

Federation President's update regarding the Congress 2019 theme

August 14, 2019

Today, I am pleased to inform you of an important step we are taking to respond to the serious issue of anti-Black racism. The Federation has listened to its members and we share your deep concerns about this issue.

With the strong support of the 2020 Programming Committee, the Federation has revised the theme of Congress 2020 – ***Bridging Divides: Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism***. Over the coming weeks, we will continue working with our partners to incorporate this change into the theme's 200-word description.

This change opens important opportunities for participants at next year's Congress. In particular, the revised theme:

- Adds, for the first time, an explicit reference to Anti-Black Racism, setting the stage for critical exchanges about this systemic problem and the nuances of Blackness in society and the academy;
- Seeks to overcome the divisive legacy of colonialism, a critical aspect of promoting reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and settler populations;
- Promotes difficult but essential discussions about the most serious issues facing us as scholars, citizens, and members of our society; and
- Remains sufficiently broad (“Bridging Divides”) for thousands of scholars, from more than 70 scholarly associations, to engage deeply in questions specific to their fields of study.

By revising the Congress theme, not only has the Federation addressed all four of the requests made by the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA) following the June 2 incident at Congress 2019, but more importantly, we have demonstrated our deep desire to address the critical issues it has raised.

We look forward to building on this in the future. Over the coming weeks and months, we will be reaching out to our members as we develop this new theme and an engaging program for Congress.

I am grateful for your patience and support as we addressed this matter, and I urge you to contact me any time if you have comments, questions, or concerns.

Sincerely,

Patrizia Albanese

President

Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences

president@ideas-idees.ca