

BC Coalition of Arts, Culture, and Heritage Election 2024 Candidate Survey

<https://www.coalitionbc.ca/bc-election-24>

The BC Coalition of Arts, Culture, and Heritage represents thousands of arts, culture, and heritage organizations in every region and more than 188 communities in BC. We believe arts, culture, and heritage enhance our everyday experiences and are foundational to BC communities.

On behalf of our membership, we are sharing this survey to all candidates in the 2024 BC Election. Our hope is to hear and share the perspectives of candidates across the province on the importance of arts, culture, and heritage to their local communities and BC at large.

We are looking forward to working with the next government, whoever they may be, to ensure the arts, culture, and heritage sector is seen as a partner in strengthening communities across the province.

Why are arts, culture, and heritage important to BC and your riding?

The Langley-Abbotsford riding has a rich arts, culture, and heritage sector that includes several museums (including a wonderful BC Tel museum in Aldergrove), the Langley Arts Council, many organizations that support local artists and artisans, and numerous fairs and festivals that showcase local musicians, Indigenous storytellers, and our multicultural and diverse community.

What is the single most important issue related to arts, culture, and heritage in your riding, and what action will you take to address it?

In my riding and in my experience, funding to support local artists, artisans, museums and fairs and festivals is a constant struggle for the organizations that support these initiatives.

During my 25 years as a community leader in Langley-Abbotsford I have held positions in many local organizations that host fairs and festivals (Aldergrove Fair, Rotary Ribfest, Fort Langley Jazz Festival, others). I have been a Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director and Past President of several of these. I'm also the founder / former President of the Langley Volunteer Bureau, which today places over 10,000 volunteers annually, including volunteers at the events previously mentioned.

In my community I also support collaborations and partnerships that celebrate and include all aspects of art, culture and heritage focused on our multicultural and diverse community.

Multiple funding streams are usually required to sustain these organizations and help them to meet their mission and goals. They rely on volunteer board members and general volunteers to run programs and events; funding for staffing is not always available.

It is very concerning when organizations are not always guaranteed to be successful when applying for grants and funding. If elected as an Independent MLA in Langley-Abbotsford, I would support reviewing the existing provincial funding model that supports the arts, culture, and heritage, and I would be interested in looking at opportunities to provide multi-year funding (e.g. 3 year funding blocks) to support established and new initiatives in being sustainable.

Would you support the development of a provincial action plan related to Arts, Culture, and Heritage?

Over the years BC has developed a number of comprehensive action plans for various industries and sectors. As an Independent MLA I would be very supportive of developing such a plan for the arts, culture, and heritage.

Would you prioritize increasing the investment toward the arts, culture, and heritage sector in the 2025-2026 budget and beyond?

We have many challenges in BC at the moment, from health care, to affordability, to public safety and crime, to infrastructure deficits. I do not feel it would be right to make an empty promise regarding prioritization unless and until I am an elected MLA and have a broader picture of the true state of our province's finances, but as a lifelong supporter and organizer of the arts, culture, and heritage I am strongly in favour of ensuring there is adequate funding for the sector.