

# DHA Policy Brief: Manifesto statements on the arts



With the likelihood of another coalition government, each of the principal political parties' manifestos is worthy of attention. This policy brief highlights the arts related proposals from each manifesto.



**Conservative**

*"In music art, fashion, theatre, design, film television and the performing arts, we have an edge. Conservatives understand these things do not just enhance our national prestige and boost our economy; they help tie our country together, strengthening bonds between us."* **A Brighter, More Secure Future. Conservative Party Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- Endorse plans for a new theatre in Manchester (The Factory)
- Support plans to develop a modern world class concert hall in London
- Support a Great Exhibition in the North
- Help establish a new India Gallery at Manchester Museum
- Freeze BBC licence fee
- Continued tax relief for the arts sector and expanded, where possible, next year.



*"The Green Party believes that the arts and humanities have an essential part to play in creating a more democratic, sane and participatory society."* **For The Common Good. Green Party Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- Promote the uptake of arts and humanities at universities
- Increase government arts spending by £500million a year to restore arts funds to 2010 levels
- Reinststate 'proper' levels of funding for local authorities
- Reduce VAT to 5% for live performances
- Decrease regulation on small scale performances
- Move arts funding from the regional level to local authorities.



*"Labour believes that art and culture gives form to our hopes and aspirations and defines our heritage as a nation. The arts allow us to celebrate our common humanity in the creation and celebration of beauty. The arts should belong to all and be open to all to take part in."* **Britain Can Be Better. Labour Party Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- Strengthen creative education in schools
- Require institutions that receive arts funding to open their doors for the young
- Increase the number of apprenticeships in the creative industries
- Rebalance arts funding across the country
- Create a 'Prime Minister's Committee on the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries' containing representatives from all regions to bring concerns of the sector directly to the Prime Minister.



*“Liberal Democrats understand that arts, creative industries and culture are crucial to Britain’s success and essential for personal fulfilment and quality of life.”* **Opportunity For Everyone. Liberal Democrats Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- Arts will play an essential role in the education system to encourage creativity in schools and universities
- Give greater autonomy to national museums and galleries
- Freeze BBC licence fee
- Work with the Creative Industry Council to promote creative skills
- Reduce barriers to entry for small creative businesses
- Promote ‘social prescribing’ of arts activities to help tackle obesity, mental health problems and other health conditions.



*“Plaid Cymru will introduce a right for everybody to have access to the arts, heritage and culture. They must be presented so that they are relevant and available to all.”* **Working For Wales. Plaid Cymru Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- Increase access to the arts for young people, particularly those of disadvantaged backgrounds
- Promote apprenticeships in the arts
- Support Cardiff to become the European City of Culture
- Develop closer links with organisations in Scotland and across Ireland to promote our cultures
- Hold a poll to agree on figures of importance in the world of writing in Wales that we can celebrate through holding national events to increase interest in literature.



*“For Scotland’s creative sector – we’ll seek increased investment through BBC Scotland so that a fairer share of the licence fee is spent in Scotland, giving a £100 million boost to our creative sector.”* **Stronger For Scotland. SNP Manifesto 2015**

Proposals at a glance:

- £100 million extra funding for BBC Scotland
- Support creation of ‘Creative Content Fund’ for video games industry
- Back retention of tax relief for video games industry.



## UK Independence Party

UKIP will abolish the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as it is deemed ‘their essential powers and functions can be merged into other departments’. The UKIP manifesto does not have any other policies specifically relating to the arts sector.

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