

2018 Municipal Election – How do Candidates Support the Arts?

The York Region Arts Council (YRAC) is the only York Region-wide non-profit charitable arts service organization focused on capacity building, creative placemaking and community engagement in support of artists, arts organizations and creative entrepreneurs.

On August 14th, 2018, we hosted an interactive Arts Advocacy Circle led by York Region-based Arts Educator, Sheniz Janmohamed. This was the first time YRAC coordinated a discussion specifically about arts advocacy in York Region.

Arts and culture are integral to healthy, creative communities, and the Arts Advocacy Circle allowed us to gain a better understanding of what artists, culture workers and patrons of the arts would like to see realized in York Region. **The Arts Advocacy Circle focused on the following outcomes:**

1. To increase awareness of the importance of the arts and culture sector at the municipal and regional level
2. To provide artists, culture workers and supporters of the arts in York Region with new means to identify issues and questions that matter to them
3. To encourage informed voting

Impact of the Arts:

1. **The arts boost our economy:** The creative industry's contribution to Ontario's GDP is greater than that of the energy industry, and the agriculture, forestry and mining sectors combined. (1)
2. **The arts provide returns on investment:** In the City of Toronto, every \$1 invested in the non-profit arts sector by the City generates \$8.25 in earned revenues plus an additional \$11.77 from other levels of government. (2)
3. **The arts spark creativity and innovation:** Arts education teaches skills that provide a competitive advantage in the global marketplace. (3)
4. **The arts are good for local businesses and attract tourists:** In 2010, arts and culture tourists to Ontario generated \$3.7 billion in GDP, 67,700 jobs, \$2.4 billion in wages and \$1.7 billion in taxes for all levels of government. (4)
5. **The arts improve the quality of our lives:** 8 major indicators of health and well-being (including physical health, mental health, stress level, and overall satisfaction with life) are strongly connected to attending, or participating in, arts-related and cultural activities. (5)

To ensure that we received feedback from artists and arts workers across York Region who were unable to attend in person, we followed up the in-person session with an online survey. Over **60%** of survey respondents identify as full or part-time arts professionals working in York Region.

When asked what type of support they would like to see from the regional and municipal governments in York Region, **66%** said funding/financial support, **63%** said affordable spaces to create and present work and **51%** said the development of policies/programs that remove red-tape are important to them.

We also requested that participants submit questions for electoral candidates. These questions fall under a number of themes, including but not limited to funding, access and community engagement. **Candidate responses will be**

posted on this page, which will be updated frequently leading up to the October 22 municipal election. Please note all responses have been published as provided to YRAC.

[Read "Where Do York Region Municipal Election Candidates Stand on the Arts?" on YorkRegion.com](#)

Candidate Questions and Answers:

Aurora

[Chris Ballard, Mayoral Candidate](#)

[Ian Clark, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Anna Kroeplin, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Derrick Hammett, Councillor Candidate](#)

[John Gallo, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Rachel Gilliland, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Vicky McGrath, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Adam Mobbs, Councillor Candidate](#)

[Denis Van Decker, Councillor Candidate](#)

East Gwillimbury

[Loralea Carruthers, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Scott Crone, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[Tara DiClemente, Incumbent Councillor Candidate Ward 2](#)

[Susan Lahey, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[Cathy Morton, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[Joe Perscheni, Incumbent Councillor Candidate Ward 2](#)

Georgina

[Boris Godzinevski, Mayoral Candidate](#)

[Margaret Quirk, Incumbent Mayoral Candidate](#)

Markham

[Nirmala Armstrong, Incumbent Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Ray Lai, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Jeff Leung, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Abdul Malik, Mayoral Candidate](#)

[Ricardo Mashregi, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Reid McAlpine, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[Bola Otaraki, Councillor Candidate Ward 2](#)

[Shanta Sundarason, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[Fred K. Wong, Councillor Candidate Ward 5](#)

Newmarket

[John Taylor, Mayoral Candidate](#)

[Tom Vegh, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Jack Zangari, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

Richmond Hill

[Michael Aziz, Councillor Candidate Ward 2](#)

[Jason Cherniak, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Carol Davidson, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Ramin Faraji, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Trifon Haitas, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Susan Korman, Mayoral Candidate](#)

[Carmine Perrelli, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Mike Rajbar, Councillor Candidate Ward 2](#)

Vaughan

[Millad Hamidkhozad, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Furio Liberatore, Councillor Candidate Ward 4](#)

[Mark Pulciani, Councillor Candidate Ward 3](#)

[John Santoro, Councillor Candidate Ward 1](#)

[Sandra Yeung Racco, Incumbent Councillor Candidate Ward 4](#)

[Skanda Singarajah, Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

[Sunder Singh, Incumbent Regional Councillor Candidate](#)

Whitchurch-Stouffville

[Sue Sherban, Councillor Candidate Ward 6](#)

References:

1. 2016 Operating Budget Briefing Note: Impact of Increased Investments in Arts and Culture
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/bu/bqrd/backgroundfile-88367.pdf>
2. CADAC (Canadian Arts Data/Données sur les arts au Canada). Aggregate 2013 Annual Audited Financial Statements.
3. Information and Communications Technology Council, (2013). Music – A Catalyst for Technology Hubs and Innovative Talent.
<http://www.ictc-ctic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MusicCatalyst.pdf>.
4. Ontario Arts Council (2012). Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile. <http://www.arts.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=8778>
5. Hill Strategies Research (2013). The Arts and Individual Well-Being in Canada: Connections between Cultural Activities and Health, Volunteering, Satisfaction with Life, and Other Social Indicators in 2010. <http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/arts-and-individual-well-being-canada>.

*Note that the above information and sources were derived from the Toronto Arts Foundation's 2016 publication, Toronto Arts Facts.