

Artsvote Ontario 2022

Responses from Jen Deck, Ontario NDP Candidate

1. How will you and your government support the COVID-19 recovery efforts of arts Organizations?

- We will help get artists, performers and arts and culture workers onto more solid ground, so they can build their best life
- We will enact a COVID-19 Arts and Culture Recovery Strategy, including operating and marketing stabilization funds, emergency grants, and tax credits to cover PPE and retrofitting costs
- We will direct support to artists, live entertainment workers, and cultural workers to keep them afloat

2. What funding policies and programs do you propose to support the ongoing work of individual artists and arts organizations in Ontario?

- We will create a provincial arts strategy that centres artists and supports arts, culture, and heritage community-based institutions committed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusions, and assessing needs through measurable outcomes
- We will increase funding to the Ontario Arts Council and restore the Indigenous Culture Fund
- We will increase festival funding and work closely with performing artists and cultural workers to make sure the sector gets back on track
- We will ensure that Ontario continues to succeed in the screen-based industry by providing competitive tax credits, strong support for cutting-edge production facilities, and a plan to bring jobs to more communities (including Northern and rural Ontario)
- We will simplify the Ontario Computer Animation and Special Effects tax credit
- We will increase funding for the Community Museum Operating Grant
- We will increase provincial funding for brick-and-mortar libraries and digital library services
- We will prioritize Ontario authors and publishers in school curricula to help promote local writers and support Ontario's publishing industry

3. What actions would you and your government take to advance diversity, inclusion and equity for marginalized (including artists with disabilities and Deaf and hard of hearing artists), and racialized artists, including BIPOC (particularly Indigenous artists in our area) and 2SLGBTQ+ artists?

- Andrea Horwath and an NDP government would restore and invest additional funding to the Ontario Arts Council, Indigenous Culture Fund and the Ontario Music Fund
- We would ensure the survival of local programs such as ethnic and multilingual community museums; LGBTQ2S+, disability, Francophone, seniors and equity-seeking arts programs

It's also true that supporting marginalized communities begins with our education system:

- We will base special education funding on actual needs, not overall populations, with timely needs assessments
- We'll create amendments to set out clear, consistent definitions of racism and anti-racism and standard policies around racial equity training for education workers, procedures for reporting incidents of racism and resources for students who experience racism
- We'll continue the long-overdue work of ending streaming so that no student is put at a disadvantage due to systemic racism, and every student can succeed
- We will ensure students learn the history of the Holocaust, to prevent antisemitism, hatred, and the insidious spread of Holocaust denial
- We'll ensure schools teach inclusive history, including Indigenous history, the history of Black Ontarians, our province's history with the underground railroad, and Caribbean and African experiences
- We will work with Indigenous leaders and educators to ensure that Ontario's school curricula appropriately reflect Indigenous experiences and histories
- We'll encourage the recruitment of Indigenous school board trustees to ensure Indigenous people are represented in school decision-making
- We'll boost funding for Indigenous language education
- We will build on Ontario's Provincial and Demonstration schools' track record of success, especially in helping students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind, and students with severe learning disabilities who need greater support

4. What special initiatives might you propose to encourage and support artistic practice in smaller urban centres such as Peterborough and arts activity in rural areas?

Re-investment in education: arts are often the first program cut when school budgets are tight.

Many children discover the arts through primary and secondary schooling.

- The NDP will lower class sizes, hire thousands of teachers and education workers, and give kids the special education and emotional supports they need now more than ever
- All of these will allow educators to focus on quality arts programming
- For many students, the arts - be it in the community or in school - are the refuges that allow them to get through school - the arts community can literally save their lives
- We will stop and reverse the cuts and closures, and invest in rural transportation, healthcare, schools and infrastructure—ensuring cohesive rural communities and a strong rural economy that all Ontarians benefit from
- To support rural and Northern schools as their communities grow, we will double the Rural and Northern Education Fund