Addressing causes of concern in the Sage community

6 messages

The SageMath Code of Conduct Committee <sageconduct@gmail.com>　　　　Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 9:54 AM
To: Matthias Koeppe <mkoeppe@math.ucdavis.edu>
Cc: sage-conduct <sage-conduct@googlegroups.com>

Dear Matthias,

In April, we shared with you that several Sage developers had left the project because of your behavior. Since then, more developers have told us privately that they are considering leaving, and Martin Rubey has expressed this sentiment both publicly and privately. Some developers have told us that they are no longer encouraging new people to join the project. In all of these cases, your behavior is a primary reason.

From the survey we conducted in July, we learned that many are worried about the atmosphere in the Sage community, especially the toxicity on sage-devel. From the responses in the survey as well as messages we received as the Code of Conduct Committee, we believe that you are often at the center of this toxicity.

In addition, many of the responses to the survey mention your conflict with Dima as contributing to an unpleasant environment on sage-devel. The two of you have made no progress on reconciliation in over six months. We don't need the two of you to be able to work together, but we do need the conflict between you two to not disrupt the functioning of the community as a whole.

We believe that Dima should, and would be willing to, apologize for his inappropriate language. However, we also believe that you should apologize for publicly describing him as an abuser, which is a term that insinuates much worse than the verbal abuse he has subjected you to. How would you de-escalate the conflict between the two of you?

Similarly, we imagine that Martin would appreciate an apology for how you interacted with him. If that is not something you are willing to do, how do you propose making him feel more welcome in the Sage community?

We also want to be clear about the kinds of behaviors that we have observed from you that are problematic. You often behave dismissively toward other developers, trying to wave away comments that you disagree with. You have displayed an unwillingness to acknowledge the outcome of conflict resolution processes, for example trying to dismiss votes in sage-devel when you disagreed with the outcome. You have repeatedly claimed a leadership role in the Sage project. While leading by positive example is welcome, claiming authority over others' behavior without any mandate from the community alienates other developers. Community members are frustrated by the condescending language that we have seen from you on numerous occasions.

We have communicated with you about many of these issues without making any progress. How will you change your behavior to improve the atmosphere in sage-devel, on GitHub, and in the Sage community as a whole?

The SageMath Code of Conduct Committee

Matthias Koeppe <mkoeppe@math.ucdavis.edu>   Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 9:57 AM
To: The SageMath Code of Conduct Committee <sageconduct@gmail.com>
Cc: sage-conduct <sage-conduct@googlegroups.com>

> On Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 9:54 AM The SageMath Code of Conduct Committee
> <sageconduct@gmail.com> wrote:
> we also believe that you should apologize for publicly describing him
> as an abuser, which is a term that insinuates much worse than the
> verbal abuse he has subjected you to.

This is outrageous minimizing, repeated once again by this committee,
and by itself warrants immediate disqualification from this committee.

I'll bring the abuses by the committee to the attention of the
community shortly.

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Dr. Matthias Koeppe . . . . http://www.math.ucdavis.edu/~mkoeppe
Professor of Mathematics

Matthias Koeppe <mkoeppe@math.ucdavis.edu>   Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 11:49 AM
To: sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com
Cc: sage-conduct <sage-conduct@googlegroups.com>

In which CoCC again denies abuse, engages in victim blaming, and
defames targets of abuse as participants in toxicixity.
[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

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ekwankyu@gmail.com <ekwankyu@gmail.com>   Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 6:16 PM
Reply-To: sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com
To: sagemath-admins <sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com>

To CoCC:

> In addition, many of the responses to the survey mention your conflict
> with Dima as contributing to an unpleasant environment on sage-devel.
> The two of you have made no progress on reconciliation in over six
> months.

True.

> We don't need the two of you to be able to work together, but
> we do need the conflict between you two to not disrupt the functioning
> of the community as a whole.

I agree.

> We believe that Dima should, and would be willing to, apologize for
> his inappropriate language. However, we also believe that you should
> apologize for publicly describing him as an abuser, which is a term
> that insinuates much worse than the verbal abuse he has subjected you
> to.

I believe that neither of them is willing to apologize,

Once upon a time, there were two developers who started to work together on sage.
Dima thought he was abused, when his opinions in technical discussions were dismissed by Matthias.
Matthias thought that he was abused, when Dima denunciated Matthias by saying that he was forcing his personal project
to sage developers.
Dima does not think he abused Matthias because he believes what he said are facts.
Matthias does not think he abused Dima because he believes he just defended the best technical practices for sage.

They are not kids. "Apologize and get along" won't work.

> How would you de-escalate the conflict between the two of you?

The conflict between them has been already de-escalated, perhaps due to the operation of CoCC and the disputed PR resolving mechanism.

> How will you change your behavior to improve the
> atmosphere in sage-devel, on GitHub, and in the Sage community as a
> whole?

Perhaps this request is condescending to him. CoCC should act like police, not like kindergarten.

To Matthias:

I think that the root cause that resulted to this tragic situation is your immense aspiration for sage. You worked hard and shaped sage into what it is now, commanding it like no one else. You had to keep sage from going astray. I appreciate it.

Statements like "you are wrong in ..." may be as offending as "you are such a ... person". Do not attempt to change people or their opinions by criticizing them. Informing them with facts is the way to that they change their behaviors and opinions, on their own.

Kwankyu

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Matthias Koeppe <mkoeppe@math.ucdavis.edu>   Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 6:33 PM
To: sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com

On Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 6:16 PM ekwankyu@gmail.com <ekwankyu@gmail.com> wrote:
> > How would you de-escalate the conflict between the two of you?
>
> The conflict between them has been already de-escalated, perhaps due to the operation of CoCC and the disputed PR resolving mechanism.

The "conflict" has not been de-escalated at all. To the contrary:
Pasechnik continues shamelessly in public forums with his
denunciations of my intentions, the quality of my work.

And once again I have to reject the word "conflict", which erases the
asymmetric nature of abuse.

It is at the very core of the key failure of the current CoCC to
follow best practices in handling abuse. Instead it has embraced David
Roe's and John Palmieri's personal ideology that confuses neutrality
and professionalism with the "both-siding" of every issue. But abuse
cannot be both-sided. There are abusers and there are targets of
abuse. (I have explained this to the committee numerous times, to no
avail.)

The key question that needs to be asked -- completely ignored by CoCC
throughout this whole affair: "What is the harm done?"
(I have explained to CoCC in detail what the harm done by the abuser is.)

> How will you change your behavior to improve the
> atmosphere in sage-devel, on GitHub, and in the Sage community as a
> whole?
>
> Perhaps this request is condescending to him. CoCC should act like police, not like kindergarten.

Not just condescending, but actively abusive.
The members of CoCC have been protecting the abusers and have been
withholding the support that the target of the abuse requires.
By "both-siding"
This is a sustained act of violence.

Matthias

[Quoted text hidden]

Dima Pasechnik <dimpase@gmail.com>   Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 3:22 AM
Reply-To: sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com
To: sagemath-admins@googlegroups.com
Cc: sage-conduct <sage-conduct@googlegroups.com>

On Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 2:34 AM Matthias Koeppe <mkoeppe@math.ucdavis.edu> wrote:
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> On Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 6:16 PM ekwankyu@gmail.com <ekwankyu@gmail.com> wrote:
> > > How would you de-escalate the conflict between the two of you?
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> > The "conflict" has not been de-escalated at all. To the contrary:
> > Pasechnik continues shamelessly in public forums with his
> > denunciations of my intentions, the quality of my work.

Matthias,

maybe, just maybe, you should start by removing the GitHub block.

It's annoying to look for much less convenient ways communicate -
 in particular as you're welcome on my GitHub,
and you are making use of it, for better or for worse (I'll get to
this in another email).

As far as convenience goes,
cf. e.g. https://github.com/sagemath/sage/issues/38182#issuecomment-2388130628
as I can't participate in the discussion between you and Martin, I just

1) opened up the thread of comments on #36380
2) wrote the comment, tried to post it (thanks to GitHub, for some
reason in the review threads I don't see any block,
I can open a cell to write the comment, the Comment button is there,
but no matter how many times I press it, it's
kept open, without the state change, no errors).
3) swear under my breath, copy the comment, reload the browser tab
4) try again, to no avail.
5) scroll down, to post this comment at the top level, see the block.
6) swear under my breath, try to find the issue I opened to comment on
#36380 - it's hidden by GitHub somewhere there,
to I have to unhide a number of times.
7) leave already mention comment 38182#issuecomment-2388130628, cc Martin on it.
Hope that Martin or someone else will take time to re-post the comment
in the right place on #36380.
8) come here and describe all this.

I doubt that you actually want to deescalate, and not just keep up the pressure
on me to stop contributing to Sage all together.

Moreover, 1)-7) above all together can be construed
as abuse, of me, and people who are interested in my opinion on #36380.
Needless to say, it's a waste of my time and energy

>
> And once again I have to reject the word "conflict", which erases the
> asymmetric nature of abuse.

We are entitled to give negative reviews on your Sage's PRs.
You rejecting my (and others) negative reviews as abuse is the actual
abuse happening here, solely from your side.

Dima

>
> It is at the very core of the key failure of the current CoCC to
> follow best practices in handling abuse. Instead it has embraced David
> Roe's and John Palmieri's personal ideology that confuses neutrality
> and professionalism with the "both-siding" of every issue. But abuse
> cannot be both-sided. There are abusers and there are targets of
> abuse. (I have explained this to the committee numerous times, to no
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> This is a sustained act of violence.
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> Matthias
> --
> Dr. Matthias Koeppe . . . . http://www.math.ucdavis.edu/~mkoeppe
> Professor of Mathematics
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> ---
> You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "sagemath-admins" group.
> To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to sagemath-admins+unsubscribe@
googlegroups.com.
> To view this discussion on the web visit https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/sagemath-admins/CAJ_
wo5gmiBLhOToRsxYEdsZyZuBxwdOU7Zj3KcxP%3DSMrT90J%3DA%40mail.gmail.com.

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