



**ANNUAL** 2018  
**REPORT** 

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 2019  
FISCAL YEAR

**SCI**

**SCIENCE  
CENTER  
OF IOWA  
& BLANK IMAX®  
DOME THEATER**



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

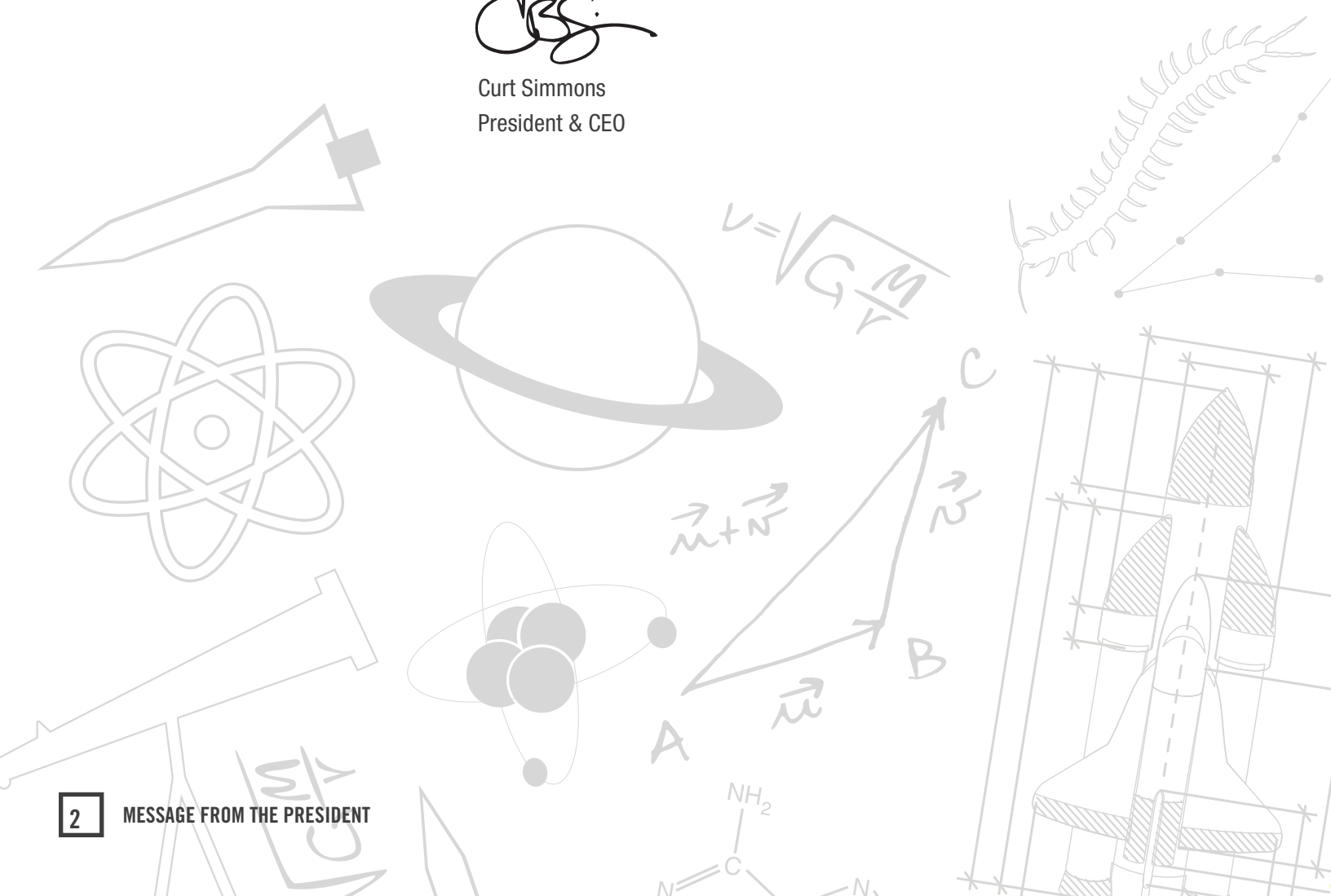
In July, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing in a big way. SCI commemorated this historic day with special events meant to recognize the past and inspire the future.

Apollo 11's popularity reflects the mindset of learning from the past while growing into the future, connecting each generation to the next. We continue to promote lifelong learning, encouraging every age through education and excitement.

This report gives examples of learning at every milestone in life. From the youngest to the oldest, SCI hopes to engage and inspire each and every member of the community. We strive to inspire curiosity no matter your age and work to keep the journey of education at the forefront of SCI's purpose for generations to come.

Thank you for pursuing an ongoing commitment to learn with us. We are honored to partner with those as dedicated to science as we are.

Curt Simmons  
President & CEO



# SCI 101—DID YOU KNOW?

**OUR MISSION:** To engage and inspire Iowans along their journey of lifelong science learning.

## 501(c)(3)

The Science Center of Iowa is a 501(c)(3) entity. We are independent, operating solely from money raised and earned on our behalf.



We are the Science Center of Iowa. In addition to welcoming visitors from all 99 counties and beyond, our outreach and professional development programs take STEM learning on the road, reaching tens of thousands of Iowans each year.



As a private, nonprofit organization, we rely on the donations of private individuals, companies and foundations to be able to achieve our mission and serve more than 300,000 individuals from across the state and country. Thank you for your support!

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JIMMY LELA



Jimmy Lela loves learning about the world around him and trying to understand it better. That's what he loves about volunteering for the Science Center of Iowa. Specifically, he donates his time to SCI because he believes it is one of the best places in Iowa to cultivate that sense of wonder in children and adults.

Jimmy met his wife Amanda online and, for their first date, went to SCI and watched the Foucault Pendulum, pondering the movement of the Earth. They've been back many times, saying they "enjoy dinosaur stuff, Leonardo da Vinci stuff, sound art stuff and much more!" They even came back to SCI for a very special moment... their proposal!

This year, Jimmy saw an opportunity to volunteer at SCI in an email. It was a technical opportunity, and he thought he could help. He felt it was an ideal blend of helping an organization he cared about and an interesting challenge for him. He is hoping to volunteer more in the future!



# YOUR SUPPORT MAKES AN IMPACT



# WHAT ON EARTH? GETS SPRUCED UP



We extend our gratitude to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for their award of a federal, multi-year grant that has enabled SCI to update and enhance the *What On Earth?* experience platform.

Improvements to the exhibit aim to increase empathy and respect for Iowa's native resources. Beyond general cleaning and maintenance, SCI's exhibits team developed content to improve multi-sensory aspects and accessibility. Live feedings for Snippy the snapping turtle can now be viewed from a monitor above his tank for those not close enough to view the action directly. A new augmented reality sandbox provides an interactive way for visitors to learn about topography. This exhibit component was developed in partnership with the University of Iowa 3D Club.

(Tip: Lift your hand above the sand to make rain appear and learn how watersheds work!)

A large portion of improvements focused on authenticating the exhibit. In the prairie and wetland areas, plants and flowers have been restored to reflect Iowa's native flora, new taxidermy such as a badger and coyote have been added and a "soundscape shower" now features recordings collected from prairies and marshes throughout Iowa.

We continue to strive for an interactive and collaborative setting, exemplified in our updates to *What On Earth?*, which will continue in the months to come.



# MIND MATTERS BRINGS MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATION TO COMMUNITY

SCI



With the generous support of HealthPartners UnityPoint Health, the Science Center of Iowa was able to reach community members like never before.

This past year, from February 5 through April 18, SCI hosted *Mental Health: Mind Matters*, a traveling exhibit focused on unraveling the stigma surrounding mental illness. Presented in partnership with HealthPartners UnityPoint Health and other community partners and sponsors, SCI created a safe space to boost awareness and understanding of mental health, and visitors had the chance to immerse themselves in hands-on interactives and multi-sensory content. Though it is estimated that around 18% of U.S. adults have a mental illness, misunderstanding and preconceptions can lead to lack of treatment, prejudice and discrimination for those living with mental illness in their everyday lives.



Presented by



The substantial community support for such an important and relevant topic allowed SCI to host a series of events. This outpouring of encouragement from partners, mental health organizations and local leaders strengthened our action for the subject matter. With the help of Capital Crossroads and various other community partners, the event series centered around destigmatizing discussion on mental illness. Major event topics included mental health in the workplace, mental health in youth and cultural and racial trauma. We are incredibly grateful that we were able to witness and take part in the public support as well as honest and open conversation and education about mental health.

Through *Mind Matters*, we were able to engage more than 60,000 people in raising awareness, reducing the stigma and creating a safe space to talk about and explore mental health.





**Mind Matters Exhibit Sponsors:**

Presented by



Community Partner sponsor



Exhibition Support sponsors



*Mental Health: Mind Matters* was produced by the Science Museum of Minnesota with Heureka, The Finnish Science Centre and their partners, Ciencia Viva and Cite des Sciences & L'industrie.

# “ONE SMALL STEP...” CELEBRATING APOLLO 50



July 20, 1969, was a historic day for humankind. One small step on the Moon launched years of exploration and inspiration.

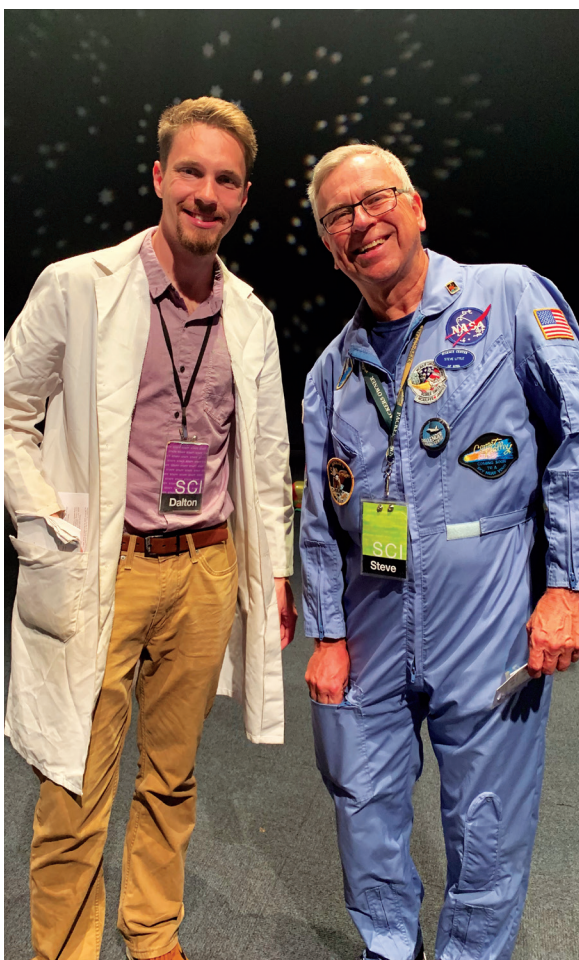
SCI celebrated the 50-year anniversary of the historic Moon landing by hosting a series of events encouraging Iowans to dream big about the future of space.

Throughout 2019, SCI counted down to the anniversary with space speakers, rocket launches and film premieres all dedicated to the Apollo program. The months-long celebration wrapped up with our annual fundraising gala, SCI's Big Blast!



From our summer library program to our Moon landing-themed Mixology Night, the 50th anniversary embodied our mission of engaging and inspiring Iowans along their journey of lifelong science learning by igniting interest in every generation. The summer library program, titled “Outer Space Odyssey,” reached more than 4,000 participants with 99 total delivered programs across 58 counties, encouraging the upcoming generation to imagine the next giant leaps in space.

Apollo's intergenerational connection continues to propel our vision of informing lifelong learners, further exemplifying a future of exciting investigation through science.





# PRAIRIE MEADOWS: PARTNERS IN PROGRAMMING



The Innovation Lab is a space dedicated to developing new ideas and solving problems through hands-on learning. In 2019, we were awarded funds from Prairie Meadows Casino to enhance the Innovation Lab, highlighting the importance of interactive learning experiences and the community partnerships needed to bring them to life.

As a nonprofit organization, Prairie Meadows fulfills its mission by giving back to organizations that support arts and culture, education, economic development and human services. "We are excited to see the impact this project will have on our Central Iowa community," said Julie Stewart, Prairie Meadows' director of community relations.



This funding has allowed the Innovation Lab to continue ongoing programming such as teacher professional development, Open Maker hours and the Pint Size Science "Tiny Tinkerers" series. Through innovative workshops, children and adults of all ages will learn new skills like 3D printing, soldering and virtual reality/augmented reality in an interactive, hands-on setting. The Innovation Lab, along with the continuous support from donors such as Prairie Meadows, reminds us how important an innovator's mindset can be.





# SPONSORSHIPS & GRANTS

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The following contributions were made through generous support of specific projects, programs and films at the Science Center of Iowa and Blank IMAX Dome Theater between October 1, 2018, and September 30, 2019.

## \$50,000 and above



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## Public Support

SCI works to engage a wide community audience to develop meaningful partnerships and new initiatives that inspire curious minds of all ages. Partnerships and sponsorships from the following organizations help SCI engage and inspire lifelong learning in all of us.



## BRAVO Greater Des Moines Fund:

The following local governments committed a portion of their hotel/motel tax in FY 18–19:

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## Mind Matters Exhibit Sponsors:

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With sincere appreciation, the Science Center of Iowa acknowledges the extraordinary support of all our donors. Your gifts enable us to engage and inspire through programming, exhibits, events and so much more. Thank you for making this possible. We make every effort to acknowledge our donors appropriately. If we have made an error, please contact the Development Office at 515-274-6868 ext. 223 or [development@sciowa.org](mailto:development@sciowa.org).

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 – In memory of Dick Sampel

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 – In honor of Tracey and Jeff Rommel  
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 – In appreciation of displaying my  
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## In Memory of Sherry (Adams) MacLean

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## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: CORTEVA AGRISCIENCE AND THE FAMILY OF SHERRY MACLEAN



The Science Center of Iowa recently was gifted a very meaningful donation for the Girls in Science Initiative from the family of Sherry MacLean.

After receiving a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and a Masters in Secondary Education, Sherry became a pioneering junior high Mathematics and Computer Science teacher in the 1970s and 80s in Waverly, NE. In 1986,

Sherry was nominated for an Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching award by the National Science Foundation. Her legacy serves as a reminder to empower, inspire and equip young girls interested in STEM careers to grow the next generation of female leaders.

SCI recognizes and thanks Sherry and her children, Kala Moore and Zach Adams, for their incredible generosity and recognition of the Girls in Science Initiative. Sherry's memory lives on not only through her granddaughters who love to participate in our Girls in Science Pajama Parties, but through the numerous girls who will be inspired by science because of her gift.

SCI's Girls in Science Initiative aims to empower and equip girls in science, technology, engineering and math. Events like Pajama Parties, Meals with Mentors and the Girls in Science Festival give girls the opportunity to meet and interact with female role models and learn about their careers.

Critical to SCI's Girls in Science program is the support provided by Corteva AgriScience. Corteva offers ongoing financial and volunteer support to all Girls in Science events and programs. Only through incredible donors such as Sherry MacLean's family and Corteva can we hope to spark a love for STEM that stays with the girls and young women through their education and helps to confront female underrepresentation in STEM career fields.

# HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO



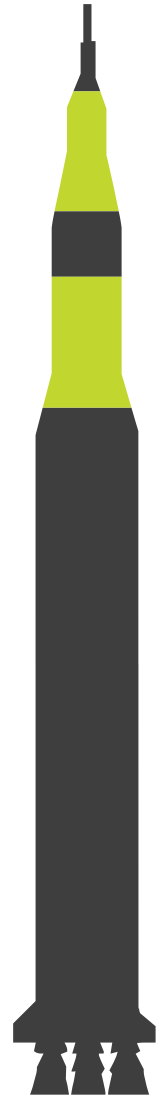
## OPERATING REVENUE & SUPPORT

- 17% Admission Fees
- 7% Donations
- 9% Government & Grants
- 6% In-Kind
- 2% Investment Income
- 10% Membership
- 11% Preschool
- 17% Retail Operations
- 21% School Groups & Education



## OPERATING EXPENSES

- 8% Administration
- 11% Communications & Marketing
- 6% Development
- 12% Retail Operations
- 63% Visitor Experience





# SCI'S BIG BLAST GALA

SCI



Each year, SCI engages more than 300,000 children, school groups and adults in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) through interactive exhibits, live programs, IMAX films, special events, classes and camps. SCI's Annual Fundraising Event and Auction contributes more than \$200,000 to these vast opportunities. Special thanks to Megan Salois, who served as the 2019 Annual Event Master of Ceremonies.

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: THE WALDORF FAMILY



Annette Waldorf's family has been SCI members for about four and a half years. They live in Des Moines and love to come to SCI with their grandchildren because, as they say, "there's always something new to see!" They love exploring **Small Discoveries** and playing with the Ball Wall, building and launching rockets and laying on the ground watching shows in the Star Theater.

In the winter, they love coming to SCI to have somewhere to play where they also are learning. Sometimes, they even get to have lunch together in the café. "Everyone that works at SCI is very helpful, knowledgeable, patient and friendly. It's a great place!"

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The first-annual team trivia fundraiser brought in more than \$12,000 to support SCI's mission! Thanks to our event sponsors and donors:

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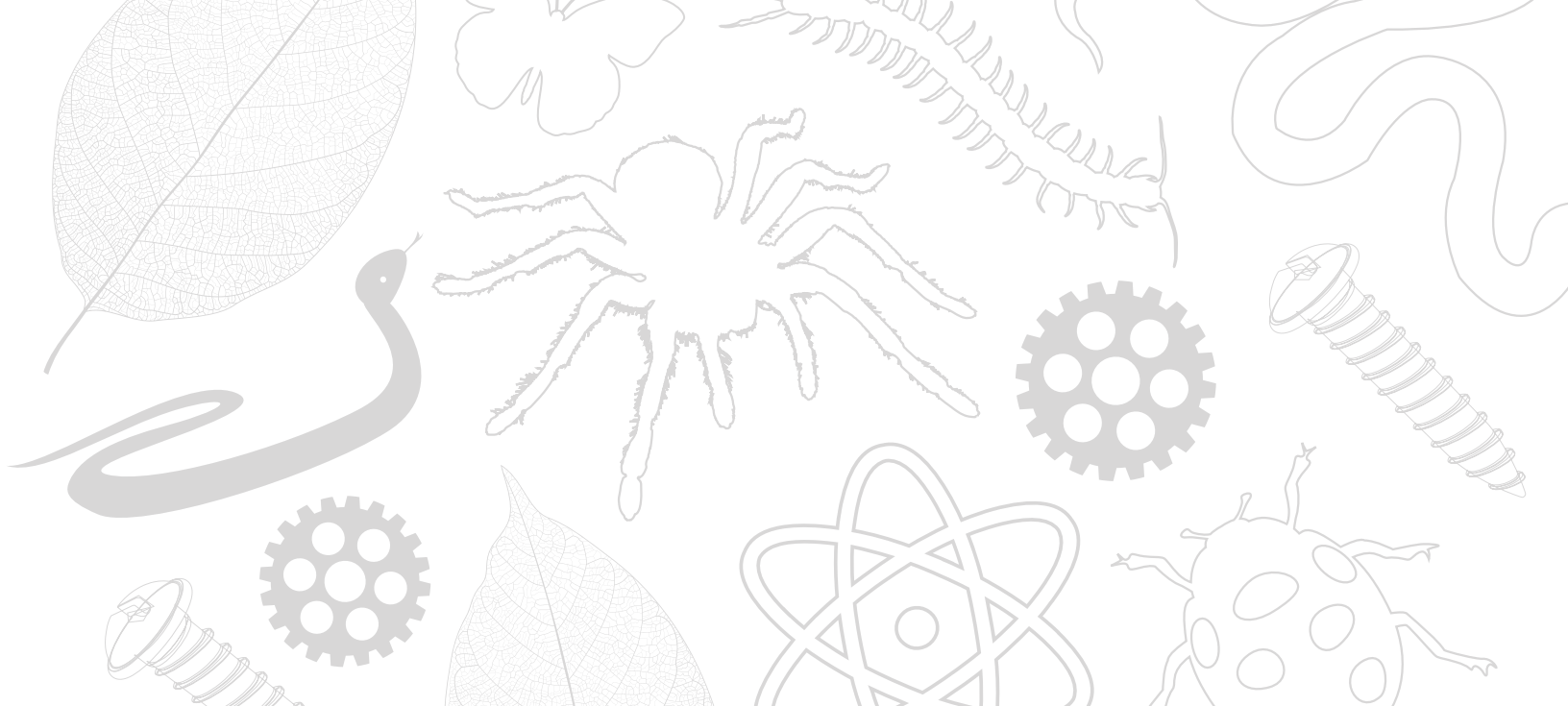
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- We have a positive attitude.
- We treat others with respect.
- We will exceed participants' expectations.
- We embody a shared purpose and mission.
- We will be accountable.

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