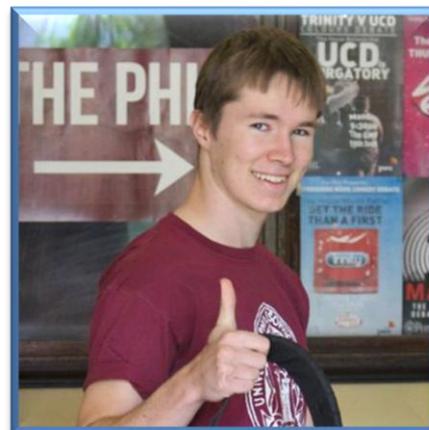


Harry Morris

Schools' convenor

Why do I want to be Schools' Convenor?

Team schools does massively important work that I care passionately about; I think that debating is incredibly useful for developing critical thinking skills, improving public speaking and also being encouraged to think and learn about more issues than just those that impact you on a day to day basis. Children leave our events having had a great time, with a real sense of achievement, as well as having greater developed these important skills.



But encouraging debating is not the only benefit of the work team schools does – it also makes attending the best college in the country a more realistic and plausible goal that school children can consider. Through talking to (hopefully!) friendly college students and seeing how normal and nice everyone is it can all seem a lot less daunting.

What I found most fulfilling about my time with the Phil this year was my involvement with the work of team schools; I volunteered twice to do schools workshops, as well as attending the PhilSpeaks competitive debating weekend and Pro-am. I want to continue to run these fantastic events this year and expand their benefits to as many people as possible.

Why would I be a good Schools' convenor?

From what I've said above, it is hopefully clear that I am really passionate about this role! I intend to work as hard as I can to channel this passion and do the job to the best of my abilities.

I am an approachable, kind person. This will help me to run positive, fun events where everyone feels included. I will also be very open to suggestions and input from the countless fantastic people involved in the Phil.

From my experience on team DC this year, I have learned a lot about organising debating events and the logistics behind these things. I helped organise the Trinity Open, Lizzies and the Trinity IV – as well as lots of drop-in-debates and workshops. I have learned important organisational skills to help with things like coordinating volunteers, controlling food supply and booking rooms with enquiries.

Also from my time on team DC – attending and planning workshops, judging drop-in-debates and attending too many Opens and IV's, I have learned a lot about competitive debating. This should help me to give helpful, engaging workshops and judging feedback to the students we deal with. I will also use this knowledge to introduce more interesting motions to supplement the staples of banning school uniforms and arming the Gardaí.

Plans

Workshops – I want to continue the great work of previous convenors in offering workshops across the country, trying to reach schools that have little experience of debating in particular. This is our best event for bringing the Phil and competitive debating to new people who otherwise wouldn't engage with it.

Pro-am – This is a fantastic event that has massive demand from schools across the country. I want to try to make it involve as many Pro's as possible by encouraging and calling in favours with anyone involved with the Phil - and indeed the Irish debating community more broadly, as I can.

Competitive debating weekend - I want to make our largest event as fun as possible –the candy floss, tunezz, bouncy castles and glitter aren't going anywhere. I also want to make it as big and efficient as possible – both of which require careful planning that I am prepared to undertake.

Digital resources – I want to build on the phenomenal work of last year's team in putting together a booklet containing debating advice. I will add to the materials we have – with things like a guide for teachers on how to start a debate club, as well as continuing to make these materials as widely available as possible.

