

# MOVING FORWARD, TOGETHER

The Ontario Liberal Plan for  
Creative People, Prosperous Province,  
2007



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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dalton McGuinty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature, the text "THE ONTARIO LIBERAL PLAN, 2007" is printed in a smaller, sans-serif font.

THE ONTARIO LIBERAL PLAN, 2007



## A Message from Dalton McGuinty

Ontario is home to a rich diversity of cultures, histories, languages and traditions. And this diversity finds its expression in our arts and culture.

Arts and culture are profoundly human. They enrich the enjoyment of our lives. They give expression to our hopes, fears, regrets, celebrations, and memories. They are the voice of our common humanity.

That is the power of arts and culture — bringing people together, bringing communities to life and improving our quality of life.

But arts and culture are more than just an outlet for our creativity. Ontario's cultural industries support thousands of jobs, build strong, vibrant communities and draw visitors here from all over the world.

The other parties have never understood that arts and culture are economic necessities, not luxuries.

Only the Ontario Liberals understand that, in our globally connected and innovative world, support for the arts is a smart and necessary economic strategy. The arts have the power to improve Ontarians' quality of life — both materially and culturally — as few things can.

Together, we must ensure that our cultural industries — and the communities and families they serve — remain strong for years to come.

Dalton McGuinty  
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party



## moving forward, together

Over the past four years, the Ontario Liberals have increased funding for artists and arts organizations across Ontario by 38% through the Ontario Arts Council.

But, during their eight years in government, the Conservatives repeatedly slashed funding for the arts.

In four short years, the Ontario Liberals have restored arts and culture in our schools, on our stages, and in our towns and cities. We've supported Ontario's artists and cultural organizations to support stronger, more vibrant communities and a better way of life.

Together, we've come a long way in four short years — let's not go backwards.

## creating vibrant communities

### PROMOTING CULTURAL CENTRES

Over the past four years, the Ontario Liberals have been encouraging municipalities develop cultural plans to put more emphasis on local arts, culture and heritage.

We've worked with cities to attract talented artists and entrepreneurs, as well as businesses interested in capitalizing on that talent. We've been helping to revitalize downtowns, promote tourism and create jobs.

Over the next four years, we'll continue to support Ontario's heritage through existing programs. In order to build on our progress, we will:

- Provide our municipalities with the funds, knowledge and tools to help develop their unique cultural creative industries.
- Support organizations that strengthen community arts programs, such as the Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership, through an annual investment of \$5 million.

### MAINTAINING AND REBUILDING OUR CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Unlike the previous Conservative government, which allowed many of Ontario's heritage buildings to be demolished and reduced grants to museums, the Ontario Liberals have strengthened heritage protection in Ontario through major revisions to the Ontario Heritage Act. The amendments provide new, municipal and provincial powers to identify and protect heritage sites and districts, marine heritage sites and archaeological resources.

We've invested \$50 million to support construction at key Ontario cultural landmarks to promote Ontario as a cultural destination. We've supported improvements to the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Ballet School, the Gardiner Museum, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Canadian Opera Company.

We also invested \$20 million to strengthen Ontario's libraries — especially in rural, northern, francophone and First Nations communities.

To build on this success, we will:

- Revitalize local arts and culture through a three-year, \$40 million cultural capital program. This program will help municipalities provide artists with space to do their work.
- Increase support for museums and heritage preservation through an annual \$650,000 investment.
- Enable our museums to engage new ideas and technology through an annual \$2 million investment that will make history more accessible and tangible to Ontarians.
- Develop libraries as a community hub of technology and recorded knowledge and support the implementation of new technology through a \$13 million investment over four years. This funding will also provide librarians new resources such as consultation, training and development.

### stimulating economic development, research and innovation

Ontario is home to some of the most creative, innovative and talented people in the world. Ontario's content creators — producers, writers, musicians, performers and other artists — breathe life into our cultural industries. The Ontario Liberals know that it is critical to help foster an environment in

which creators of Canadian content can innovate, embrace new technologies and find new audiences in national and international markets.

Under the previous Conservative government, funding to the Ontario Film Development Corporation was slashed. The Ontario Liberals know that the film industry is integral to maintaining Ontario's position as an ideal film and television production centre. We believe that the industry can continue to play a critical role in fostering job creation and economic growth in the province. That is why we increased the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit, the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit and the Ontario Interactive Media Tax Credit, in order to give our film and television industry the boost that it needed.

We didn't stop there. We also supported partnerships in Ontario's Entertainment and Creative Cluster stakeholders in order to help them to develop new approaches and solutions through the three year, \$7.5 million Entertainment and Creative Cluster Partnerships Fund. And we invested \$10 million in the Canadian Film Centre for training and apprenticeships in film, TV and new media.

To build on this success, we will:

- Create a new fund to further promote and develop new media content creation in Ontario. The fund will focus on the creation of new and original content for mobile and online platforms.
- Assist our publishing industries, including books and magazines, to implement the digitization of their creative content.

- Invest \$50 million annually to increase the film and television tax credits and provide support for our producers at the start of a production.
- Extend and increase funding to the Ontario Media Development Corporation for the Entertainment and Creative Cluster Partnerships Fund by \$12 million over four years.

## supporting youth and the arts

Arts and culture programs have been of great benefit to marginalized youth. The Ontario Liberals believe that all children and youth in our province deserve the opportunity to experience a full range of learning, which includes the arts. That is why we've taken steps to inspire our youth to participate in culture and the arts in Ontario.

Under the Conservative government, funding cuts to Ontario school boards meant that 430,000 high school students were deprived of extra-curricular activities including arts and music programs.

Since 2003, the Ontario Liberals have invested \$25 million in arts and education programs for children and youth across the province. A solid arts education contributes to success for students across the curriculum. We know that learning through the arts supports higher academic achievement and improved cognitive development.

To continue this progress, we will:

- Support evidence based programs that are led by youth, or focus on marginalized youth through the \$1 million per year ARTSPIRE fund.

## support the cultural renaissance

Ontario is home to renowned artists, museums, theatres, art centres, festivals, exhibitions and historic places. Showcasing our culture here and abroad strengthens our tourism, stimulates job growth and economic development, and supports our communities. Ontario Liberals believe that harnessing the potential of cultural tourism will give us a competitive edge in the 21st century.

Ontario's major cities are also in competition with other cities across the world to bring special attractions to our province. Cultural attractions agencies compete for blockbuster attractions, such as the popular "BodyWorks Exhibit" at the Ontario Science Centre, which draw the attention of a broader and more diverse public, including our youth.

The Ontario Liberals recognize that cultural tourism and special attractions not only benefit the economy, but also engage Ontarians and visitors alike and allow them to tap into their own sense of creativity.

In order to foster Ontario's cultural tourism, we will:

- Create a \$15 million special events fund for our cultural attractions agencies to host blockbuster attractions.

- Collaborate with our cultural attractions and municipalities on strategically targeted cultural tourism campaigns for foreign markets.
- Ensure the culture sector is represented on all trade and business missions.
- Work to have our province's places internationally recognized as world heritage sites by UNESCO.

### nurturing our artists

As Premier McGuinty often says, a society does not reveal itself through roads or golf courses, but through its songs, its dance, paintings, films, theatre, architecture, and literature. The stewards of these creations are our artists.

For eight years, the previous Conservative government starved the agencies that support our artists.

The Ontario Liberals have increased annual funding to the Ontario Arts Council to almost \$55 million by 2009-10. The Ontario Arts Council is the province's key vehicle for providing support to individual artists and professional arts organizations across the province. Thanks to the Ontario Liberals, the Ontario Arts Council awarded \$35.7 million to 1,268 individual artists and 836 organizations in 249 Ontario communities in 2005-2006 alone.

The Ontario Liberals established a Minister's Advisory Council, which provides a forum for discussion and advises the Minister of Culture on how to build strong and vibrant cultural communities in Ontario, including advice

on legislation. For the first time in history, the Ontario Liberals formally recognized the important role that individual artists play for our social and economic well-being by passing the Status of Ontario's Artists Act. We've demonstrated our commitment to artists through:

- Training and professional development opportunities,
- Audience development,
- Promoting artists' health and safety,
- Strengthening arts and culture organizations,
- Creating forums for artists to access information, and
- Promoting local culture tours and municipal cultural planning.

To increase support to Ontario's artists, we will:

- Provide artists with business training seminars in all Small Business Enterprise Centres across Ontario.
- Increase annual funding to the Ontario Arts Council by a further \$5 million per year starting in the 2008/2009 budget year in addition to our previously committed funding of \$55 million by 2009/10.

We are fortunate in Ontario to have people who care deeply about the value of creativity — and who are eager to share their talents and improve their communities.

The Ontario Liberals will continue to work with all levels of government to strengthen Ontario's arts and culture — so that generations to come may continue to enjoy the rich, vibrant complexity of Ontario's culture, and benefit from it.





Authorized by the CFO for the Ontario Liberal Party