Welcome back to 2016. We would like to take this opportunity to alert you to some key initiatives and changes for the TtEDSC network in 2016.

1) **National Virtual Debating Initiative**
   Please access the PDF flier [here](http://tinyurl.com/2016interest)

Expressions of interest are currently sought from schools wishing to enter teams in this year’s initiative. The exact structure of trials and competition will not be finalised until we see the extent of interest in the EOI process. It is envisaged however that semester 1 will see trial debates leading into selection for formal competition in Semester 2 based on 16 or 8 team rounds in each division (Open, Yr. 9& 10, Yr. 7& 8, Yr. 5 &6). There are some technical and peripheral device requirements and having a SIP/H.323 encoder is an advantage but **not** an absolute requirement. We hope to admit some schools using desktop access. Please read the attached flier for conditions and express interest for teams from your school here: [http://tinyurl.com/2016interest](http://tinyurl.com/2016interest)

2) **Professional Learning Webinars**
   The webinar program will continue into its 4th year. Some cosmetic changes will be obvious but the mechanisms will remain largely the same. One change will be the gradual introduction of “User-Pays” content. The majority of content will remain free but some premium events will now attract a fee. We hope to see more state based AIS content made available to the national audience. TTEDSC will attempt to use remaining federal funds to maximise opportunity for all.

3) **Classroom Events – Virtual Excursions and Expert Lessons**
   In 2015, many teachers for the first time exposed their classes to a third party excursion or expert lesson. Many did this with little more than a cheap microphone and a large screen or projector connected to a classroom PC. (See Item 4). TtEDSC will continue to subsidise these classroom experiences for as long as funds allow. Some “user-Pays” events, will by necessity, begin to appear.

   We will also start this year to “curate” excursions from the NSW department of Education’s DART Connections content. Events of this nature will be clearly marked as “**courtesy of DART**” and you will be able to connect to them using our procedures and software. Please remember there is nothing stopping any Australian independent school (“Non-DEC”) accessing DART sessions directly without the involvement of this network but you will obviously then be governed by their procedures and most events will have a cost. If interested register your school at the DART site [http://www.dartconnections.org.au/](http://www.dartconnections.org.au/)

4) **Negotiated Purchase Offers**
   TtEDSC has begun to research and negotiate with vendors on items of peripheral equipment (microphones, speakers & cameras) to assist you to increase your capabilities in the classroom with conferencing experiences without the need for expensive high end encoder equipment. Two offers are already available to TtEDSC network members and more will appear. The two microphone/speaker devices on offer currently should allow schools on smaller ICT budgets the ability to turn a classroom PC into an effective conferencing
environment.

Please access the offers at [http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/partners/Pages/Equipment-Offer.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/partners/Pages/Equipment-Offer.aspx)

We believe the devices and the negotiated prices are excellent.

5) **Don’t forget the extras**

As part of this network all members have access to residual secondary services from the original project. These include:

a. **Digital Media Repository (DMR)** - this cloud service is available to all individuals and schools to store, organise and stream video content. It is a safe Australian service setup specifically for independent schools and there is no cost.

   See detail and access directions at [http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Services/Pages/DMR.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Services/Pages/DMR.aspx)

b. **iSee Immersive Video Conferencing**

   This virtual 3D environment could have many uses but we offer it to members as a site for a Virtual School Art Gallery

   See detail and access directions at [http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Platform/Pages/isee.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Platform/Pages/isee.aspx)

   Please contact us if you would like a gallery for 2016.

c. **Online Indigenous Awareness Course**

   This is self-paced course for students rich in video instruction and simple formative tools.

   See detail and access directions at [http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Platform/Pages/tom.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Platform/Pages/tom.aspx)

   Please contact us if you would like access for staff or student groups.

Most services on this network will continue to be provided free to members for as long as is viable under remaining funding. Ultimately a more “user-pays” model must apply and a school subscription may form part of this model. For now, take advantage of the subsidized services.

**Enjoy the year!**

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Any staff member from an Australian Independent school can access our services; they just need to be registered.

Obtain a login at: [http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Pages/SiteRegistration.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Pages/SiteRegistration.aspx)

See and register for ALL upcoming events at:
[http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Events/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ttedsc.edu.au/Events/Pages/default.aspx)

Thanks