



SHAMBHALA

Shambhala Board Frequently Asked Questions

Updated June 12, 2023

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Charter and Affiliate Policies

[What is the Charter and International Bylaws?](#)

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[Can a Centre or Group request that certain parts of the charter be modified or deleted before they sign?](#)

[How should a Centre approve and sign the Charter?](#)

[If a Centre decides to close and not continue as a Shambhala Center, can individuals still participate in Shambhala Global, such as receive Shambhala Network posts and access to Shambhala Online?](#)

[Can they join another local Center or Land Center?](#)

[The mission stated in the Charter says “to present, propagate, and support the teachings and practices of the Shambhala and Buddhist traditions as taught by the Lineage of the Sakyongs of Shambhala.” Does this mean that all individuals studying in Shambhala must study the Sakyong’s teachings?](#)

[Section 3.2 of the Affiliation Policy talks about an affiliation fee, but there is not an amount listed. What is the affiliation fee per/member that Centers and Groups are expected to pay?](#)

[Section 5 of the Affiliation Policies, refers to “Real Property.” Does that refer to just real estate or other items that a Shambhala Center or Group might hold?](#)

[Article 3.4 of the Affiliation Policies refers to “Membership Policies,” but I am not sure how best to recruit and retain members. What support is available to me and my Center?](#)

[Section 10 of the Affiliation Policies refers to the “Global Leadership Council \(GLC\).” How will that work? What support is available to make the GLC functional?](#)

[The role of the Shambhala Board, scope and boundaries are not clearly defined in Charter and Affiliation Policies. What is the full scope of operations of the Board and why?](#)

[If a Group is starting up and brand new, do they need to sign the Charter? What is the threshold for signing?](#)

[Article VIII.3 of the Charter, “Binding Effect and Dispute Resolution”, refers to the obligation of Centres and Groups to participate in an internal dispute resolution process. Is that different and separate from the Code of Conduct Procedures?](#)

[Ultimately, can the Shambhala Board sell a Centre building and use the money if there are financial issues in Shambhala?](#)

[Does the language around real property mean that if our Centre is privately owned \(for example, if an individual bought a property and a Shambhala Group or Centre operates in it\), it's now "held in trust", or “owned” by the Shambhala Organization?](#)

[If a local Centre elects to transfer title through the process described in Section, is our building still "held in trust" by the Shambhala Organization after the transfer? What does the transfer of title mean? I imagine it would usually mean "our local community owns our building" straightforwardly, but is that true?](#)

[Does the option to transfer title apply to Canadian Centres?](#)

[How does Shambhala Global Services provide liability insurance for my Centre?](#)

[What level of liability insurance is required for Centre and Groups in Europe and other parts of the world that are separately incorporated that are not covered by an insurance policy?](#)

Dorje Kasung

[I heard that the Dorje Kasung have disbanded. Is this true? Are the Dorje Kasung still a part of Shambhala?](#)

Practice and Education

Does the Shambhala community have a lineage, or is it now lineage-free?

There are many ways to talk about lineage in Buddhism, but the most basic view is that lineage is a way to describe the direct line of teaching from the Buddha to the present day. Shambhala was founded by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, who could trace his line to the Buddha through the instruction he received from his Tibetan Buddhist teachers, particularly of the Nyingma and Kagyu schools (two of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism). There are many in the Shambhala community who connect to the lineage of the Buddha through their connection to Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, or connecting through his direct students. Chögyam Trungpa also assumed the title of Sakyong, or Earth Protector, and designated his son, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, to hold this title as a family lineage. There are also those in Shambhala who connect to lineage directly through Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche.

The relationship between individual students and lineage is a personal one. It is our aspiration that Shambhala can create an environment for students to make a connection to the line of teachings that originated with the Buddha in way that feels healthy and genuine, whether through the current Sakyong, through Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and his close students, or other Buddhist teachers with a connection to Shambhala vision.

What is our path of study?

As a Shambhala community we hold a vast array of teachings and practices, made up of the [three yanas of the Buddhist tradition](#). Yana literally means “vehicle” and refers to a mode or method of spiritual practice as taught by the Buddha. We also hold the profound teachings of the Shambhala Training sequence through Warrior Assembly. This includes continued study of the Shambhala terma (“terma” are the seminal texts of the Shambhala tradition received by Chögyam Trungpa that illuminate a path to creating a good and kind society), as well as the practices he introduced to the community, including meditation (Shamatha / Vipashyana), compassion practices (Tonglen), contemplative arts (flower arranging, tea ceremony, photography, calligraphy, etc), contemplative psychology (Maitri Space awareness), and all aspects of the vajrayana path including Ngondro (preliminary practices such as prostrations that prepare one for deeper vajrayana practices) and Sadhana practice (Sadhana is translated as “means of accomplishment” and refers to a practice with various vajrayana elements, such as visualizations and mantra). These form a spiritual path which we will continue to offer and support. We also want to encourage each other to respect all aspects of this dharma, rather than holding a view that some elements of our teachings are higher or more important than others. These teachings and practices are a benefit for all sentient beings and will be meaningful in different ways to different people.

If Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche is not participating with Shambhala any longer, from where will our spiritual leadership arise?

The Shambhala Board feels that we have all the necessary elements - including our teachings, our students, our connections with both Sakyongs and connections with other accomplished teachers of our traditions - to support Shambhala’s paths of practice and study. We can not return to the way Shambhala

was organized in the past, and the Shambhala Board is committed to creating and supporting an inviting space that will let us build a Shambhala that is genuine and relevant for our time. We are not trying to replace Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche with a different person, or group of people, but will work to define a collaborative decision-making process for practice path matters outside of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's direct teaching.

How does the dissolution of the roles of Acharyas and Shastris (senior teachers) by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche affect Shambhala's plans for teachers and Meditation Instructors?

We very much appreciate all of the contributions made by former Acharyas, Shastris, Senior Teachers, and all other Shambhala Educators and look forward to their continuing involvement in teaching and mentoring. The Practice and Education office of Shambhala Global Services is currently working on a plan to bring in our senior teachers as advisors to support practice and education leaders and community practitioners who are interested in helping work on curriculum and shape the paths we can offer in Shambhala. Please click [here](#) to read a Practice and Education update to educators and leaders, and [here](#) to read the Practice and Education update that was sent to the whole Shambhala community. Members can also [click here](#) for ongoing updates about Practice and Education. We invite everyone to continue to contribute to the practice and teaching paths of Shambhala and we believe there will be many opportunities for input and involvement moving forward.

Now that there are no Acharyas or Shastris, what's going to happen with the teaching structure? Will former Acharyas and Shastris still be able to teach and guide our curriculum?

All Shambhala teachers, Shambhala Training Directors, Meditation Instructors (Now called Shambhala Path Meditation Instructors) and Shambhala Guides retain their current teaching authorizations. Our community is fortunate to have deep resources in the realm of dharma teaching and practice. Everyone is invited to help us shape the practice and education situation that carries our Shambhala teachings forward.

There are concerns about dissolving a structure without having another structure in place. We rely on the structure of an organised path and authorised teachers for our revenue. Who will be in charge of the organisation? When are the working groups forming?

Fundamentally, the support and structure that has been in place with the SGS Office of Practice & Education providing resources and support for Centres and Groups, and local Practice and Education Directors helping with local care and support of students, will remain in place. The way in which that basic structure makes decisions is what is changing. Our intention is to create a networked, collaborative, and transparent structure within Practice and Education where we can make decisions that are aligned with genuine dharma and our values as an inclusive and supportive community.

We want to connect with our mutual wisdom so that we co-create a structure that fits with our aspirations for enlightened society. This means creating open channels of communication and offering everyone an opportunity to participate and give voice to our inspirations and priorities. We will also work to bring people together who are interested in helping in specific areas and create the lines of interaction that will foster this. Ultimately we will be forming a Practice and Education Council to jointly review action proposals in different areas and make unified recommendations for programs and policies.

Will we be able to train our teachers locally? We really need a teaching path.

A priority for the revised Practice and Education system is to develop a training and mentoring network for all Shambhala Educators, so that new people can enter into the educator path and so that we can all upgrade our skills to be relevant, sensitive and effective. Together, with attention to the needs of students, teachers and centres, we can design an authorization system that is workable, sustainable, unbiased, and promotes diversity in our teaching community. The teaching and Meditation Instructor path will be available at the local level, while leveraging the training talents and skills that exist across the mandala and across generations.

How will we continue on the vajrayana path?

Our intention is to present very clearly to practitioners in Shambhala the options that are available for entering vajrayana practice, so that each person can make the informed choices for their path that make sense for them. We also know that not everyone practising in Shambhala will choose to engage with vajrayana practice.

Our Shambhala heritage includes many vajrayana teachings presented by the Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, transmissions for the practice of Kagyu Ngondro and the Werma Sadhana, and relevant teachings and commentaries by many other teachers. Creating the appropriate settings and approach to making these teachings available is another important priority for Practice and Education going forward. We understand that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche is providing his vajrayana teaching path through the Sakyong lineage support group (email: connect@sakyonglineage.org).

Are people who are trained and empowered as Meditation Instructors, Shambhala Guides, Shambhala School of Buddhist Studies teachers, Shambhala Training Directors and Assistant Directors, and teachers of “In Everyday Life” (IEL) classes still authorized to carry out those roles?

Yes, they remain authorized.

Who will be able to offer Refuge and Bodhisattva vows?

Shambhala will continue to recognize Refuge and Bodhisattva vows from qualified Buddhist teachers, record them in the Shambhala database and accept them when needed as required program prerequisites. We will also examine various approaches within the Buddhist tradition to authorize vow preceptors and work with our senior teachers within Shambhala to propose an approach that makes sense for all of us.

What about the role of other Buddhist teachers and particularly Kagyü and Nyingma teachers in Shambhala?

Our intention is to explore how the teachings and practices we hold within Shambhala intersect with teachings being presented in the rest of the Buddhist world. In general, as detailed in [the current guidelines](#) for inviting guest teachers, we should be aware of the background and practice context of all of the teachers who present at our Centres and Groups and ask them to adhere to our Code of Conduct

guidelines. In particular, in considering how to invite teachers from Kagyu, Nyingma, and any other Tibetan lineages to teach at Shambhala centres, we also need to be sensitive to the complex relationships among these lineages and the teachings and practices that they hold. Invitations to teach in Shambhala will be interpreted in different ways in different contexts, including in ways that we may not intend. The Office of Practice and Education is working on a revised set of guidelines to assist us with extending such invitations in a manner that fits the expected decorum of such teaching visits and that are sensitive to these concerns. The Office of Practice and Education is of course available to consult on specific invitations that are being considered.

Who does one get Ngondro and Pointing Out Instructions from?

The Dorje Loppon, Lodro Dorje has the authority to give pointing out instructions from Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and has recently done so for a group of qualified students. We are in conversations with him and other senior Shambhala teachers to explore how best to support students who wish to enter into vajrayana practice in this way. The Practice and Education initiative will take this question up in a way respectful to our traditions, the wisdom of our senior teachers, and the concerns of our communities.

Who gets to teach at centers? How are teachers / facilitators selected?

All teaching authorizations are still active, and it is clear that developing and strengthening training for Guides, Meditation Instructors, and Teachers is an important matter in our community. We are in the process of reexamining the teaching authorization process, and the curriculum to make sure it transmits authenticity. Once authorized, how teachers are selected for local courses is really a local matter.

The results of the mediation have, in some cases, created a schism in the community and led to opposing points of view within local Centers and Groups. What if someone wishes to teach or facilitate a program or class, has enough years as a practitioner and has done many programs, and they are still denied the opportunity locally?

We acknowledge that there is much work that needs to be done to improve the system of mentoring and guidance for those who wish to teach, so that those with experience can share it within the proper context. It is our intention and hope that the local teacher selection process involves many diverse voices and supports a culture that fosters honest conversation and appropriate support networks.

On what basis can someone be denied a teaching opportunity, and or on what basis should someone be deemed qualified enough?

How and why people are passed over for teaching opportunities can be complex. It is our goal to help create an environment that encourages kind and direct feedback regarding teaching opportunities and qualifications. We also want to empower local Centres and Groups to use a council framework to address these types of issues as they arise.

What kinds of Vajrayana teachings will be part of the Shambhala curriculum?

This is a work in progress.

What will our relationship with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche be? Is he offering teachings to the wider Shambhala community, and how can people find his teachings?

Shambhala welcomes everyone with a connection to the Shambhala teachings, including individuals with different relationships and connections to Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. We hold to the core principle of honouring everyone's spiritual path and choices. Adhering to the principles of respect and inclusion will be an on-going challenge, but also an on-going opportunity to put into practice the values of basic goodness and enlightened society that we uphold.

Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche is requesting that individuals interested in studying with him make a personal supplication for teachings through [Sakyonglineage.org](https://sakyonglineage.org). It is our understanding that currently he is not accepting supplications to teach from organisations, only from individual students or groups of students. He is selecting the venues where he feels that it is beneficial to offer his teachings. He is not currently teaching in Shambhala.

Are there plans for sharing curriculum and practices between the Shambhala organization and the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche?

This remains an open question which we cannot answer at this time. This will need more time for considerations from both sides.

There are other Shambhala-related teaching sites, for example, Open Torii, Ocean, and Wisdom Seat, that some people have found, and others are unaware of. Will information about these sites be shared with the whole Shambhala community?

There certainly is no prohibition in sharing any of the many resources that are available to our communities. These initiatives are set up by many life-long Shambharians, and we aspire to have good and collaborative relationships with them.

How could teachers who are currently inactive resume teaching in Shambhala?

This will be one aspect of the revised teacher training, mentoring and authorization system that is a high priority for the revised Practice and Education structure, as noted above.

How will Shambhala continue to offer the full spectrum of programs for practice and study, for both students and teachers as it has in the past? Where will our focus be? Will the community be involved in deciding how this will work?

The Shambhala Office of Practice & Education is working hard to gather interested community members and teachers, including our most senior ones, so that we can organize ourselves in a way that honors the wisdom of our past and respects the needs for our future. The Board sees the present as an opportunity full of potential and creativity, a possibly historic occasion for Shambhala teachings to take root in contemporary society in a way that is fresh and relevant. This will require the courage and wisdom to accommodate the uncertainty of entering into this activity without preconception and fixed views.

The Role of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche in Shambhala

Are there plans for Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to teach within Shambhala?

Not at this time. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has not taught in Shambhala since he stepped back from his leadership responsibilities in 2018.

Can my Center invite Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to teach?

Land Centers, and local Centers and Groups can invite Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to teach, however, the Shambhala Board has been told by his representatives that he does not have plans to teach in Shambhala. [The Code of Conduct](#), which we understand that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche supports, applies to everyone in Shambhala and if he were to teach in a Shambhala Centre, he would be expected to sign it, as well as the [Policy for People Holding Positions of Authority](#). We would also request that all Centers and Groups be sensitive to their community in terms of consensus and to try to avoid divisiveness as they work with these issues.

How does Shambhala view the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's response to the harm his actions created?

We know that there are students who feel that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has genuinely apologized for his past behavior. However, we are also aware that many others have expressed their need for him to take more accountability. To this aim the Shambhala Board approached Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and his representatives with the wishes for better accountability and further communication from him. We consolidated the emails the Board received from the community that articulated many open questions and feelings, offered ideas for possible processes, and introduced potential consultants to help with a reconciliation process. The Board also made it a priority to share the new Code of Conduct with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Sakyong Wangmo. Although we would welcome an address to the entire Shambhala community from him sharing an update on his view of the issues and the future of Shambhala, at this time it is our understanding that he has chosen to go forward to teach only those individuals who supplicate to receive his teachings.

This diversity of views does not only go back to the alleged past sexual misconduct and abuse of power, but also to the silence from Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to the community. In early 2019, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche wrote to the community that he looked forward to sharing what he felt and learned, and various groups and individuals asked him to share his views and called for his collaboration to help heal the community.

However, since that time, he has not communicated directly to the Shambhala community. Further to this, there is no mention on the Sakyong Lineage website of the existence of the Shambhala organization and community he headed for decades. Some see this as a skillful way to not add further to the conflict and devote his energy to the dharma, but others regard the absence of truth and reconciliation efforts as the core cause for divisions and departures.

Please clarify, are the Shambhala Board and Shambhala Global Services (SGS) now completely independent of sponsoring Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche (his teachings, financial support, and administration)?

The agreement between the Shambhala Board, the Sakyong Potrang Board and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche created a Shambhala Board which operates independent of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. The Shambhala organization is not providing him with financial support or administrative assistance.

Is the Board now responsible to ensure that all elements of Shambhala support the teachings, and students, of both Sakyongs (Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche) equally, rather than taking sides as some local Centres have done?

The Board supports the full breadth of the Shambhala teachings, all students, and our many skilled and knowledgeable senior teachers. Our practice and education initiatives include finding the way to skillfully support the Buddhist three yana path, the Shambhala teachings and terma treasures for all members of our community, including for those who do not wish to study with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. Equality may not mean a 50/50 split. Centers and Groups will need to support all students and respond to the diverse needs in their community with care and concern. A Center or Group with a majority of students who are attracted to a particular path may have more participants in a program or group, but Centers and Groups are responsible for ensuring that other kinds of programs are offered as well, and that all members feel welcome and included. To protect these kinds of rights, we are working with local Centers and Groups to form their Governing Councils which value and represent diverse views.

As A Student of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, Why Stay in Shambhala?

This is a question that has been asked of us by people currently studying with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and we feel requires each person's personal exploration of what the Shambhala community means to them. As a Board, we remain committed to a Shambhala community that is open to everyone who feels a connection to the Shambhala teachings and vision. We would hope that regardless of what that personal connection is for each of us, people could find value and support in being in relationship with others who share the same societal vision of collective awakening. And we could view the diversity of viewpoints and practice paths in our community as a strength, protecting us from fixed views and acting as a catalyst to open our hearts even further to others. We feel that the biggest challenge for each of us in Shambhala at this time is working with our personal projections and being respectful of everyone's personal path. We feel this is the work of creating an enlightened society.

Shambhala also provides some resources and support that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's organization is not currently providing, and that are complementary to his online teachings. These include: local communities where practitioners can practice together and celebrate life transitions, attend annual dharma and cultural events, and enjoy the company of fellow practitioners. And in many locations, Shambhala maintains the physical Centers that were founded by our lineage holders, and that are imbued with awakensness and the blessings of decades of practice and teachings that have flourished there. They should be used by all students who have been inspired by the Shambhala teachings.

I attended a reading of a letter from the Sakyong Potrang Board to the Shambhala Board that was written in December 2020 and I have questions and concerns. Can you please address this?

In brief, this letter (written in Dec 2020) outlines Sakyong Potrang representative's understanding of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's view that he could not support a "pluralistic" or "wide umbrella" Shambhala that was equally open to all Shambhala lineage streams, and also open to teachers from other authentic lineages. It has been brought to our attention that this letter is now being read to groups of people and this has resulted in questions from students of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche regarding the transparency of the Shambhala Board and its intentions, as well as concerns that the Board acted without the feedback of community members and with their wellbeing in mind.

We have always sought thorough and extensive community input and feedback and considered it carefully before making any decisions, and then communicated our views and intentions transparently to the global sangha. In this Dec 16, 2020 update to the community we stated the following:

We have been asked by center/group leadership, the community and the Sakyong Potrang to articulate our view of the role of the Sakyong, the relationship of Shambhala to the Sakyong Potrang, and related matters. We have spent a great deal of time on these issues, sought independent advice, interviewed many, reviewed the results of the survey(s) (see below), had in-depth meetings with the Process Team Government Models Group, and examined in detail what has worked or not worked in the past.

The Shambhala Board recently surveyed our community's leadership and understands that the majority of leaders believe that we need to have governance changes in order to have decision-making that reflects the best interests of all parts of the sangha. We believe such changes would: assure the continuity of care and healing initiatives; help restore the reputation of Shambhala; and ensure Shambhala's sustainability in the future. Our policy views as presented in our August Update and at our October webinar for leaders, appear to have wide support among the sangha.

Over this past year, the Shambhala Board has communicated these views through discussions and in writing to the Sakyong Potrang Board. In July, we sent the Sakyong and the Sakyong Potrang a list of legal and charitable status concerns about Shambhala USA, Shambhala Canada, the Sakyong Potrang USA and the Sakyong Potrang Canada. In October, the Shambhala Board sent a comprehensive proposal to Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Sakyong Potrang Board with a proposed restructuring for a more independent Shambhala Board, the role of the Sakyong, and resolution of many issues which have divided, and could continue to divide, the sangha in its recovery and revitalization. It remains our intention to continue working with the Sakyong Potrang and the Sakyong on a way forward. We know you will all have many questions, and we will continue to communicate with you about these efforts.

We have also been hearing from some students of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche who have heard a reading of the December 2020 Sakyong Potrang letter a sentiment that could be expressed as, "The Shambhala

Board knew that in pursuing the mediation agreement and securing its final outcome, we were essentially sending Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche away, and understood that he would no longer wish to be a part of Shambhala.” The Shambhala Board would like to state that this is simply not true. As a stand alone message being read to people, this one letter is out of context and doesn’t offer a clear picture of discussions that occurred over many months, both before and after.

When the Board received the Dec 2020 letter, we accepted it as a true statement of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche’s position at that time and were prepared for a separation. However, shortly after we received this letter, through conversations with a trusted intermediary of both Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Shambhala Board, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche agreed to an assessment process to explore both an amicable separation, but also various models of integration or separation in six key areas, including practice and study. This gave us hope that there were no fixed views and still a path forward that could bring him back into connection with the wider Shambhala community. This assessment process resulted in a mediation agreed to by all parties. At no time during these processes was it communicated by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to the Shambhala Board that an outcome or consequence of a mediation agreement would be that he would no longer teach within the Shambhala organization, which is what we now understand is being stated by some of his close students.

Finally, we must clarify again that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche agreed to the mediation outcome. If he was not genuinely in agreement with the outcomes, as has been suggested to us by some of his students, this was never communicated to us, and still has not been. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche retained his full legal and governance authority throughout the mediation. He could have at any time prior to his acceptance of the mediation agreement asked the Shambhala Board to step down and done whatever he wished to change the leadership and direction of Shambhala. It was, and still is, our understanding that he was in full agreement with the mediation outcomes and felt, as we do, that this mediation outcome was a solution that would allow for all Shambhala practitioners to be nurtured and supported.

I am concerned that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has not been treated well by Shambhala leadership. Can you please speak to this?

The Shambhala Board has been hearing from some students of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche who are expressing the following sentiments: “Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has been insulted, disrespected, treated unfairly, ousted from central leadership, and overall treated badly by Shambhala leadership and the Shambhala organization.”

The Shambhala Board has treated Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche with utmost respect, openness, and dignity. We have always been transparent with him and his representatives and engaged in all conversations and processes with a sense of respect and longing for a way forward together. We understand that the mediation outcome is not what some community members would have wanted, but we must state again that the mediation was mutually agreed. If it was an outcome that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche was not comfortable with, as has been stated by some of his students, this was never communicated to us during the more than six month mediation process.

It feels important to correct an ongoing false narrative that the community and Shambhala leadership are responsible for Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's current path forward. His current situation and his path forward are based on his decisions. He had the highest level of power and chose for himself how he wanted to relate to the sexual misconduct allegations, his path forward as a lineage holder, and his relationship to the Shambhala organization.

Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche always had the power to assert his centrality as the governing head of Shambhala at any time prior to the mediation outcome. To be clear, the Shambhala Board had no authority to remove him from this position since either he or the Sakyong Potrang were the "sole members" of Shambhala. We chose to try to engage him in conversation about how the Shambhala Board, as well as the majority of senior teachers and leaders, the community, and other third-parties with organizational expertise, felt an autonomous governance structure for the Shambhala organization with a connection to the lineage would be best for everyone involved, including Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. We also expressed the need to provide for students who did not want to study with him, but had connections to the Shambhala teachings - which were a majority of the membership.

Although the Shambhala Board brought to Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and his representatives several proposals for possible governance changes early in the process, these were not accepted or given full discussion. We were looking for a way to have an independent Board with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche having a lineage seat, as well as a way to mutually engage in the management of the assets of Shambhala, maintain communication with the full sangha, and encourage healing. These options were not accepted by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. However, it was expressed in an ongoing way to us that he was seeking "amicable ways" to remain in connection with Shambhala - on his own terms.

We have always wanted to maintain the connection to Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche as a lineage holder, have acknowledged his spiritual authority as a lineage holder, and communicated this clearly to him and his representatives. It has been surprising to us to hear from some students of his that post-mediation he no longer wishes to be in any connection with Shambhala. We have never heard this directly from him, nor did we hear this from any close students or representatives prior to the mediation outcome. It was Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's wish that, post mediation, any decision to change Shambhala's corporate organizing documents, or a decision to dissolve the Shambhala organization would still require the consent of the lineage holder, and we agreed to these terms. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Shambhala Board further agreed that the organizing documents for Shambhala would include the purpose to support and promote the teachings of all past, present, and future Sakyongs.

While some of the choices Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has made have been disappointing for us as a Shambhala Board, we also respect the way he is moving forward. We trust he is doing what he feels is best for himself, his family, and his desire to continue to teach the dharma.

I keep hearing from some people that there was no actual “crisis” in Shambhala and that there has been no real misconduct by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. If so, why was there a mediation process and what now appears to be a split between Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the organization?

In recent weeks, the Shambhala Board has been receiving this question in our inbox and we have also been hearing this narrative from some people with whom we are speaking. This is very troubling, as the Board has put a great deal of work these last few years to help ensure that Shambhala continues to develop a culture of transparency that is willing to relate directly with difficult issues and take accountability for past and present actions. We must clearly state that the allegations against Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and other leaders and community members in Shambhala that came to light in recent years have been of grave concern and have warranted the response that has emerged from the Board and community. If there are ongoing doubts as to why Shambhala has gone through an existential crisis in recent years, we point you again to some of the following documents:

[Wickwire Holm Report](#)

[An Olive Branch Report](#)

[Shambhala Board Update on An Olive Branch Recommendations](#)

[2019 Annual Report](#)

[2020 Annual Report](#)

We know there is much work ahead to create a culture that is able to look at both its history and present moment and to see its shortcomings with bravery and a willingness to be accountable. As a Board, we are committed to this work and we invite all community members to join us in this commitment.

How do I connect with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche?

For questions about Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche’s teaching schedule, you can email:

connect@sakyonglineage.org. Other communications can be sent to: davidshermanbrown@gmail.com.

Why are there no regular updates about Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and his family in Shambhala Global Services communications?

Since the mediated agreement with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche that created an independent governing Board of Directors for Shambhala, there have been no further statements from either him or the Sakyong Potrang regarding how they wish to co-exist and stay in relationship with the Shambhala community. We have heard from representatives, although not Sakyong Mipham directly, that he no longer wishes to teach on Shambhala.

The Shambhala Board does not feel that it can speak on behalf of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, his family, or his whereabouts unless there is direct communication from him to do so, and this has not happened for some time. We feel it is important to remain respectful of him and how he wishes to relate to

Shambhala. We will of course be responsive to any request from him or any official representatives to share information about himself or his family.

Shambhala Governance and Organizational Structure

What is the governance authority of the Shambhala Board of Directors?

The Shambhala Board of Directors has full fiduciary and legal responsibility for Shambhala USA, Shambhala Canada and Shambhala Europe, and their related Centers and Groups in other countries around the world.

What major properties are owned by Shambhala and which are owned by the Sakyong Potrang?

Below is an overview of the ownership of the major Shambhala centers. Please note this list does not include all city centers.

Shambhala Canada

Halifax Shambhala Center
Gampo Abbey
Dorje Denma Ling
Milk Lake

Shambhala USA

Karme Choling
Dorje Khyung Dzong
The Stupa and its land
Sky Lake
Boulder Shambhala Center, through Front Range Shambhala, a division of Shambhala USA

Shambhala Europe (German nonprofit assoc. with Shambhala USA as the only shareholder)
Dechen Choling

Sakyong Potrang

Halifax Court and adjacent property
Kalapa Valley

Drala Mountain Center (formerly Shambhala Mountain Center) Affiliated with Shambhala, but not owned or controlled by Shambhala or the Sakyong Potrang.

How will the Board ensure they have the capacity to create needed changes in a timely manner and is there a plan to bring in a Director or other leadership staff?

Now that the mediation with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and Sakyong Potrang is complete, the Board is beginning to step back from the day-to-day operations and move into a more strategic and policy focused role. To support that process we formed an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) made up of current

Shambhala Global Services team members David MacLellan, *Finance Director*, Faradee Rudy, *Development Director*, and Tara Templin, *Care and Conduct Director*. Together they will manage and lead all functions of Shambhala Global Services. We are delighted that they have agreed to step forward into these new and challenging roles that will help us move forward as a community in new and positive directions. Please click [here](#) to learn more about the ELT and how they will support the functioning of Shambhala Global Services. Over the next several months the Board is also planning to recruit new members through a transparent and open process led by a Board Advisory Nominating Group.

Can you explain what the agreement between the Shambhala Board, the Sakyong Potrang and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche means to Shambhala students in a few sentences, using plain English?

The Shambhala Board worked for several years to create opportunities for Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the community to come back together, but despite our best efforts, we did not find a pathway that allowed this to happen. In an attempt to find a way for Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and Shambhala to coexist in a mutually beneficial way, both parties agreed to a mediation process that ended with a settlement in February of 2022. In the settlement, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche agreed to relinquish his legal control over Shambhala, except for sharing with the Shambhala Board any decision to change Shambhala's corporate organizing documents, or a decision to dissolve the Shambhala organization. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Shambhala Board further agreed that the organizing documents for Shambhala would include the purpose to support and promote the teachings of all past, present, and future Sakyongs. And, both sides agreed to keep channels of communication open with each other.

In addition, the mediation process worked on the issue that the Sakyong Potrang owns the trademarks in the United States for the names "Shambhala," "Shambhala Meditation Center," "Shambhala Training" and other related names. By granting a no-cost, perpetual, non-exclusive license, Shambhala USA is given the privilege to legally continue using these names.

The settlement allows Shambhala to support those students who would not accept Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's authority over Shambhala paths of practice and study, as well as support those who do. The Board seeks no direct replacement for Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. Instead, we imagine a community based organization focused on the Shambhala teachings of both Sakyongs. Clearly, there is much transformation work ahead of us. We hope members of the community will see this as an opportunity to get involved in supporting Shambhala globally and locally.

What will the relationship be between Shambhala and the local Centres? What do you mean by A Charter and Affiliate Agreements?

The reorganization of Shambhala governance requires us to look at the proper relationship between the worldwide community of local Centres and Groups and the central resources (that we know as Shambhala Global Services) which allow us to act with common purpose. Shambhala Global Services houses the Offices of Practice & Education, Care and Conduct, Communication (including our websites and email systems), Shambhala Online, Development, Finance, and Legal, who together provide many of the necessary elements for Shambhala to operate as a global Buddhist community. We are exploring, through conversations between Centre Leaders, the Shambhala Board and SGS Leadership, the creation of a Charter and Affiliate Agreements that will clarify the mutual responsibilities between Shambhala Global Services and individual centres. After a round of conversations with community leaders from

around the world, we will create and circulate a draft Charter and Affiliate Agreements for discussion and input. The intention is that Centre and Group leaders will sign these documents by Shambhala Day 2023. We also plan to have substantive conversations with local Centres and Groups and address their questions about property ownership.

Shambhala Land Centres

What do you see as the role of the Board in supporting the Land Centres?

While the Land Centres generally operate autonomously, they are an inextricable part of the Shambhala community and the Board has maintained close connections with their Directors. The Board remains committed to supporting Shambhala Land Centres which has historically included, and will continue to include: advisory, financial, legal, and international program planning.

Can you provide more information about the following, as stated in your March 2023 Shambhala Board Update? "Legal costs related to the mediation process and protecting the Great Stupa of Dharmakaya from backing Drala Mountain Center loans".

During the course of Drala Mountain Center's (DMC) bankruptcy case, the Shambhala Board learned that errors were made in the legal descriptions of DMC's property in the Deeds of Trust that secured DMC's debt. These errors were made in a 2015 Modification of Deed of Trust, which stated that the parcel of land on which the Great Stupa of Dharmakaya is located, which is owned by Shambhala USA, was included as collateral instead of two other parcels of land owned by DMC (the "Campfire Council Parcel" and the "Mildred Mason Parcel"). Therefore the Stupa was incorrectly being used as collateral to secure the DMC debt.

Shambhala USA hired a bankruptcy attorney to work with DMC and its lender to correct this error and to ensure that the Stupa parcel was removed from the Deed of Trust. This took months of work and negotiating and ultimately resulted in protecting the Stupa from securing DMC's debt, for now and the future.

Shambhala Finances

How is Shambhala doing financially? Will you be sharing a financial update with the community?

We invite community members to access all of our financial reports [here](#).

Most Centers are experiencing deep financial straits. Can you provide some guidance and insight into how we can meet and overcome these challenges?

The Shambhala Board is working to provide as much support as possible for Centres and Groups to help them through this challenging time. We are engaged in a Digital Refresh Project that will enable more

people to easily connect to Shambhala and local Centres and Groups. We are working on dynamic programming for Shambhala Online that will not compete with local Centres and Groups, but will send people their way. And we are developing an initiative whereby Centres and Groups will receive financial support for processes that support healing, repair, and visioning a way forward.

Why was Marpa House sold in 2019? If you sold Marpa House, what is keeping you from selling a local Shambhala Centre in the future?

There was imminent bankruptcy looming for Shambhala Global due to financial mismanagement before the 2018 sexual harm scandal occurred. The former Kalapa Council, the main leadership body of Shambhala before the Shambhala Board was seated, had agreed among themselves that they needed to sell a property to prevent insolvency.

To keep Shambhala solvent while a property sale or other long run solution was pursued, the Sakyong Potrang, a separate non-profit organization that is led by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, offered the Kalapa Council a loan that was funded by private donors to cover Shambhala operational costs until a property could be sold. This loan was for \$1M CAD and had a term of one year. Marpa House was used as collateral to secure the loan. The new Board that took over Shambhala Global operations in 2018 after the Kalapa Council stepped down inherited this financial situation, including the \$1M CAD one year loan secured by Marpa House. The Board described Shambhala's financial situation and the reason why Marpa House was selected to be sold in a letter to the community on February 2, 2019.

A Shambhala community group came together and wanted to buy Marpa House and the Shambhala Board wanted to sell it to them. However, the community group needed more time than was left on the term of the Sakyong Potrang loan to Shambhala to secure their funding. At about the same time, a buyer with cash in hand made a valid offer to purchase Marpa House.

The Shambhala Board asked the Sakyong Potrang to extend the term of their \$1million CAD loan so the community group could secure their funding, and the Sakyong Potrang said no. When pressed by the Shambhala Board to extend the loan period to allow the community time to put together their financing, the Sakyong Potrang told the Shambhala Board that they felt an obligation to the donors to keep to the original terms and if the loan was not paid by the original term, they would consider Shambhala in default of the loan agreement.

At this point, the Board decided the best way forward was to sell Marpa House to the cash buyer, as they were bound by the one year term of the loan, and the Sakyong Potrang would not extend this timeline. The alternative was to default on the loan, and forfeit Marpa House to the Sakyong Potrang who would have wanted the cash purchase offer anyways. To default on the loan would have severely damaged the financial standing of the Shambhala organization with other lenders, and would have meant Shambhala was still close to financial insolvency. Selling Marpa House allowed Shambhala to meet the terms of the Sakyong Potrang loan agreement, to pay off other debt, and to have funds to manage the organization during a time of crisis and a decline in donations.

The current Shambhala Board recognizes that the sale of Marpa House was the direct result of prior financial mismanagement, made worse by a crisis caused by misconduct. The current Shambhala Board and the Shambhala organization is now structured much differently. Financial reporting and budgeting is much more transparent and straightforward than ever before. It is the Shambhala Board's clear aspiration that our new structure, drawing on the wisdom of our community, will avoid such a financial crisis in the future.

Charter and Affiliation Policies Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Charter and International Bylaws?

The Charter is the expression of the commitments, interconnection, governance structures, shared purposes, principles, and rules by which Shambhala Centers, on behalf of their current and future members, mutually aspire and commit to.

It is also the legal expression of an emerging collective and co-constructed governance model for Shambhala. The intention is that Shambhala will be characterized by interconnected and collaborating networks of local Centers and Groups, collective and consensus based decision making at the central and local levels, and regular, two-way communication and support between central governing bodies and local Centers and Groups.

Why do we need a charter at all?

It is the conventional way for a non-profit like Shambhala USA and Canada to demonstrate to tax and legal authorities that affiliate organizations (our centers) meet requirements to operate under our non profit status and have legal use of our trade name and marks.

Globally, the Charter expresses and acknowledges publicly, and to each other, each center's commitment to the aspirations, goals, objectives and provisions of the organization. For new members, the Charter also describes and serves as a statement of organizational commitments.

Why do we need a new charter?

We have had charters before - the most recent in 2015. That charter is outdated in significant ways, and, more importantly, as the Preamble states, provisions need to be reaffirmed after a period of instability. As described below, based upon the experiences and developments of the last three years, the 2022 Charter adds important new provisions. Lastly, many Centers, Groups, and members did not know of the existence of the 2015 version of the Charter, much less know their Center had signed or understood its terms. Thus, the process of writing and adopting a new Charter is in itself a good reason to do this work.

How is this 2022 Charter the same as past charters?

In many ways, it is similar to past charters in that:

- a.) The objectives or “purposes” of a Shambhala Center are almost identical, with the clarification that the purposes include propagating the teachings of past, present, and future Sakyongs of Shambhala (the lineage of the Sakyongs). (See Article I, Section 1.1). In the previous Charter, the purposes only pointed to the current Sakyong. As before, each Center commits to making its best efforts to advance those purposes (See Article I).
- b.) The Charter reaffirms an international (now called global) association of Shambhala Centers who join together to appoint a central governing body to advance the collective purposes of the Centers and the members. (See Article I, Section 1.1(c.) and Article III, Section 3.1).
- c.) It reaffirms local and regional autonomy and self-governance (See Article II, Section 2.2).
- d.) It describes the basic standards or commitments for going forward together. (See generally Articles III, V, VI and VII).
- e.) The Charter includes a license to each Shambhala Center for the use of Shambhala trade names and marks (Article VII).
- f.) The Charter reaffirms the proposition that assets of a local Center acquired through the activities of a Shambhala Center are dedicated to the purposes of the Shambhala community and upon ceasing to be used for the purposes of the Charter will be held or conveyed back for the benefit of the Shambhala community (Article VIII, Section 8.2).

How is this 2022 Charter different from previous versions?

While similar in intention, the 2022 Charter differs in significant ways:

- a.) In previous charters the “binding force” of the organization flowed in one sense vertically from Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche through Shambhala Global and then “down” or out to each separate Centre. The 2022 Charter takes also a “horizontal approach”, in that Centers bind themselves to each other in a community that is global and interdependent and not completely dependent upon a strong central authority. Each Centre remains connected to Shambhala Global. However, it is expressly linked to every other local Centre and, thus, each Centre’s activities under the Charter support the benefit of every other Centre. (Article IX, Section 9.1).
- b.) Linked to the above, Shambhala Global (formerly Shambhala International) derives its authority from the Centres themselves. In the Charter, Shambhala Global is appointed to be the governance body for the Shambhala Organization and governs by the consent of the Centres. In addition, as before, Shambhala Global derives authority both from its historical role and the permission of the lineage to move forward with the vision and activities of Shambhala as articulated by past, present, and future Sakyongs and as traditionally practiced (Article III, Section 3.1).
- c.) Again, linked to a.) and b.) above, the Charter now specifically states that Shambhala Global owes a duty of loyalty to, and best efforts on behalf of, the Centres and, thus, to the sangha - the Shambhala Global Community (Article IV).

- d.) New to the Charter is the commitment of every Shambhala Center to the new Code of Conduct (Article V).
- e.) In order to clarify that the Shambhala Organization is open and available to all, regardless of practice experience or level, the new Charter has a requirement that programs offered meet the needs of the range of its members (Article VI).
- f.) The new Charter sets forth a new dispute resolution process (Article 9, Section 9.3).

What if a Center does not sign the new Charter?

Ultimately, a Center or Group cannot be or remain a Shambhala Center without committing to the new Charter. However, the new Charter is not finalized, so any current issues with the proposed new Charter will be discussion points for further exploration and evolution of the Charter.

Can a Centre or Group request that certain parts of the charter be modified or deleted before they sign?

Feedback and requests for modifications from Centers and Groups are essential to the process of refining and finalizing the Charter for the entire Shambhala community by Shambhala Day 2023. After a feedback period of five months (Sept 2022-Jan 2023), once all changes have been considered and incorporated, the current “Charter Draft” will become final.

Thereafter, the Charter will not be modified or subject to separate negotiation. The Charter is designed to be a worldwide commitment by each and every Centre. Over time, if changes are needed, there could be updates. But again, amendments would be changes applicable to all the Centres.

There is however, the possibility of separately incorporated centers in the United States qualifying for an “Exemption Letter,” which could exempt them from Sections 4.7.1 - 4.7.7, 4.7.8-4.7.10, Section 6.2.1 and Section 6.2.2 in the Affiliation Policies, if they meet the specified criteria. Click [here](#) to see a DRAFT Exemption Letter.

How should a Centre approve and sign the Charter?

Center leaders are being consulted on an approach that could involve: 1) sharing the Charter with their community, 2) inviting members to a community meeting to discuss the Charter, 3) encouraging members’ feedback to their Councils and directly to the Board, 4) Sharing the final version of the Charter and 5) Informing members once the Charter is signed.

The Shambhala Board and Executive Leadership Team will continue to work with Centre leadership on a good approach for this.

If a Centre decides to close and not continue as a Shambhala Center, can individuals still participate in Shambhala Global, such as receive Shambhala Network posts and access to Shambhala Online? Can they join another local Center or Land Center?

If you are interested in supporting Shambhala but don't live close to a Shambhala Center, you are welcome to join as a member of Shambhala Global or your closest Centre or Land Centre.

Members of Shambhala Global engage with the Shambhala community and can receive support for their personal meditation practice by participating in online conversations and courses, and connecting with a meditation instructor online or by phone. Members of Shambhala Global are asked to support Shambhala by offering monthly membership dues appropriate to their financial situation. There are also international volunteer opportunities for those who are interested in offering their skills and talents. For more information about becoming a member of Shambhala Global, contact John Shaw at john.shaw@shambhala.info.

The mission stated in the Charter says “to present, propagate, and support the teachings and practices of the Shambhala and Buddhist traditions as taught by the Lineage of the Sakyongs of Shambhala.” Does this mean that all individuals studying in Shambhala must study the Sakyong’s teachings?

Shambhala and Shambhala Online offer a rich variety of foundational and advanced Shambhala and Buddhist teachings for practitioners to choose from. We encourage students to find the teachers, teachings, and paths that are most suitable for them. At the same time, we honor the lineage of Shambhala and the fact that our teachings stem from the lineage of Sakyongs, past, present and future.

Section 3.2 of the Affiliation Policy talks about an affiliation fee, but there is not an amount listed. What is the affiliation fee per/member that Centers and Groups are expected to pay?

There is an Affiliation Fee Policy currently under development that encourages Centres and Groups to commit to working towards \$7 per/member per/month. This policy will be shared with Center and Groups for review prior to Shambhala Day 2023. In the meantime, you are encouraged to contact John Shaw in the Finance Office if you have questions about the affiliate fee your Centre is currently paying. John can be contacted at john.shaw@shambhala.info.

Section 5 of the Affiliation Policies, refers to “Real Property.” Does that refer to just real estate or other items that a Shambhala Center or Group might hold?

In this section, “Real Property” refers to physical spaces, including land and buildings.

Article 3.4 of the Affiliation Policies refers to “Membership Policies,” but I am not sure how best to recruit and retain members. What support is available to me and my Center?

As a Shambhala Leader, we encourage you to access the resources available to you on the Shambhala.org website, in particular the Center and Group Leadership support page. This page includes the Revenue Generation Training with resources specific to membership support, recruitment, and retention.

Section 10 of the Affiliation Policies refers to the “Global Leadership Council (GLC).” How will that work? What support is available to make the GLC functional?

The Global Leadership Council (GLC) is new and an important part of how Shambhala will be governed, as expressed through the Charter and Affiliation Policies. The GLC will comprise leaders from different geographical areas whose individual terms are specified for two years in order to provide continuity and experience in the leadership body. SGS could provide leadership, IT, and logistical support for the GLC. For example: information from the SDB, Zoom accounts, email addresses, and translations, as well as convening and organizing support in order to support the mission and purposes of the GLC, once they are defined. The Shambhala Board and ELT look forward to working with community leaders, including in collaboration with the Process Team and Centre leaders participating in the monthly Leadership Forum, to help develop and realize the GLC as part of a new governance structure for Shambhala.

The role of the Shambhala Board, scope and boundaries are not clearly defined in Charter and Affiliation Policies. What is the full scope of operations of the Board and why?

As stated in Section 2, Shambhala Global (the combined legal entities of Shambhala USA (SUSA), Shambhala Canada (SCAN) and Shambhala Europe (SE), e.g. the Shambhala Board, has the duty and responsibility to govern, direct, administer, support, and carry forward the work and shared spiritual vision of the Shambhala Organization. Shambhala Global shall at all times represent the best interests of the Shambhala Organization and act in accordance with the Charter, its respective articles of incorporation, memorandum of association, bylaws, and applicable local, state, provincial and federal laws.

Shambhala’s leadership and governance structure is evolving and we anticipate that the scope of responsibilities, as well as how the Board is elected, regenerates, and is held accountable, will shift once the Global Leadership Council is in place. We strongly encourage community members inspired to participate in the governing bodies of Shambhala to apply to be on the Shambhala Board or to help form the GLC.

If a Group is starting up and brand new, do they need to sign the Charter? What is the threshold for signing?

Yes, all Groups and Centres are expected to sign the Charter, and new Groups are encouraged to review and contemplate the Charter as one of their first processes prior to becoming a Shambhala Group. The minimum requirements for a centre and group are listed here.

Article VIII.3 of the Charter, “Binding Effect and Dispute Resolution”, refers to the obligation of Centres and Groups to participate in an internal dispute resolution process. Is that different and separate from the Code of Conduct Procedures?

Yes, the Internal Dispute Resolution process is intended for conflicts that arise from situations that are not related to the Path of Good Conduct or the eight definitions of misconduct as defined in the Code of Conduct Policies. The Internal Dispute Resolution process could be applied in cases of, for example, property disputes, rental agreements, etc. As is common to religious associations, the dispute resolution process is agreed to be binding and that the parties will not go to court to settle internal matters. This

section is currently under review based on community feedback.

Ultimately, can the Shambhala Board sell a Centre building and use the money if there are financial issues in Shambhala?

When a Shambhala Centre informs the Shambhala Board that they would like to sell the real property that they have resourced and managed locally, as long as there is at a minimum, a small group of local members with the intention of using the funds to continue operating as a Shambhala Group or Centre as defined by the Charter, the funds from the sale of the building will remain in the local community for the express purpose of supporting that specific Shambhala Centre or Group. The Group or Centre may then choose how they wish to use the funds, for example: to rent short or long term, host teachers, put on programs, etc.

If there is no Centre or Group that will continue in a given location under the purposes of Shambhala, and the building must be sold due to financial exigency in the local situation, the proceeds from the sale would be retained by Shambhala Global or a neighboring Centre to continue benefiting the rest of the global Shambhala community.

In all matters, the Shambhala Board and SGS are bound to act in the best interest of the overall global Shambhala community. Shambhala Global financial management is based on transparency and good reporting practices. In the unlikely occurrence of a financial exigency - an existential financial crisis for the Shambhala community, Shambhala Global would still operate with the practices of transparency and consultation with Centre leadership.

Does the language around real property mean that if our Centre is privately owned (for example, if an individual bought a property and a Shambhala Group or Centre operates in it), it's now "held in trust", or "owned" by the Shambhala Organization?

If a Centre is renting from an individual who owns a property, the individual is the owner and it is not held in trust for the Shambhala organization. If a property has been given to a Center (often in exchange for a tax benefit), SUSA or SCAN is the owner and under the new Charter it would be held in trust for the Shambhala organization. Please note that in Europe, South America, and Oceania, Centres are typically owned by a locally incorporated entity.

If a local Centre elects to transfer title through the process described in Section _____, is our building still "held in trust" by the Shambhala Organization after the transfer? What does the transfer of title mean? I imagine it would usually mean "our local community owns our building" straightforwardly, but is that true?

If a separate nonprofit is created to accept title to a property, the local Centre would need to work out a use agreement with that new nonprofit's Board (i.e. a lease or other arrangement). In addition, the new nonprofit property owner would need to get its own insurance for the property.

Does the option to transfer title apply to Canadian Centres?

It is much more difficult to accomplish a transfer of title in Canada. A Centre would need to go through the process of becoming a Registered Charity with Canada Revenue and become an Affiliated Organization with Shambhala Canada Association so that transfers could be made without tax implications. There are also questions about whether or not a Centre could still be a Shambhala Centre if they are a different registered charity. You can get "Affiliated" Organization letters from the CRA, but not possibly to use the same name and trademarks. It is uncertain if in Canada the new Charter could be binding to a different charity or not. And we are not sure how it would work with GDPR rules for another charity to have access to the Shambhala Database. In short, we do not have all the details about how this would be possible and Centers would have to research it themselves to see if it was a viable option.

How does Shambhala Global Services provide liability insurance for my Centre?

Shambhala Global administers the General Liability and Property insurance for Shambhala Canada Association and Shambhala USA. An insurance survey is sent out each year in advance of upcoming renewals in order to provide the most up-to-date information to our insurance carriers. New Centres are required to have liability insurance and would need to contact Shambhala Global in advance of meeting in a space to request insurance coverage. Shambhala Global negotiates rates and keeps the various policies updated in order to provide the best coverage for Centres and Groups. Premium costs are billed to the Centre and Group either directly from Shambhala Global (SUSA) or by the insurance carrier (SCAN).

What level of liability insurance is required for Centre and Groups in Europe and other parts of the world that are separately incorporated that are not covered by an insurance policy?

Property insurance is required for centers operating with owned property, while liability insurance is usually sufficient for centers renting their space. Centers should refer to local laws and regulations regarding insurance requirements for incorporated entities.

Dorje Kasung

I heard that the Dorje Kasung have disbanded. Is this true? Are the Dorje Kasung still a part of Shambhala?

In February 2022, a letter was sent to Dorje Kasung members that announced that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche was removing ranks and titles from serving Dorje Kasung Officers. Although some consider the removal of ranks as a form of disbanding, there are many members of the Dorje Kasung who are still engaged in their communities as “active Kasung”, while others have the view that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, as head of the Dorje Kasung, has the capacity to dissolve this entity within the Shambhala mandala.

So, while there are different views regarding the official structure of the Dorje Kasung, the practice of Kasungship - which includes offering care and protection for the dharma teachers, the teachings themselves, and the community - is not owned by anyone and is not capable of being "disbanded". Many Shambhalians continue to engage in the practice of being Kasung in their Centres and Groups, including engaging in protector practice for teachers and teachings, and acting in roles that are like Desung and Rusung to provide care for their local communities. And of course, many people continue to study and practice the Dorje Kasung teachings. At present, there is no formal structure for the Dorje Kasung - but it may re-arise in a new format depending on the wishes of the Shambhala community.