



Conseil québécois du théâtre : Election Toolkit for Members

Municipal Elections, Fall 2021





Question Bank

Here are 10 sample questions to ask municipal election candidates at public debates and meetings or in an email or letter.

Each question begins with a short preamble or introduction explaining the issue (why is this important?). The preamble frames the question (when time and context permit) for the candidate.

Preamble 1

Since the beginning of the municipal election campaign, many leaders of cultural institutions have been encouraging candidates to put arts and culture at the heart of their municipality's recovery efforts. We would like to raise awareness among our members and candidates running for office about the importance of municipal involvement in developing and promoting professional arts activities in our community.

Question 1.1

- What do you propose to do to increase the municipal contribution to the development and outreach of professional arts activities in our community?

Question 1.2

- What kinds of measures could be put in place at the municipal level to support cultural organizations as they resume activities in physical venues after the shock of the pandemic?

Preamble 2

When it comes to the cultural experience, one of the strengths of municipal government is its close proximity to community members. This essential proximity is the key element of the artistic encounter and is all the more essential when it comes to the performing arts. We believe it is important to think of new ways to embody this proximity, to rekindle curiosity and enthusiasm for the artistic and cultural activities municipalities provide.

Question 2

- What do you think municipalities can do to create more proximity between artists and the public?



Preamble 3

Culture is a common good. Artists give us a unique, evolving, nuanced view of the world. One could say that art oxygenates the spirit: it liberates thought and stimulates dialogue. In this regard, we like to say that culture contributes to social cohesion and a sense of belonging. Through art, certain features of the collective identity are revealed.

Question 3

- As a vector of social cohesion, culture occupies an essential place in society. What can be done at the municipal level to ensure that cultural activities are better known, valued and accessible to all?

Preamble 4

One of the issues that concerns us is the intersection between cultural recreation and professional arts practice. We believe it is important to establish a clear policy framework for each of these sectors, both of which contribute to improving people's quality of life. We deplore the fact that too often, municipalities feel less concerned by the fate of professional artists who live and create on their territory. We believe it is crucial that the municipal administration understands the barriers that creators face when it comes to accessing creative, production and presentation spaces.

Question 4.1

- What do you propose to do to better distinguish between the cultural recreation and professional arts practice sectors in our city?

Question 4.2

- What concrete actions can you undertake, if you are elected, to learn more about and promote the work of artists who live and work in your community?

Question 4.3

- What concrete measures are you proposing to facilitate access to creation, production and distribution venues for professional artists who live and work in your community?

Question 4.4

- Would you be willing to commit to establishing a working group to address the challenges faced by professional artists in accessing resources in your municipality, with a mandate to develop an action plan to address these barriers?



Preamble 5

We are aware that cities have multiple contractual provisions and obligations (public safety, development, transportation, health, recreation, culture, etc.). In this regard, the collection of property taxes plays a key role in financing a municipality's activities. However, we note that some of the criteria used to assess the tax rate are not adapted to the economic reality of cultural organizations.

Question 5

- Would you be willing to call for the establishment of a reduced rate that would enable arts groups to maintain and expand their cultural activities?

Preamble 6

We are not done with the pandemic. It is clear that we will have to learn to live with the presence of COVID-19 in our communities in the medium to long term. This is a major challenge for the arts and culture community, since certain activities lose their meaning if they are not performed before a physical audience. We believe it is important to reflect on the long-term impacts of the pandemic on our milieu—whose strength lies in contact, exchange, and proximity—so that we can think now about solutions that are commensurate with our creativity.

Question 6

- What measures do you propose to initiate to continue supporting the arts and culture community in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic?

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