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Building solid foundations: graduate students and researchers in the basic sciences and the library

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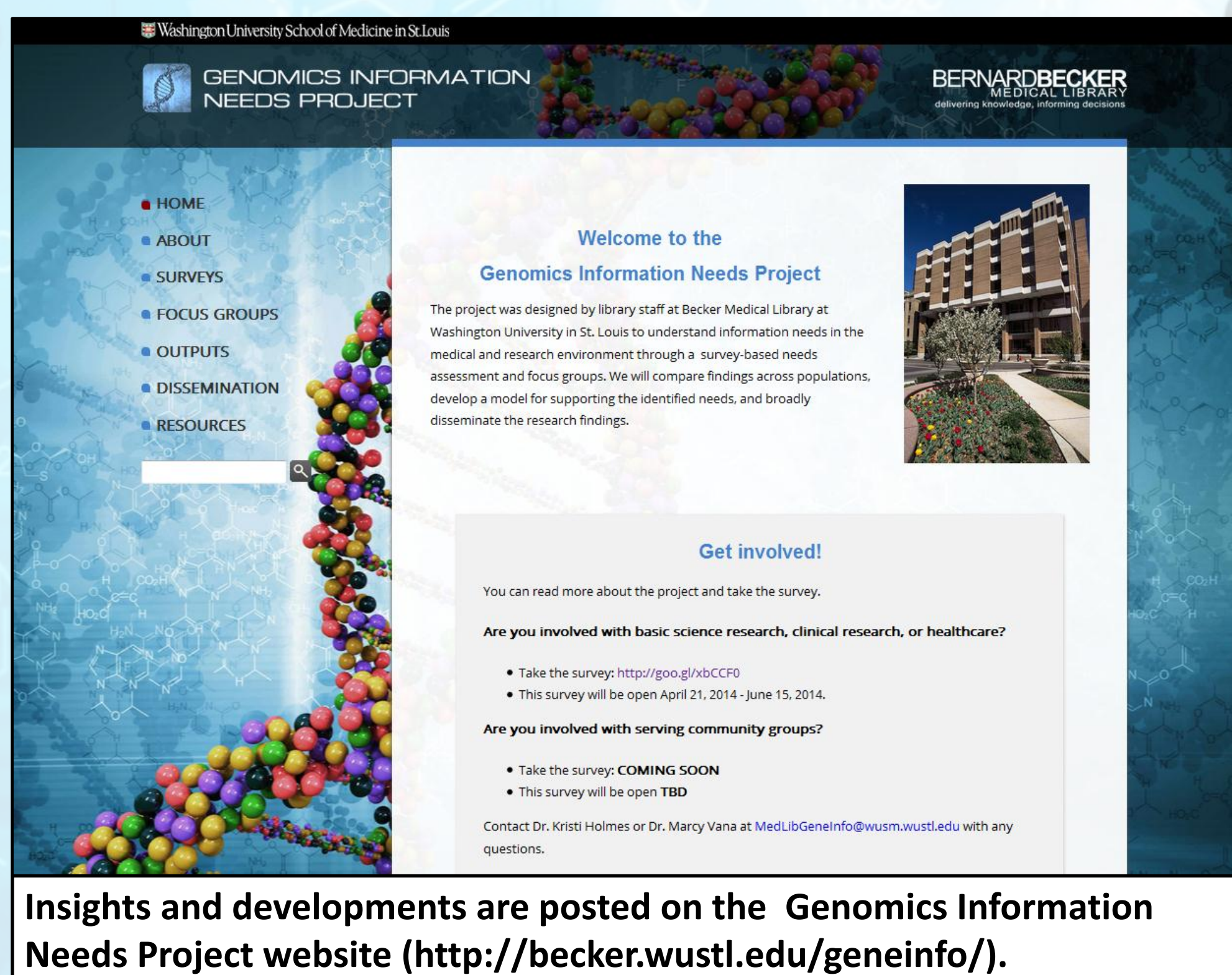
²Galter Health Sciences Library, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL

Objective

As graduate students and researchers in the basic sciences carry out their work, they can benefit from library services and resources. This project aims to provide librarians with insight into information needs of students and researchers at different points along their careers, and suggest possible ways to improve services, communication, and resources.

Methods

We are investigating the information needs of basic science graduate students and researchers through the ongoing Genomics Information Needs Project. Students and researchers are asked a series of survey questions to learn about their research background and genomic educational history, their database and software use and preference, their library use, and how they stay current with developments in their field, among other related topics.



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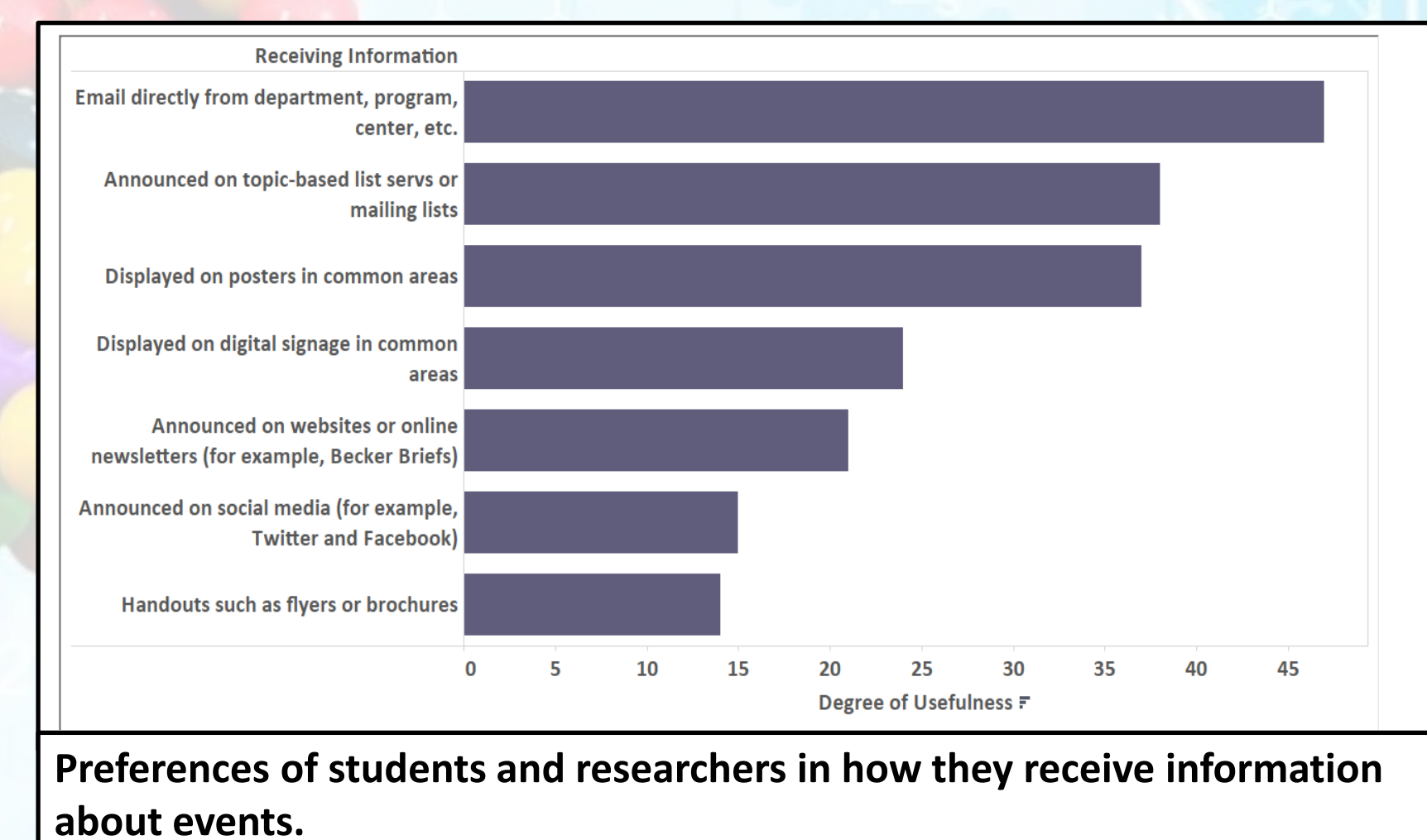
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Results

Basic science graduate students and researchers feel they benefit from a variety of library services and resources. A review of survey data from the ongoing Genomics Information Needs Project indicated that students and researchers desire support in areas such as:

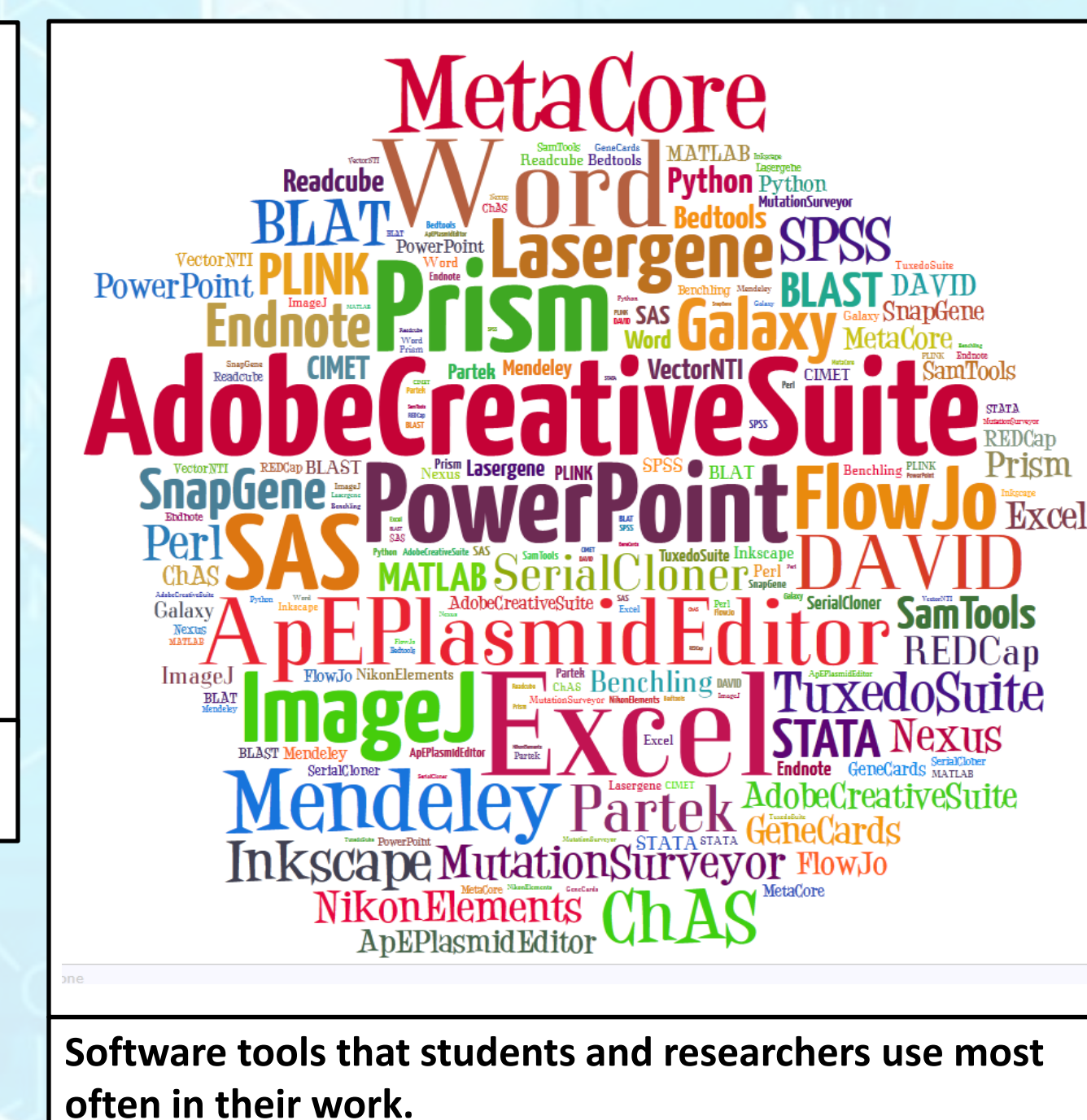
- assistance with statistics, measurement methods, and research design
- receiving software training
- accessing free software
- keeping track of developments in their field

The library has many options in fulfilling these needs, such as providing direct support, arranging training sessions through outside groups, or making connections with departments on campus to provide support to students.



Conclusions

Undertaking graduate studies and pursuing a research career in the basic sciences is not an easy task. Students and researchers face long hours working on difficult coursework or designing and carrying out experiments in the laboratory. They also face deep competition during their career. The library can support students and researchers by acting as a respite from the lab, offering sessions with insight on topics of interest, and supporting needs for certain database and software tools.



Software tools that students and researchers use most often in their work.

Type of Support	
Getting help with statistics, measurement methods and research design	
Software training	
Accessing free software in the library	
Keeping track of the latest developments in my field	
Finding and accessing public data sources	
Finding funding opportunities	
Selecting the most appropriate software for the task	
Accessing reduced-price software through library-managed group or site licenses	
Finding core research facilities	
Assistance with submitting data to repositories	
Finding biological samples in repositories	
Finding opportunities to present my research	
Finding collaborators	
Identifying various and appropriate publishing options for manuscripts, presentations, and posters (for example: journals, or repositories)	
Assessing and reporting the impact of my research	
Complying with public access mandates (such as the NIH Public Access Policy)	
Keeping track of publications (for example: using reference management software such as Papers or EndNote)	
Finding information about clinical trials and clinical trial data	

Types of support that students and researchers are “very interested” in receiving.

<h2>Topics of Interest</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics for Genome Research Analysis of the Transcriptome Current application of genomics in diagnosis and treatment Genetic Variation and Disease The Genetic Basis of Disease Emerging Uses of Genomics Data Epigenetics Genome Sequencing Technologies Computational Genomics Data and Research Software Genomes and Genome Browsers Functional Genomics via Induced Pluripotent Stem (iPS) cells Genome Engineering Germline Genomics Susceptibility Genetics Delivery of complex health information to the public Pharmacogenomics Molecular Biology/Genetics Refresher Case Studies (various topics) Somatic Genomics Consumer Genomics (including direct to consumer tests) Research Ethics Proteomics and Mass Spectroscopy Copy Number Variation Genomics of the Microbiome Metabolomics Consent and Tissue Banking 	
<p>Topics that students and researchers are “very interested” in learning more about.</p>	

For more information this data, visit the Genomics Information Needs Project website:
<http://becker.wustl.edu/geneinfo/>

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