## **Conservative**

### *The platform*

The Conservative platform has not yet been released. Reports indicate that the party intends to publish its platform on or about October 11<sup>th</sup>.

### *Costing*

The Conservative Party has not yet published its platform costing.

Of the 18 costing reports the Conservative Party requested from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, only one pertains to arts and culture: [Costing report on the Children’s Arts Tax Credit by the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer.](#)

### *Specific measures*

- During an appearance on *Tout le monde en parle*, Mr Scheer indicated that the Conservative platform would include measures to tax Netflix and other web giants for their activities in Canada.
- The Conservative Party requested the Parliamentary Budget Officer provide a detailed costing of the reintroduction of the Children’s Arts Tax Credit with the same conditions as in the 2015 taxation year, except the credit would be refundable. The PBO projected the total cost of reintroducing the tax credit at approx. \$56 million, from 2020 forward.<sup>1</sup>

## **Green**

### *Platform*

The [Green Party Platform](#) is available online.

### *Platform costing*

The Green Party has provided a [detailed costing](#) of its platform.

Of the 23 costing reports the Green Party requested from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, none pertain directly to arts and culture.

### *Culture*

The Green Party’s proposals pertaining to the cultural sector can be found in the *Arts, Culture and Media in a Green Economy* section of their platform (*page 44*). Overall, the sector is well positioned, and presented as beneficial to communities and national identity, and as integral part of a green economy while having a minimal ecological footprint. The platform contains no measures specific to orchestras. However, proposed increases target all federal cultural agencies and crown corporations, including the Canada Council for the Arts. Also, proposed changes to tax policy regarding donations of easements on heritage properties could be beneficial to some orchestras, and could indicate a willingness to explore other incentives to charitable giving, in keeping with OC priorities.

### *Specific measures*

- Increase funding to all of Canada’s arts and culture organizations including the Canada Council for the Arts, the National Film Board and Telefilm Canada. The Costing projects \$25 million per year for this item.<sup>2</sup>
- Review tax incentives for film production, with incentives rising when Canadian talent is employed.

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Budget Officer, *Children’s Arts Tax Credit*, September 16 2019, page 2.

<sup>2</sup> Green Party of Canada, *Costing*, page 7.

- Implement an income tax credit for restoration expenditures to help preserve built heritage.
- Establish charitable tax credits for the private donation of easements on heritage properties to charitable organizations or local governments.
- Reform anti-trust laws to enable the break-up of media conglomerates
- Require social media platforms to collect taxes on advertising and ensure that federal government advertising appears only in Canadian publications.
- Increase funding to CBC and Radio-Canada by \$315 million per year until the per-capita level of funding is equal to that of the BBC. The Costing projects \$300 million per year for this item.<sup>3</sup>
- Reform the governance structure of CBC/Radio-Canada to remove the potential for political interference in board appointments.

## **Liberal**

### *Platform*

The [Liberal platform](#) is available online.

### *Costing*

The Liberal Party has not provided a detailed costing of its platform.

Of the 22 costing reports the Liberal Party requested from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, none pertain directly to arts and culture.

### *Culture*

The Liberal Party's proposals pertaining to the cultural sector can be found in the *Arts and Culture* section of their platform (*pages 49-50*). The Liberal platform touts the governing party's investments in the cultural sector over the past four years. The platform confirms future commitments to other federal agencies and crown corporations such as the CBC/Radio-Canada and Telefilm Canada but is notably silent with respect to future commitments to the Canada Council. The proposal with the broadest appeal is probably *Culture Pass*, an arts and culture credit for children 12 and over. The platform contains no measures specific to orchestras.

### *Specific measures*

- Introduce *Culture Pass*: a \$200 credit that every child will receive at age 12, to be used to access theatres, museums, galleries, workshops, and other cultural venues and local Canadian content

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

- Strengthen the regional mandate of CBC/Radio-Canada so that local stations can broadcast more local news.
- Require CBC/Radio-Canada to share its digital platform with journalism start-ups and community newspapers.
- Increase annual funding for Telefilm Canada by nearly 50% per year.
- Review the national museums policy to increase access overall, and in particular with respect to digital collections.
- Move forward with making the RCMP Heritage Centre into a national museum
- Introduce a new Cultural Diplomacy strategy
- Move forward with legislation to ensure that all content providers offer meaningful levels of Canadian content in their catalogues, promote this content and make it easily available.
- Move forward with legislation to clarify how federally owned heritage places should be designated and preserved.

## **New Democrat**

### *Platform*

The [NDP list of commitments](#) is available online.

### *Costing*

The NDP has not provided a detailed costing of its platform.

Of the 4 costing reports the NDP requested from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, none pertain directly to arts and culture.

### *Culture*

The NDP's commitments pertaining to the cultural sector can be found in the *Supporting Canadian Arts and Culture* section of their platform (*pages 85-86*). None of the NDP's commitments pertaining to arts and culture include any indication of cost or timeline. The platform contains no measures specific to orchestras.

### *Specific measures*

- Protect our heritage and support a strong, independent, Canadian arts and culture industry.
- Make sure that Canadian talent can thrive on both digital and traditional platforms – here at home and around the world.
- Make sure that Netflix, Facebook, Google, etc., pay taxes, support Canadian content and take responsibility for what appears on their platforms.

- Increase funding for CBC and Radio-Canada.
- Make sure that arts and cultural institutions receive stable, long-term funding to grow and promote Canada’s diverse cultures and histories.
- Extend support to Canadian media to assist them in making the digital transition.
- Provide financial support for Indigenous theatre at the National Arts Centre.
- Put in place income tax averaging for artists and cultural workers.

## **People’s Party**

### *Platform*

The complete People’s Party Platform is not available online. Policies pertaining to the following topics have been posted on the party’s website: Equalization, Firearms, Health care, Internal trade, Supply management, Global warming and the environment, Foreign policy, Freedom of expression, Pipelines, Immigration, Refugees, Canadian identity, Veterans, Aboriginal issues. For topics not yet covered, visitors to the party webpage are referred to proposals made by Maxime Bernier when he was running for the leadership of the Conservative Party in 2016-17.

### *Costing*

The People’s Party has not provided a detailed costing of its platform.

The People’s Party has not requested costing reports from the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

### *Culture*

None of the People’s party’s policies pertain to arts and culture.

## **Odds and Ends**

- The English language leaders’ debate is scheduled for October 7. The debate will be divided into five themed blocks: affordability and economic insecurity; environment and energy; Indigenous issues; national and global leadership; and polarization, human rights and immigration. It is worth noting that these themes differ somewhat from those that will be discussed during the French-language debate, to be held October 10.