FEDERAL ELECTION 2021

September 10, 2021

Dear Federal Election Candidate,

As Canada prepares for the federal election on September 20th, MusicNL respectfully submits the following 3 recommendations for your consideration if elected.

Canadian creative industries, like live music, are a global success story. Accounting for $53.1 billion or 3% overall of GDP, more than 666,500 Canadians are directly employed in the creative industries, with countless spinoff jobs that significantly contribute to the economy. These industries, which include the music, book, magazine, screen-based media, interactive media, broadcasting, performing arts and digital sectors in addition to associated subsectors, is a key economic driver undergoing significant change, with numerous opportunities and enormous potential. [[1]](#footnote-1)

MusicNL is committed to helping the music sector succeed. This submission is presented on behalf of more than 500 members representing thousands working in the sector. The recommendations offer opportunities to ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador remain an attractive place to live and work.

We hope, that if elected, you will make decisions in the short and long term that will benefit all working in the music sector across Canada.

Respectfully,

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Amy House, Chair

POLICY RECOMMENDATION #1 MENTAL WELLNESS

In 2018 the East Coast Music Association completed a survey to get an impression of the mental health state of members from the east coast music scene. Representation included singer/songwriters, musicians, volunteers, and other industry professionals.

Over half of the respondents indicated living below the poverty line, past research shows that living below the poverty line can be a negative indicator for mental health outcomes.

Financial stresses are also more likely from people with young families and over 65% of individuals surveyed were between the ages of 25-44, which is typical of family stage of life.

**Facts**

* 20% of those completing the survey reported suicidal thoughts in the past month as compared to the Canadian average of 3.3% in the previous 12 months.
* 50% percent of respondents reported being concerned now or in the past about their alcohol/drug usage and,
* 38% offered that others are concerned about their use.

Today, the new realities of working at home, unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with family and friends has taken time to get used to. Adapting to changes such as these and managing the fear of contracting the virus and worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us.

The above can be particularly difficult for people with mental health conditions and are pronounced right now.

**Recommendation: Make mental health a priority for your constituents including those in the music sector and ensure that supports and resources are made available to all Canadians.**

POLICY RECOMMENDATION #2: INVESTMENTS IN ARTS AND CULTURE

MusicNL supports the previous requests made by the Canadian Live Music Association that include: long-term capacity rebuilding of the live music sector via permanent investments in Canadian Live Music Support Fund.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Such a fund will:

* Keep people, and artists, to work and keep them there, both for and non-profit companies/organizations,
* provide financial assistance for pandemic retrofitting capital investments in live performance venues: help venues manage the cost of implementing public health measures such as installing new HVAC systems, plexiglass barriers, cleaning supplies and hiring personnel related to standardizing best practices, etc.
* support innovative marketing partnerships to build consumer confidence and welcome Canadians back to live music,
* support the future of tourism broadly, and cultural tourism specifically, across Canada,
* support all primary live music stakeholders who play a meaningful and demonstrable role in the local/regional/national sector, including all companies that help to drive the careers of Canadian artists
* support the production and technical community who are fundamental to the live music ecosystem.

**Recommendation: Advocate for the arts and culture sector in Canada by providing stable and consistent funding addressed in the 6 points above.**

POLICY RECOMMENDATION #3: REMOVE BARRIERS TO IMMIGRATION

Newfoundland & Labrador has the fastest aging population in Canada. For our province to survive and thrive, we must look to immigration as a solution. In the past governments have made great strides in reducing the barriers to attract and retain immigrants to Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador.

**REMOVING BARRIERS**

**Story 1:** In 2021 MusicNL hired a highly skilled student through a 12-week program offered by the Association for New Canadians. This experience was exceptional and provided MusicNL with a time period to try out a new employee. When MusicNL tried to proceed in hiring the individual on a full-time, permanent bases, with supports, they hit wall after wall because federal wage subsidies are only eligible for permanent residence (PR). If we are to recruit and retain immigrants, we must remove barriers such as this and expand the criteria allowing international students, international graduates, and anyone working towards their PR to qualify for federal wage supports during the transition. Due to this barrier, this highly skilled graduate is not working in their field of study and our province may not retain them.

**Story 2:** MusicNL recently qualified for funding supports offered through Factor by the Canadian Government to support immigrants in the music sector. Once again, we learned that the funds could only be used for PRs and not for international students or graduates that are working towards their PR. If we are to recruit and retain immigrants in Canada, we must remove barriers such as this and expand the criteria so international students and graduates and anyone working towards the PR qualify for wage supports.

**Recommendation: Remove barriers allowing international students & graduates and anyone working towards their PR to avail of federal wage subsidy funding during their immigration journey.**

1. <https://canadianlivemusic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CLMA-FED-Pre-Budget-Submission-Aug.-2021.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://canadianlivemusic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CLMA-FED-Pre-Budget-Submission-Aug.-2021.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)