



**Saskatchewan
Arts Alliance**

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**2019 Federal Election
Arts and Creative Industries
Policy Questionnaire**

Thank you for writing on behalf of The Saskatchewan Arts Alliance and your members. New Democrats are your natural allies when it comes to protecting, promoting, and enhancing Canada's arts at home and abroad. The arts and culture portion of our platform was crafted after numerous consultations with artists and their representatives over the last two years. We believe that, if we are elected and these measures are implemented, artists will receive a steadier and more suitable income in compensation for their labour and creativity and contributions to Canada's cultural identity. For your information, here is that section of our platform for your consideration:

Supporting Canadian Arts and Culture:

Arts and culture are at the heart of who we are as Canadians. It's how we listen and understand each other better. It's how we connect across vast distances and celebrate our identities. And in such a diverse country, it's how we share our incredible stories with each other in both official languages and with the entire world.

Canada's film and television industry are a big part of our economy's future and at the heart of our culture in this increasingly digital era. Almost 180,000 people work in this \$9 billion industry across Canada in good family-sustaining jobs.

But after decades of cuts, a rapidly digitizing media landscape, and government inaction are putting Canadian arts, culture, and jobs at risk.

It's time for a different approach.

New Democrats will protect our heritage and support a strong, independent Canadian arts and culture industry. New Democrats will make sure that Canadian talent can thrive on both digital and traditional platforms – here at home and around the world. We think that artists should be able to earn a decent living from their art and that government has an important role to play in making sure that a diversity of Canadian voices tell our stories.

Most Canadians now get their news from Facebook and Netflix is the largest broadcaster in the country. But these web giants don't pay the same taxes, or contribute to funding Canadian content in the same way that traditional media do. Canadian film, television, and media is up against a tidal wave of well-funded American content but the Liberals have refused to take action to level the playing field.

That's why we will step up to make sure that Netflix, Facebook, Google, and other digital media companies play by the same rules as Canadian broadcasters. That means paying taxes, supporting Canadian content in both official languages, and taking responsibility for what appears on their platforms - just like other media outlets.

We'll also increase funding for CBC and Radio-Canada to help reverse the damage of decades of funding cuts under both Liberal and Conservative governments. Public broadcasting has a remarkable legacy of connecting all points of our country and it needs to have an even stronger future now more than ever to help make sure that Canadians have access to accurate, relevant information no matter where they live.

We will make sure that arts and cultural institutions receive stable, long-term funding to grow and promote Canada's diverse cultures and histories. We will also extend support to Canadian media to assist them in making the digital transition.

The arts also have a vital place in reconciliation. A New Democrat government will provide financial support for Indigenous theatre at the National Arts Centre as part of our larger efforts to honour and support Indigenous arts and culture.

Finally, recognizing the special challenges faced by people who make a living in the arts and culture industry, we'll make life more affordable by putting in place income tax averaging for artists and cultural workers.

In this election, we have committed to action on the issue of precarious work and Employment Insurance reform. A New Democrat government would immediately put in place a universal qualifying threshold of 360 hours to make sure that many more Canadians can access benefits, no matter what kind of work they do, and restore the appeals system to make decisions fast and fair. And, we will also work with the provinces to launch a national basic income pilot project in addition to continuing Ontario's program, in order to gather data about this approach to tackling income precarity.

New Democrats believe that these provisions will help Canadian artists thrive, and enhance Canada's cultural identity for years to come, and we are also open to working with artists, broadcasters, and other industry representatives to review our copyright legislation and to improve it wherever possible. We hope you will agree however, that the measures above are a solid start to improving the lives of Canada's artists and content producers.

We will always work to support to the arts and culture industry, and hope you will get in touch during or after this campaign should you have any comments, concerns, or questions for us. In the meantime, please accept our best wishes moving forward for your friends and colleagues who are keeping Canadian culture rich and vibrant.

Sincerely,
Canada's NDP

In it for you • On se bat pour vous

NDP  NDP
Jagmeet
Singh