

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

ALANA RYAN

Position: **President** ELECTED UNOPPOSED*

I am thrilled to be nominating to return to the HTAV Board. I first served on the Board between 2020 and 2024. Since then, I have taken on a leadership role in my school as Deputy Head of Humanities.

In my four years on the Board, I thoroughly enjoyed all parts of the role, including representing HTAV at conferences and events, and helping with the smooth running of the National History Challenge as Assistant State Coordinator. I contributed meaningfully to the governance and financial management of the organisation, including two years on the Finance Committee. Through this work I developed a strong understanding of the organisation's financial position. I also contributed to the Board's work on risk management which became better documented during this time.

I am now in my eighth year of teaching. I currently teach VCE Australian History (my great love!) at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School. My role as Deputy Head of Humanities allows me to spend time supporting the Humanities teachers in my school to be at their best, and to have input on the faculty's curriculum planning. I have enjoyed the opportunity to build strong connections with my VCE Australian History colleagues in other schools through the email network and through many HTAV events.

The longer I spend in the classroom, the more committed I become to the importance of HTAV's vision and purpose. In many schools, time allocated to history education is under threat. In my opinion it has never been more critical for every student in Victoria to be able to access rigorous, engaging history lessons. Further, my recent experience as an early career teacher has shown me how much of a difference HTAV can make in giving a teacher the resources and confidence they need to thrive in the classroom. There is an almost complete overlap between HTAV's purpose and my own professional purpose, which is why I found my previous service on the Board so fulfilling.

CANDIDATES FOR VICE PRESIDENT

CHRISTOPHER HART

Position: **Vice President**

I have been honoured to work on the Board as First Vice President since 2022 and would like to continue to serve. For almost 30 years I have been committed to providing quality education with an emphasis on History since 2012. I have delivered many lectures for HTAV from Teachers New to Revolutions to specific historical content to Middle Leaders since 2013. I received the Excellence in History Teaching by a Secondary Teacher and Outstanding Contribution to the Teaching and Learning of History and to the HTAV by an Early Career Educator before joining the Board. In addition, I have co-authored *Forging America*, the American Revolution textbook for HTAV, and have assisted at every major HTAV conference since I joined the Board. I have chaired Board meetings and have made contact with international visitors to support the Annual Conference. By this and writing for the *Agora*, I feel that I can give back to this great community. I maintain that advocacy for History Education and educators is essential in this age of disinformation and uncertainty. I have enjoyed supporting our President, the Board, Executive Officer and the entire organisation in whatever capability I can and wish to continue to do so as Vice President.

JO LEECH

Position: **Vice President**

I have been serving on the HTAV Board since 2023 as a director and am finishing a 12-month position as Vice President. In my time on the HTAV Board I have been able to support the EO Deb Hull and the staff at HTAV in the roles that they undertake. My experience as a long-serving History teacher allows for practical insight which I am able to share with my colleagues. In the last 12-months as the Vice President I have been able to support the work done by the President and in doing so have a more intricate understanding of the various immediate and diverse actions which need to be made from time to time. As a long-standing contributor to HTAV, I have a strong passion and empathy for the goals that the organisation has; and being on the Board has allowed me to experience first-hand the commitment that the EO and the staff have towards History Education and supporting all teachers throughout Victoria. In my time on the Board, I have been witness to various policy impacts and changes which through the good governance of the board's structure has allowed HTAV to respond positively and with sound judgement when various situations have risen. I feel that through my position I can aid HTAV in continuing to achieve their goal which is supporting all teachers of History.

KARA TAYLOR

Position: **Vice President**

I seek your vote as Vice President for the HTAV Board. I have had years of experience as an HTAV director with one year as 2nd Vice President. I have been a member of the Finance Committee as well as the Agora Advisory Group in my time serving on the Board as well as working with staff to deliver opportunities for Victorian History teachers.

** There was one candidate for the single vacancy for President. This candidate is therefore considered elected and will be put forward for member endorsement at the HTAV AGM.*

[↓ Scroll down to view more Candidate Statements for Director positions and to scan the QR code to vote.](#)

LAUREN BURRISS**Position:** Director

After several years working in Public Relations, I commenced teaching at Monbulk College in 2017 as a History, Maths and Science teacher. I believe every student deserves a quality History education and teachers who will guide them to becoming knowledgeable, analytical, global citizens. As the History teacher, I particularly focus on developing my students' historical inquiry skills and finding creative, engaging ways to scaffold their writing. In Maths/Science, I emphasise cross-curricular links between these disciplines and History.

I enjoy supporting my students as they find insights into, and connections with, how those who have come before us have lived. Studying History is a great way for students to step outside their familiar community and begin to understand the experiences of people living in alternative locations and time periods. I believe this understanding will aid students as they move from the classroom, to finding their place in an unpredictable world. I try to provide my students with a dynamic classroom; one that connects to outside education facilities and guest speakers; that also includes hands-on inquiry with tangible sources that they may hold in their hands. I love working with other History teachers and sharing ideas. While at Monbulk College I have also taken on the roles of Numeracy Improvement Teacher, Year 7 Team Leader and Acting Learning Specialist: Director of Inclusive Education and Differentiation.

I joined the HTAV Board in 2019. Since then, I have had the opportunity to develop, write and host the History EDge – Top Tips for VCE History Students podcast. I have also written for *Agora* and contributed to the *History EDge – How to do Great History Inquiry Projects* video series. I have been a member of the HTAV Finance Committee for the last three years (I have been the Chair of the Committee for the last two years) and have enjoyed assisting with the implementation of the National History Challenge in Victoria, at HTAV conferences, as well as sitting on numerous HTAV Awards Committees.

I sincerely hope to continue in my role as Director on the board of the HTAV.

ATHENA KAVALERIS**Position:** Director

I am nominating for the position of Director because I believe deeply in the role HTAV plays in strengthening History education, supporting teachers, and advocating for the discipline across Victoria. As an experienced middle leader and curriculum specialist, I bring a perspective that is grounded in practical classroom experience and a commitment to growing the teaching of History.

Across my career, I have worked in roles that centre around curriculum and teachers. As Head of Teaching and Learning – Middle School at Westbourne Grammar School, I lead curriculum alignment, assessment systems, and pedagogical development across Years 5–8. I work closely with Heads of Curriculum and classroom teachers to build consistency and high quality learning experiences for students. My work is driven by a belief that education should empower young people to think critically. I also believe that History can allow students to engage with the past in a way that helps them understand their place in the broader world.

Throughout the course of my career, I have been an active contributor to the History teaching community through conference presentations, contributing to *Agora* and attending a range of professional learning opportunities. I have presented at HTAV conferences on subject-specific content, skill-focused information and supporting new teachers in the profession. I have received so much from the association and value any opportunity to give back to the broader History teacher community.

If elected as Director, I would bring my skills in curriculum, History teaching and learning and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing educators. I am particularly interested in supporting HTAV's work in curriculum, professional learning, and building sustainable pathways for the teaching of History. I would welcome the opportunity to work alongside colleagues who share a passion for History education.

ALLAN KERR**Position:** Director

I am honoured to accept nomination for a position on the Board of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria. For more than 30 years, History education has been the foundation of my professional life, and I am eager for the opportunity to contribute more deeply to an organisation that has shaped, supported, and inspired my practice throughout that time.

Across three decades in State, Catholic, and Independent schools, I have been privileged to teach History to thousands of students and lead Humanities faculties in five different schools. These roles have strengthened my belief in the transformative power of historical thinking – its capacity to cultivate critical inquiry, empathy, and an informed citizenry. Currently, as Head of the Centre for Learning Excellence at Strathcona Girls Grammar, I work to nurture high-impact pedagogy, innovative curriculum design, and professional growth across the Humanities.

My long-standing relationship with HTAV includes extensive authorship and presentation work. I am the author of the *VCE Revolutions Teacher Pack* and a contributing author to *Liberating France*, and I have produced numerous VCE Revolutions practice examinations used widely across the state. I have also authored textbooks for Jacaranda, further extending my commitment to creating accessible and rigorous learning resources. Over many years, I have been a prolific presenter at both HTAV and HTAA conferences, sharing practical strategies, disciplinary insights, and classroom innovations with colleagues across Australia.

My experience in assessment includes serving on the VCAA exam panel for Revolutions as both a marker and writer, as well as working as an examiner for the International Baccalaureate in History. I also support the next generation of educators as a tertiary supervisor and occasional lecturer for the Australian Catholic University, working closely with pre-service teachers of History and the Humanities.

I bring to the Board a deep commitment to the discipline, a collaborative spirit, and a genuine enthusiasm for advancing the work of HTAV. And yes – I can ride a bike, which I like to think demonstrates balance, perseverance, and a willingness to keep moving forward.

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GREG NAYLOR

Position: **Director**

I am excited to offer my candidature, as nominated by Matt Taylor, for a position on the HTAV Board. I see this as an ideal opportunity to ‘give back’ and support an Association and its members and fellow Board members that have been very generous to myself and the teams I lead. Having been a writer of articles for Agora and presenter for the HTAV and HTAA, I know how the organisation works and how it can assist teachers at all stages of their teaching journey. I am now an experienced administrator and leader of History-based teams, used to chairing and being an active member of planning committees for new initiatives. As Head of Faculty at The Geelong College for over 18 years and involved in various VCAA roles, including Study Design co-writer, auditor, panel member and panel chair for VCE examinations for over 15 years, I clearly have an ability to work to time and experience of how to work with others to get the best out of individuals and organisations. Importantly, as an experienced teacher of Victorian Curricula, from VELS to our current VC2.0, ACARA iterations, VCE and IB History both in Victorian regional classrooms and IB, GCSE and A levels in the UK, I believe I can offer the Board a very broad set of insights into how to best steer this crucial subject into the new and largely uncharted waters of disinformation, disputed History agendas and ‘facts’ and of course the use and misuse of Generative AI becoming so prevalent. I still teach significant sets in my non-selective-entry regional school, so I can provide the practical as well as philosophical views into the strengths and limitations of the current iteration of the subject in Victoria and, crucially, an entirely non-metropolitan perspective, studying in Warracknabeal and later in Ballarat. In addition, I have an insight as a parent of children who have undertaken 7-12 History subjects in Victoria in a range of Geelong schools. I hope this Statement provides some idea of my desire and suitability to be part of such an important Board.

NATALIE SHEPHERD

Position: **Director**

I am currently a secondary teacher of History and Humanities at Hume Anglican Grammar and VCE Coordinator at the Donnybrook Campus. I am nominating for the role of director on the HTAV Board. I have a passion for learning and teaching and believe that all students should receive a quality History education, no matter their circumstances or ability. I have over two decades of teaching experience, ten years within the government sector (albeit in the UK) and 14 years in the independent sector. For the last 14 years, I have been an active contributor to HTAV, writing articles for Agora and presenting regularly at conferences, as well as being asked to present at the Regional Summits. I have helped enhance educational resources through my involvement in HTAV publications as well as providing accessible resources via my presentations. I have in the past been a judge for the Simpson Prize and National History Challenge and have promoted various History Competitions. Over the last eight years, I have acted as a mentor through HTAV to support colleagues throughout the state. I feel that I can bring knowledge and experience, as well as contributing relevant skills, if elected to the HTAV Board. Furthermore, I would love the opportunity to continue contributing to the ongoing success of the most vibrant and envied Teachers’ Association in Victoria.

KARA TAYLOR

Position: **Director**

I seek a position on the HTAV Board to continue working with the staff and Board in supporting Victorian teachers. I bring not only years of experience as an HTAV director but also the experience of being a regional teacher and a public school teacher too.

VOTE TODAY!

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