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By Kate Cornell

Later this year, Canadians will vote in the 43rd federal election. Many non-profit organizations, networks, and coalitions see elections as a critical opportunity to raise relevant public policy issues. Recently, the rules for charities engaging in public policy have become a prominent source of debate and discussion in government and the sector. As we countdown to the next election, The Philanthropist is asking non-profit leaders what public policy issues are top of mind for them.

Name and organization: Kate Cornell, co-chair of the Canadian Arts Coalition and executive director of the Canadian Dance Assembly

What current election issues might impact your work?

Climate change is sure to affect everyone's work dramatically in the next 11 years. Climate change and how to respond is very likely to be the central issue in this upcoming federal election. In the performing arts, reaching Canadian audiences is challenging and expensive, and touring leaves a significant carbon footprint. Currently, not many Canadian artists or arts organizations are thinking about the carbon footprint of their work because of the scarcity mindset. One leader in this area is Kendra Fry (Creative Collisions) and her work to revitalize faith-based spaces for arts organizations as cultural hubs.

What issues would you like to bring more attention to in the election?

The Canadian Arts Coalition developed a comprehensive list of election issues important to the arts sector, such as training and space. The Coalition has reached out to the major federal parties to encourage them to include the arts in their platforms. For me, the most important recommendation from the Coalition is for a broad-based horizontal approach to Indigenous artists within multiple departments with federal support for language development, training, hubs and spaces, and presentation. Canada has historically under-served Indigenous peoples and it is time to recognize and fully support Indigenous artists.

Where can we learn more about these issues? Canadian Arts Coalition Federal Election Platform 2019