

A message from the Core (BOD) of Emergence:

Hello 2020 Emergers! As excitement builds toward this year's Emergence, the Core has a message for the community. Last year there was a series of heated exchanges and reactions on the Emergence Facebook Group specifically on the topic of racism. We found ourselves unprepared for the controversy and backlash, and we made many mistakes in dealing with it. For this we are truly sorry, especially to those who tried to help and had their comments deleted. We have listened to the concerns of the community, and our work since then is intended to fundamentally shape the future of the event. We were blessed with feedback and advice from many, many folks, and have taken it to heart. We also solicited feedback from a broad range of people both who attended the event and who did not. Some of the changes we've made include:

- Broadening the leadership team that contributes to Emergence and the community. Key event functions are being handed off to leads and co-leads. In this way we broaden participation and diversity of thought, and create more resources to pay attention to important issues.
- A broad and diverse social media team has been formed to monitor activity on the Emergence Facebook group, and to address issues immediately.
- We have formed "The Pulse", an advisory committee consisting of a diverse group of community representatives to bring multiple perspectives and accountability to the Core, and to bring the mission and vision of Emergence to the community.
- The Core attended the SERT leadership conference, and had the opportunity to learn from other leaders in the region.
- We recognized the need for clarity about mission, with a specific emphasis on diversity and radical inclusion. For that we are revising our policies and statements on [Emergenceburn.org](#), and as mentioned above, created The Pulse. This is a work in process with more to come.
- We continue to grow a set of standard operating procedures and guidelines, including [an online complaint system](#) and an independent Conduct Committee.
- We developed an [Acidic Art Policy](#) to deal with radical self expression or art that is in conflict with the principle of radical inclusion and destructive to our community.

We value the growth and empathy that arise from direct dialogue concerning important, sensitive and nuanced topics. To that end, we invite you to bring any concerns you have to one of the Town Hall gatherings that will be taking place in and around Charleston prior to Emergence 2020, or to one of our pre-event community conference calls (see [our Facebook page](#) for notifications). We also invite you to submit constructive feedback via [our contact form](#).

With the guiding principle of radical inclusion, we aim to include the widest and most diverse perspectives within our community, and to take appropriate organizational actions that provide a nurturing and respectful environment for the event and its participants. Burns are co-created events and we encourage participants to engage in dialogues that promote and expand empathy and inclusion.

Contact