



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION NO.: **421-02645**

BY: **Ms. DABRUSIN (TORONTO--DANFORTH)**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 24, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **ANDY FILLMORE**

Response by the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Funding aid

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government would like to thank the petitioners for expressing their concerns regarding the designation of stand-up comedy as an art form and support for Canadian comedians through arts funding.

A number of Department of Canadian Heritage funding programs recognize "Humour" as an eligible performance discipline, such as the Canada Arts Training Fund (CATF), the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF), the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF) and the Canada Arts Presentation Fund (CAPF).

As such, the Government of Canada, through the Department of Canadian Heritage, provides financial support for comedy and humour, for example:

- Through the CATF, the Department provides funding to l'École de nationale de l'humour in Montréal to support the training of humourists with a high potential for national or international professional artistic careers.
- The CCSF supports construction and renovation projects to improve the physical conditions of cultural spaces, such as the Festival international du rire's Salle ComediHa! in Québec City, providing a dedicated space for comedic performance.

- The CAPF has confirmed funding for this year to the Halifax Comedy Festival Society and the Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival, among others.

The Canada Council for the Arts (Council) is an arm's length Crown corporation, established in 1957 through an Act of Parliament. It reports to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism. The Council is responsible for determining its programs and activities independently, within the scope of its mandate.

The Council's mandate is "to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts." The organization champions and invests in artistic excellence through a broad range of grants, services, prizes and payments to professional Canadian artists and arts organizations. Funded activities must fall within the Council's published eligibility criteria and support the organization's mandate.

Beginning in 2017, the Council adopted a non-disciplinary, activity-based funding model. The Council supports artistic activities across eleven "fields of practice." While stand-up comedy is not a designated field of practice, the Council understands that a broad definition of theatre can include forms practiced by stand-up comedians, such improvisational theatre or solo creation. The Council also recognizes that many stand-up comedians have professional training and experience as theatre artists.

Stand-up comedians who wish to apply for Council funding have the option of creating a theatre artist profile, providing they meet the published eligibility criteria. Stand-up comedians who meet these criteria can then apply for Council grants for activities that are broadly eligible under one of Council's fields of practice.

In early June this year, the Council had a productive meeting with representatives from the Canadian Association of Stand-Up Comedians, which included discussions about the place of stand-up comedy within the artistic community and the cultural industries.

The Council considers all the feedback it receives. The Council will continue to examine how its new funding model responds to the evolution of the arts in Canada.