Canadian Magazine Publishers' 2025 Pre-Election Advocacy Toolkit

Canadians head to the polls on April 28, 2025. The Canadian Magazine Coalition (Alberta Magazine Publishers Association (AMPA), Magazines Canada, L'Association québécoise des éditeurs de magazines (AQEM), and the Magazine Association of B.C. (MagsBC)), is committed to working effectively with the elected government on behalf of our members and the magazine media industry.

We're seeking your support to ensure the sector and its many contributions to Canada's economic, cultural and information landscape are recognized and protected.

- Read this document to familiarize yourself with key issues affecting the magazine media sector.
- Consult Elections Canada to confirm the candidates in your riding.
- Review candidates' bios and request meetings.

Why this election is critical to Canadian Magazine Publishers

1. With many external challenges, federal investment is critical to a strong Canadian magazine publishing industry.

Through the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Government of Canada's investment strategy protects Canadians' sustainable access to essential news, data, diverse perspectives and information. This strategy sustains an ethical and professional Canadian-owned media space that generates content on multiple platforms by, for, and about Canadians; attracts, supports, and maintains a base of creative workers who earn competitive wages; and contributes to the cultural, social, and economic aspirations of Canadians.

Aid to Publishers (ATP) and Special Measures for Journalism (SMJ) are complementary grant programs that invest in the Canadian magazine ecosystem and serve communities of readers from coast to coast to coast.

In 2020, the federal government created a critical, timely, and responsive policy tool through its Special Measures for Journalism (SMJ) grant program, by investing in magazines with modest circulation and titles that distribute free to readers. In 2023, 258 Canadian magazines accessed funding through SMJ over and above the existing 363 Aid to Publishers (ATP) recipients.

The investment through SMJ is not only critical for Western Canadian publishers – where 83% of magazines distribute content free to readers – but across the country. More than half of the program's recipients are situated in Ontario and Quebec. This fund helps publishers nationwide serve niche communities and reach unique and dedicated audiences.

> **The Coalition's recommendation**:
> That the Government of Canada continue to invest in magazines eligible to receive support through the Special Measure for Journalism Initiative by making the fund a permanent addition to the Canada Periodical Fund starting in 2025-26.

2. Investment in Canadian Media

Despite the many benefits of advertising in print and digital magazines to reach premium, engaged audiences (and the trust our readers have in us), a significant portion of the federal government's ad spending has bypassed Canadian publishers and flowed to foreign platforms, providing minimal economic return.

A government commitment to advertise in local magazines ensures that storytelling, journalism, and cultural representation remain in Canadian hands and bolsters our economy. Redirecting a portion of federal ad

budgets to locally owned media businesses supports local magazine jobs and the creative sector, including journalists, editors, photographers, designers, art directors, and illustrators.

> **The Coalition's recommendation**:
> That the federal government, when looking to reach Canadian audiences, direct a portion of its annual advertising budget to Canadian magazine media.

3. Increase local economic growth.

Providing small and mid-sized businesses with the means to connect with their communities through locally owned magazine media strengthens the foundation of local economies. Advertising money spent in Canadian magazines invigorates communities and invests in local businesses, local media, and local jobs.

> **The Coalition's recommendation**:
> That the federal government introduce a tax incentive program for Canadian businesses advertising in Canadian-owned local print and digital magazine media, supporting local magazine journalism and the production of Canadian content.

4. Magazines need to be at the table.

Canada's magazine publishers were not involved in the Online News Act discussions (C18). As a result, the legislation relies too heavily on the CRA's overly restrictive and exclusionary definition of Qualified Canadian Journalism Organizations (QCJOs), despite the magazine sector's participation in and essential contributions to the news and journalism ecosystem and its role in combatting misinformation and disinformation through trusted, verified, and fact-checked content.

Legislation that enacted a two-month GST/HST holiday for consumers in late 2024 excluded Canadian magazines from the program, while including print newspapers.

> **The Coalition's recommendation**:
> That the federal government include magazines when developing and enacting policies and legislation in support of the broader Canadian media and publishing sectors. The Canada Periodical Fund's (PCH) Aid to Publishers and Special Measures for Journalism eligibility criteria are more inclusive than the restrictive QCJO criteria set out in the Income Tax Act.

Magazines Matter

- The Canadian magazine sector is a $1 billion per year industry.
- The sector provides more than 8,000 high-quality careers employing journalists, editors, art directors, writers, artists, digital specialists, sales teams, marketers, event planners, and more.
- Canadian magazines reach nearly 8 in 10 adults across the country.
- Canadian readers have access to nearly 2,400 magazine titles published from coast to coast to coast by more than 1,124 Canadian businesses.
- Canadians rely on magazine journalism to stay informed about their communities and the stories that are significant to them.
- Magazines fill a critical gap by covering local news and stories in large cities and small towns and for communities of interest.
- Fact-based, fact-checked magazine journalism combats misinformation and disinformation and plays a role in our democracy and sovereignty.

While the sector navigates the many outside pressures on the business model, Canadians continue to rely on magazines to stay informed about their communities and the stories that are significant to them. Canada's magazine publishers are highly entrepreneurial problem solvers who are responding and adapting to current realities.

The Canadian media sector is a significant contributor to the nation's economy. Maintaining and strengthening the magazine sector through ongoing investment and policies ensures it reflects Canadian society, publishes diverse voices and points of view, and resonates in communities of all sizes at national, regional, and local levels.

While Canadian media is a pillar of our democracy, magazines are pillars of our identity. Magazines continue to excel at what they have always done: share insightful stories about who we are and how we see the world, written, illustrated and photographed by exceptional Canadian talent, using trusted journalistic practices and values.

Engage in the election and with your local candidates
As a magazine publisher, you have real-life insights to share. Inform the candidates in your riding about the role you play as a Canadian publisher / business owner, and the important contributions made by the magazine media industry in the country.

- Meet with candidates to introduce yourself, your business and your magazine(s).
- Inform them about the impact on your community – whether that be a town, city, industry or community of interest.
- What is your publication(s) about, and how many readers does it reach? How many employees and contractors do you employ?
- Keep the meeting positive and help them understand how magazines impact Canadian identity and our role in the broader media ecosystem.
- Discuss any funding and policy issues important to you and your business. You don't need to touch on everything above – only what resonates for you.
- Engage with candidates online, through social media, to encourage them to demonstrate support for Canada's magazine publishing sector.