

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing on behalf of the Canadian University Society for Intercollegiate Debate (CUSID), the national organization that governs university debating in Canada. We sanction several official tournaments every year, including three separate regional championships, the British Parliamentary Championships, the National Championships, and the North American Championships in conjunction with the American Parliamentary Debate Association. Our membership is comprised of university debating clubs, sanctioned by their respective institutions, from across Canada. Born in the 1970s, our organization now encompasses over 30 debate clubs from British Columbia to Newfoundland & Labrador. This past year alone, we admitted a handful of new clubs and we continue to generate new interest.

As the Société Universitaire Canadienne pour le Débat Intercollegial (SUCDI), we also promote and facilitate French language debate at the university level, including hosting the Compétitions nationales françaises. Many of our newest member clubs are from French language universities in Quebec.

The successful operation of a university-level debate club within CUSID is not without costs. Internally, debate clubs host regular meetings, show debates, a high school tournament, and one annual CUSID-wide tournament. As such, clubs incur costs associated with booking rooms, buying food for tournament participants, and hosting social events to facilitate club cohesion. On average, such costs can range between \$500 and \$3500 annually.

Clubs spend the bulk of their budget, however, on external costs. The average debate club will send competitors to seven Canadian tournaments a year. Most clubs also attend CUSID Nationals, the World University Debate Championships, and American tournaments. While costs depend upon the level of participation and distance from tournaments, clubs incur the costs of tournament registration (which averages \$100/two-person team), accommodation, and travel costs. Travel costs are particularly high for Western clubs because they must fly to the majority of their tournaments. In this light, the average debate club spends approximately \$25 000 on external activities. Individual clubs work hard to generate revenue, but this never adequately covers the cost of running a successful debate club.

Debating is a long-standing tradition throughout Western Canada. Many Western debate clubs even predate the institutions that they represent. With such a strong background it can come as no surprise that Western Canadian debaters have achieved a substantial amount of national and international success. In the past Western debaters have won national titles, international competitions and have competed in the final round at the World University Debating Championships. Western Canadian clubs are also working hard to promote French Language debate by hosting and competing in French Language tournaments. We hope to continue to provide a competitive and enriching environment for our debaters. However, many of our clubs face significant financial difficulties every year. The travel and registration costs for Western clubs would be unworkable without the support we receive from our sponsors. It is this generosity that allows Western Canadian debaters to represent the region across Canada and internationally.

Sincerely,



Padraic Ryan
President



Erin Reddekopp
Vice-President, Western Region