



There is no Oxford without the arts

Oxford County is home to a vibrant culture and arts scene. A critical part of our regional identity, it is also a tremendous economic engine for our region. Museums, art galleries, theatres, festivals, and more take place all year round. Oxford residents from every neighbourhood attend these events, often for free or at low cost. Arts programming in our communities enriches our lives and creates beauty in our environment as well as promoting cultural awareness, encouraging citizen engagement and helping to revitalize neighbourhoods.

Let's support our artists

Oxford County provided \$50,000 in funding in 2013 and the has approved the same amount for 2014. It is critically important that provincial spending on the arts is also maintained.

Although Oxford residents support the arts by buying tickets to events and governments underpin arts programming with grants, it is easily argued that the greatest investment in the arts comes from the artists themselves. Arts organizations frequently cannot pay artists fully for their time and artists pursuing their own careers often finance their art with low paying service jobs. The average artist's income is just about \$24,500 in Ontario, despite high levels of education and expertise. Increased support for artists can make a real difference to the livelihoods of some of our lowest paid citizens.

It is also important that the provincial political parties have a clear position on arts – an area often neglected in party platforms. The provincial government can increase its support for artists and arts organizations through the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ministry of Culture.

Ask your candidates:

- Does your party have an arts platform and what is it?
- Does your party have any initiatives to promote arts attendance and accessibility for all?
- Will your party prevent clawbacks to arts funding through the Ontario Arts Council and Ontario Trillium Foundation?

Resources:

The Ontario Arts Council: <http://www.arts.on.ca/index.html>

Oxford Creative Connections: <http://www.oxfordcreativeconnections.com>

Hill Strategies Research Inc. Artists in Canada's Provinces and Territories 2009:

<http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/artists-canada%E2%80%99s-provinces-and-territories>

