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GRANTS OFFICE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GRANTS OFFICE

EXPANDING ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A SPECIAL ISSUE OF *FUNDED* EXPLORING WHAT THE EXPANSION OF BROADBAND CAN MEAN FOR GRANTSEEKERS

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Crossing the Digital Divide in Education

LEVERAGING BROADBAND TO EXPAND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

By Christopher Haight, Grants Development Consultant

The expansion of broadband to rural schools is a critical step in eliminating the digital divide and ensuring students have access to the tools of the 21st century. Most importantly for students and educators alike, access to broadband internet services creates new opportunities and methods for increasing student achievement.

For educators, broadband can mean opening a world of new professional development resources. Many state plans for education reform specifically cited the use of various crowd-sourcing projects as a part of their plans for supporting effective teachers and principals in their Race to the Top applications. Applicants proposed items such as online banks of lesson plans, where teachers would be able to share, borrow, and adapt lesson plans with others in their state. These types of efforts fostered collaboration and communication by breaking down geographic barriers. Likewise, the Investing in Innovation program, targeted towards school districts and nonprofit organizations, embraced the use of technology-based efforts to improve resources for teachers.

Access to broadband also has a prominent role within the relatively young Promise Neighborhoods program that supports development of wraparound services targeted towards addressing socioeconomic influences on student success. The Promise Neighborhoods Program, now in its second year with $30 million requires applicants to address the expansion of and access to broadband services within the applicant communities in order to foster improved communications and collaborations among agencies and constituents.

In addition, broadband accessibility can also foster the creation of new tools that increase the use of evidence and data-based decision making in education - a key goal of many in the K-12 education sector. Cloud-based services or applications that analyze student performance data in real-time allow teachers to respond accordingly by identifying those students most in need of greater assistance or adapting their own lesson plans or teaching techniques.

The introduction of new broadband to rural schools also gives students the opportunity to utilize the tools and resources common to their generation. One of the most prominent uses is for distance learning projects, in which students are given access to learning opportunities such as virtual field trips, that would otherwise fall outside of their primary and secondary education experiences due to geography or fiscal challenges. Distance learning can also be used to support teachers for various aspects of training and professional development from a variety of different agencies.

While Congress eliminated the Enhancing Education Through Technology grant program in 2011, there are other opportunities for funding education technology projects. One such grant program is the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) program sponsored by EDUCAUSE, a national nonprofit organization, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The NGLC program supports the effective and promising uses of technology in education. Like the Investing in Innovation program, NGLC relies on data- and evidence-intensive applications that require

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applicants to have sound research and theoretical support for their proposals.

When looking to leverage broadband funding and other grant opportunities to upgrade education technology in schools, libraries, or elsewhere, it remains critical to remember to think carefully about your requests. The call for accountability and wise investments through grant funding is louder than ever. Funders at all levels remain acutely aware how important it is to fund applications with the greatest promise of success, not just those toting far-flung promises or fancy equipment.

When preparing applications, you should always look at the "big picture." Technology alone does not improve student achievement - it's still the curriculum, teachers, resources, parents, and other influences. A proposal for equipment that does not address teacher training, technical assistance, and development of associated curriculum has already omitted three key considerations that should accompany the introduction of any new technology.

The expansion of broadband holds much promise for underserved communities. However, the development of broadband infrastructure is just the first step. Realization of its vast potential requires a strategic approach to grantseeking and most of all, a thoughtful application of technology.

a digital divide

The digital divide is the gap between communities that do and do not have access to broadband and other 21st century technologies. This divide crosses educational, socioeconomic, and geographic boundaries.

$7.2 Billion
Recovery Act Funding for Rural Broadband

education

Bachelor's degree or higher: 84%

High school diploma or lower: 51%

income

Annual income over $150,000: 90%

Annual income under $15,000: 32%

geography

Live in an urban area: 70%

Live in a rural area: 60%

Data Source: *Digital Nation,* U.S. Department of Commerce. Feb. 2011.

Digital Promise Talks Education Technology

In September 2011, the federal government announced the opening of a new center called Digital Promise. As an independent nonprofit organization, Digital Promise works ""to support a comprehensive research and development program to harness the increasing capacity of advanced information and digital technologies to improve all levels of learning and education, formal and informal, in order to provide Americans with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global economy." To learn more, visit www.digitalpromise.org.

Empowering Smart Communities

Energy • Education • Public Safety • Healthcare
Transportation • Economic Development

The development and spread of broadband across the country is enabling innovations not just in the private sector, but also in how public agencies are transforming themselves to meet the demands of the 21st century. The U.S. federal government administers several grant programs each year that can help communities operate more effectively and efficiently.

Choice Neighborhoods

Choice Neighborhoods grants transform distressed neighborhoods and public and assisted projects into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods by linking housing improvements with appropriate services, schools, public assets, transportation, and access to jobs.

Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants

This program will support metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments.

Smart Policing Initiative

This program seeks to build upon data-driven, evidence-based policing by encouraging state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to develop effective, economical, and innovative responses to precipitous or extraordinary increases in crime, or in a type or types of crime within their jurisdictions.

Promise Neighborhoods

The purpose of Promise Neighborhoods is to improve significantly the educational and developmental outcomes of children in our most distressed communities, and to transform those communities by building a complete continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports.

Economic Development Assistance Programs

Economic Development Assistance Programs are designed to provide distressed communities and regions with comprehensive and flexible solutions to a wide variety of economic challenges.

i6 Green Challenge

i6 Green is designed to encourage and reward innovative Proof of Concept Centers that accelerate technology commercialization by assisting entrepreneurs and existing companies, encouraging new venture formation and sparking job creation and economic growth across the United States.

Learn more about these and other grant opportunities by visiting www.grantsoffice.info where you can find free information on featured and recently released grant programs. You can also register for upcoming webcasts, join our email list, and find out more about how we can help you in your grantseeking.

Video Applications in Public Safety
KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE WITH 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY
By Vince Siragusa, Grants Development Consultant

With terms like interoperability, collaboration, and standardization saturating the pages of guidance documents across the funding landscape, there is often an associated focus on supporting initiatives that, for lack of a better term, make sense. For many communities across the county, rural and urban alike, utilizing video conferencing to support various public safety-related needs will fit that broad requirement.

Identifying examples of how education-based community anchor institutions have leveraged video conferencing solutions is certainly not a difficult task. The Department of Agriculture's (USDA) aptly named Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) alone has enabled thousands of facilities to utilize video technology allowing students in remote locations to experience the same quality of education as their peers in more traditional settings. Along the same lines, healthcare organizations have in their own right been employing this technology to support telehealth and telehomecare-based initiatives, whether through DLT's support or through a more healthcare-centric program like the Telehealth Network

Grant Program or the Telehealth Resource Center Grant Program. DLT grants, similar to most USDA offerings, establish a "rural threshold" for their eligibility by targeting jurisdictions under 20,000 in population. By geographic characteristics alone, these areas have been deemed "rural" and with that designation comes the recognition that someone living in rural Montana may not have the same onsite education or healthcare options as one residing in New York City. In this case, geographic isolation serves as one of the main determinants in identifying a particular need for distance learning or telehealth-based deployment and support.

Of course the unique needs geography presents are not limited to education and healthcare. Many of the same benefits of video conferencing technology can be applied in the public safety/homeland security realm. Moreover, despite the relative lack of funding that has been dispensed to these remote areas, they can benefit greatly from the implantation of these types of technologies.

Since the early advent of videophones, the public safety and judicial system have always been tempted by the promise of cost and time savings offered by videoconferencing technologies. The initial start-up costs for a

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In addition to our services for nonprofit organizations, we also help businesses market to and support public sector and nonprofit customers. If you're looking for an innovative way to use grants intelligence to reach out to schools, community organizations, municipalities, or other nonprofit organizations, contact Kathleen Kelly at kkelly@grantsoffice.com or (585) 473-1430, ext. 105.

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videoconferencing system are undoubtedly substantial but cost-benefit analysis shows that these costs are quickly offset by, among other things, the savings in transportation and other training redundancies. These efficiencies are often magnified the more remote the area is. Time spent traveling to and from a training session, arraignment hearings, etc. generally comes at the expense of the alternative job duty that is not chosen, and getting around rural areas often requires more travel time because of the sheer distance between facilities.

Perhaps as grant-friendly as any benefit, video conferencing solutions help facilitate communication by making it easier and much more efficient for various groups, whether based on geographic or other disparities, to improve information-sharing but also to standardize the information and training that is shared. While educational strategies like train-the-trainer and hands-on-training will never be without merit, a hybrid approach to training our nation's first responders, judges, emergency management officials and other service providers makes sense when we can incorporate the best of both worlds.

When seeking funds for a mission as broad as information-sharing, a number of key programs will likely show up in your grant team's prospect list. For those involved in the public safety, the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) remains one of the more obvious programs to target. Addressing a variety of public safety needs, the JAG program can in fact fund video surveillance in a police cruiser, and in the same way it can support video conferencing or tele-arraignment in a local court or judicial environment. But the fact that decisions about how to spend the money are usually made at the local level, champions for these types of technology enhancements usually need to advocate for their own needs early and often under this DOJ program's support process. And it is never too early to start. Interested agencies should be working now to further explore the potential uses and support available under the anticipated Fiscal Year 2012 JAG offering.

Other federal opportunities to consider include the funding available through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Visit the Responder Knowledge Base (www.rkb.us) and under the Interoperable Communications Equipment Section you will find "video conferencing" described as an eligible expense for programs including the Emergency Management Performance Grants, State Homeland Security Grant Program, Urban Areas Security Initiative and others. Interested applicants should be working with their local/regional level decision makers, in conjunction with their State Administrate Agency (SAA), to target ongoing DHS grant money. See www.fema.gov/government/grant/saa/index.shtm for additional SAA information.

Additionally, for the community anchor institutions operating in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 people, the USDA's Community Facilities Grant Program may be another promising option for a video communication project. While these federal funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities, awards are also comprehensive enough to cover the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. Contact your local USDA field office (www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html) for additional information.

As we continue down the line of a nationwide approach to security preparedness, maintaining regional collaborations, memorandums of understanding, and standard operating procedures will become more and more relevant in our heavily inter-dependent world - a world that requires us all to play a role in ensuring we have the tools, training, and awareness necessary to keep our nation and communities as secure as possible.

Broadband Policy: FCC Issues Net Neutrality Rules

Last year in December, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) passed new regulations regarding the concept of Net Neutrality. Those rules, set to go into effect this November, require internet service providers to treat all content equally with respect to download speeds, increase their own disclosure and transparency related to network management and reliability, and prohibit providers from blocking any legal content.

Net neutrality has long been a long-standing source of controversy among federal regulators, content creators, and service providers. On the most basic level, proponents posit that the absence of such regulations would empower providers with the unfettered ability to create tiered access to content - making it comparably easier to access to a simple personal blog than a data-intensive website like Netflix, for example. They contend that this power would threaten innovation as newer companies could find it harder to gain a web presence. Notable supporters for various net neutrality policies include some of the most-visited websites, including Yahoo!, EBay, Amazon, and Google.

Even supporters remain divided, however. Google has supported a more limited net neutrality, one in which similar websites and applications must be treated the same but that would still allow for differentiation between types of websites. Under this situation, a provider would be able to differentiate pricing and download speeds between a video-streaming website and a personal blog, but could not give preferential treatment to one video-streaming website over another video-streaming site.

In contrast, opponents claim net neutrality regulations are an unnecessary infringement by the federal government into private markets. They contend regulations preventing the prioritization of data sources across networks may stifle the expansion of broadband services by reducing the ability of providers to recoup their investments. Without the incentive, they also argue innovation may be impacted. Leading the way, Verizon Wireless sued to halt implementation of the rules soon after they were published in the Federal Register in late September.

Providers, too, have divergent viewpoints. The new regulations differ between fixed and mobile broadband providers, giving the latter somewhat more leniency in discriminating against applications that could compete with their primary services. Senator Al Franken (D-MN) highlighted this disparity in his opposition over the lighter treatment of mobile broadband providers, saying consumers could be inhibited from accessing their preferred applications on their cell phones, like Google Maps, if Verizon could favor its own Navigator application instead.

The FCC's new net neutrality rules are likely more a first step than a final say. With Verizon having officially filed its lawsuit challenging the FCC's authority and more suits possibly on their way, the ultimate decision is likely to be one decreed by a court room rather than a regulatory body.

As a condition of receiving a grant from the Recovery Act's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) effectively required applicants to adhere to net neutrality principles. The original program rules required recipients "not favor any lawful internet applications or content over others," aiming to prevent formation of ''fast lanes'' that could discourage competition.

The Far Reach of Broadband

By Christopher Haight, Grants Development Consultant

Devising and implementing a national broadband policy has been a notable priority for the Obama administration. Since including over $7 billion for the expansion of broadband in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Obama administration has worked primarily through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to achieve this goal.

The FCC completed work on the *National Broadband Plan* in 2010 and has since embarked a number of reforms to implement its suggestions and goals (you can view the plan at http://download.broadband.gov/plan/national-broadband-plan.pdf). The effort to improve broadband access and services is more than just a technology priority, however. Broadband has been viewed as infrastructure necessary to accomplish many other policy aims.

Take the E-Rate program for example. E-Rate is a $2 billion program developed by the FCC that supports schools across the country in acquiring telecommunications services. Schools may apply for discounts ranging from twenty percent to ninety percent off the normal price of eligible services, depending on their location and poverty statistics.

As a part of the National Broadband Plan, the FCC called for reforms and changes to the E-Rate program that would help even more schools gain access to broadband services. These recommendations aimed to "improve flexibility, deployment, and use of infrastructure, improve program efficiency, and foster innovation."   One such recommendation was to expand the use of E-Rate funded services to include connectivity to portable learning devices for teachers and students beyond regular school facilities and hours. The FCC implemented this suggestion with a new $9 million program titled E-Rate Deployed Ubiquitously (EDU) 2011 Pilot Program.

Projects announced earlier this year in March are now being implemented across the country. The results from the twenty recipients will inform how the FCC proceeds in evaluating whether to include off-site connectivity in the general E-Rate solicitation each year. Many of the projects support providing students from low-income backgrounds with increased access to new educational technology tools such as digital textbooks, netbooks, or other mobile devices (a complete list of funded applicants and brief descriptions of their projects can be found at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-305088A1.pdf).

While this was primarily a technology consideration, it also helped enable an education reform in expanding learning times and opportunities for students beyond the typical school day, and continued supporting the effective use of technology into K-12 learning.

The same pattern of broadband-enabling holds true for other sectors of the economy as well. In energy, one of the major initiatives championed by the administration and also included in the Recovery Act was the development and implementation of a smart grid. A smart grid aims to increase the efficiency of energy use by integrating improved communications and computer analytics. By making better use of these types of technologies, the hope is to create an electrical grid that can distribute energy more optimally, reliably, and securely.   These "smart" innovations, of course, rely on access to many information resources and tools made available primarily through broadband.

This leveraging of national broadband policy to achieve outcomes in other areas suggests broadband remains one of the most influential areas of national policymaking and will continue to impact nearly every sector of the economy.

CHECK OUT WWW.CONNECTEDCOMMUNITYGRANTS.INFO TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER GRANTS!

Special Web Series: Distance Learning & Telemedicine

JOIN CISCO AND GRANTS OFFICE to learn more about how to get the most out of rural broadband for education and healthcare. Register today at http://grantsofficevents.webex.com.

In this 3-part web series, we will provide everything you need to know about the Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) program, one of the most popular and highly competitive IT-friendly programs of the year. Through the support of DLT funds, countless rural citizens have been provided with access to a wide variety of much-needed educational and healthcare-related programs. Due to the program's competitiveness, it is crucial to begin preparing your project well in advance of the deadline so that you can develop the best application possible.

- **October 20, 2011: Part 1** will provide a general overview of the DLT program and discuss key points such as determining eligibility, identifying participants, developing a budget, and more.

- **December 8, 2011: Part 2** will delve into the intricacies of the application process, including identifying and scoring hubs and end-users, completing necessary forms, determining your preliminary objective score, and correctly organizing your application materials.

- **March 15, 2012: Part 3** examines several aspects of developing and strengthening the narrative sections of the proposal, including properly incorporating technology equipment and vendors, addressing project scope and sustainability, demonstrating community need and innovativeness, and avoiding common application pitfalls.

*All webcasts are scheduled for 2 p.m. EST the day of the webcast and will be recorded and available for viewing after the original presentation.

Grants Program Spotlight:
Distance Learning and Telemedicine

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program is specifically designed to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America through the use of advanced telecommunications technologies.   Funding many be used for purchase of eligible equipment such as video conferencing, instructional programming, and technical assistance.

Organizations operating a rural facility currently delivering and proposing to deliver distance learning or telemedicine may apply.

Awards range from $50,000 to $500,000. Approximately $30 million is anticipated to be available for new awards each year.

The deadline for 2011 was April 25, 2011. A similar deadline is anticipated each year.

Applications are scored in the following categories: (1) Rural Area (Rurality): up to 45 Points; (2) Economic Need (NSLP): up to 35 Points; (3) Matching Funds: up to 35 points; (4) Empowerment Zone (EZ): up to 10 points; (5) Additional NSLP: up to 10 points; (6) Needs and Benefits: up to 45 points; (7) Innovativeness: up to 15 points; and (8) Cost Effectiveness: up to 35 points.

Learn more at http://www.dltgrants.info/GrantDetails.aspx?Grant=7702

Creating a HEALTHY Demand for Broadband

GRANT FUNDING FOR HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

By Chris LaPage, Grants Development Consultant

Congratulations! You put together a competitive proposal under BTOP and were fortunate enough to be funded. Now you are in a position to provide broadband to all these previously underserved communities. There's just one problem: The community anchor institutions (CAIs) in your area do not have the financial resources to implement their broadband-intensive projects. Fortunately, grant programs are available for CAIs to fund their initiatives, which can have a direct impact in increasing demand for broadband infrastructure.

In particular, there are several grant programs available to health care providers that are struggling to fund projects that require robust broadband networks. Healthcare organizations are turning to technology and related communications networks to increase access to health care, lower costs, and improve quality. Health care organizations are attempting to implement electronic health records and online patient records that can be accessed anywhere internet is available. Providers must implement the technology to take advantage of federal incentives and avoid future penalties. In addition, they must be able to exchange the health information they collect with other providers and public health agencies. In rural and underserved areas, hospitals are turning to telehealth networks in order to deliver cost-effective services. Hospitals and other health care organizations utilize video conferencing technology to deliver education curriculums to health care professionals. The mobile health, or mhealth movement, is making it possible for patients to communicate with physician via their smart phones and

computers. While these providers have a plethora of broadband-intensive projects to rollout, the problem is they operate on extremely thin margins and are unable to secure funding.

As a BTOP recipient or broadband provider in general, it can be extremely beneficial for you to connect your healthcare CAIs to funding opportunities that will ultimately increase demand for your services. Fortunately, grantmakers primarily allocate funding based on the greatest need, which is consistent with the underserved areas targeted by the BTOP program. Funding options are available through multiple sources, including federal, state, private foundation, and corporate giving programs. The most important consideration to note is that at the federal level, funding tends to be cyclical as most programs are recycled on an annual basis. Once a program is announced, these CAIs will only have four to six weeks to respond with a proposal. The most important piece of the puzzle is to educate yourself on what is coming down the pipeline. With that in mind, the following page contains a small sample of grant programs that are anticipated to be available in FY2012 for your healthcare CAIs.

What are Community Anchor Institutions?

Schools, libraries, medical and healthcare providers, public safety entities, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations and agencies that provide outreach, access, equipment and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income, the unemployed, and the aged. *(Source: http://match.broadbandusa.gov/BTOPpartners/TypeDefinitions.htm)*

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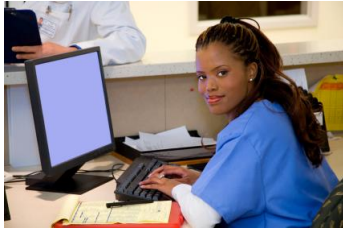
Nursing Education

Title: Nurse Education, Practice, Quality & Retention Program (NEPQR)

Funding Level: $750,000 over 3 years

Technology Funded: Distance learning, network equipment

Anticipated Deadline: January 2012

Telehealth

Title: Telehealth Resource Center Grant Program (TRCGP)

Funding Level: Over $1.1 million

Technology Funded: Telehealth, HIE, network equipment
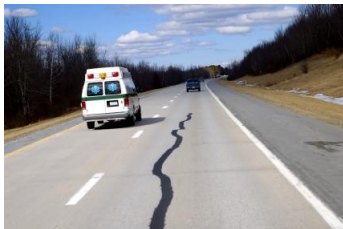
Anticipated Deadline: March 2012

Title: Telehealth Network Grant Program (TNGP)

Funding Level: $750,000 over 3 years

Technology Funded: Telehealth, HIE, network equipment

Anticipated Deadline: Prior to March 2012

School Health

Title: School Based Health Center Capital Program (SBHCC)

Funding Level: $500,000 over 2 years

Technology Funded: Telehealth, EHR, network equipment

Anticipated Deadline:
Phase I: Dec 2011
Phase II: Jan 2012

Rural Health & Community Development

Title: Community Facilities Grant Program

Funding Level: Up to 75% of project costs

Technology Funded: EHR, Telehealth, network equipment

Anticipated Deadline: Open all year-round

Title: Community Connect Grant Program

Funding Level: Up to $1.5 million

Technology Funded: Broadband infrastructure, end-user equipment

Anticipated Deadline: June 2012

Title: Rural Healthcare Services Outreach Grant Program

Funding Level: $450,000 over 3 years

Technology Funded: mhealth; Telehealth

Deadline: November 22, 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2011 Webcasts

- **October 11, 2011:** COPS Secure Our Schools Grants

- **October 20, 2011:** Distance Learning & Telemedicine Webcast Series, Part 1, *sponsored by Cisco*

November 2011 Webcasts

- **November 8, 2011:** IT Grants Forecast in the FY2012 Budget

- **November 16, 2011:** 2012 Higher Education Funding, *Sponsored by Dell*

- **November 17, 2011:** Aiming Higher: Funding Colleges and Universities with SIP Grants, *sponsored by Cisco*

- **November 29, 2011:** Funding Fire Prevention and Safety Initiatives

December 2011 Webcasts

- **December 8, 2011:** Distance Learning & Telemedicine Webcast Series, Part 2, *sponsored by Cisco*

- **December 13, 2011:** Grantwriting Series: Grants for Research and Development

Register for upcoming or view previous webcasts at
http://grantsofficeevents.webex.com

Strategic Grants

Intelligence Framework

As we enter the new 2012 funding cycle, it's clear that the grants landscape is in flux. Let our grant experts put together a custom *Strategic Grants Intelligence Framework* (for municipal and nonprofit clients as well as industry clients calling on those sectors) for your organization and provide you with a structured approach to building municipal and nonprofit budgets through grants.

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