

The U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Notice of Funding Opportunity: Program for the Study of Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII).

Federal Awarding Agency:	Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence & Research (INR)
Program Office:	INR's Office of Analytic Outreach
Funding Opportunity Title:	Program for the Study of Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII)
Funding Opportunity Number:	SFOP0005213
CFDA Number:	19.300
Application Deadline (Due Date):	Submit through SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov by 11.59 PM Eastern Standard Time, Friday, July 27, 2018
Total Amount Available:	\$2,000,000 pending the availability of funds

Please read the entire announcement before addressing inquiries to the Office of Analytic Outreach. If you have responded to previous notices of Title VIII funding opportunities, we encourage you to read this entire announcement because application requirements may have changed.

The Department of State invites applications from U.S. organizations with interest and expertise in conducting research and training to implement programs concerning the countries of Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union. Institutions of higher education or U.S.-based non-profit organizations that meet the provisions outlined in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC (501)(c) (3) may apply.

The purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is to inform potential applicant organizations of programmatic, procedural, and funding information for the annual grant competition for the Program for the Study of Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII). Fiscal Year 2017 Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia resources are expected to provide the funds for this funding opportunity. Grantees will receive funds before September 30, 2018. **This notice is subject to the availability of funding.**

This notice contains seven parts: Part I-Statement of Purpose, Part II-Federal Award Information, Part III-Eligibility, Part IV-Application Instructions, Part V-Forms, Part VI-Review Process and Criteria, and Part VII-Award Notification.

Part I - Statement of Purpose

Authority:

Grant-making authority for the Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII) is contained in the Soviet-Eastern European Research and Training Act of 1983, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4501-4508) ("the Act").

Purpose:

In the Act, Congress declared its finding that independently verified, factual knowledge about the countries of Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union is critical to the national security of the United States, the furtherance of U.S. national interests in the conduct of

foreign relations, and the prudent management of U.S. domestic affairs. Furthermore, Congress found that the development and maintenance of U.S. expertise in these regions depends upon a national capability for advanced research by highly trained specialists. Such specialists constitute a national resource potentially available for service in and out of government. In the Act, Congress also declared that providing a stable and dedicated source of financial support for Title VIII functions, beyond federal, state, local, regional, and private sector funding, is critical to maintaining this important research and training on a long-term, national scale.

Through the Title VIII Program, the U.S. government, in the interest of national security, funds organizations to help develop and maintain this critical expertise.

Program Goals:

The State Department administers the Title VIII Program to attain the following goals in alignment with the legislation:

- a. Develop, support, and deepen American expertise in the countries of Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union.
- b. Develop American proficiency in the critical languages of Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union.
- c. Bring regional and language expertise to the service of the U.S. government and contribute to U.S. knowledge and national capability.
- d. Advance U.S. foreign policy goals and foster international collaboration and understanding.

Through open, merit-based competitions, the Title VIII Program awards grants to American universities, institutions of higher education, and non-governmental organizations. Project proposals must be national in scope and involve an open, merit-based recruitment of fellowship recipients. All research proposals must explicitly support U.S. foreign policy and should promote analytic outreach and engagement with State Department policymakers and intelligence community analysts.

Eligible Research Programs:

The Title VIII Program supports research that addresses U.S. policy interests in the region, broadly defined. Research on the following countries is eligible for funding under this NOFO: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. (Travel to certain countries may be subject to restrictions due to unforeseen world events, statutory restrictions, U.S. embassy requirements, or general security concerns.)

The Title VIII review committees will give the highest priority to research programs that focus on current political, economic, security, democratic, or governance challenges relevant to U.S. foreign policy. Historical or cultural research that promotes understanding of current events in the region and makes an explicit connection to policy-relevant issues, broadly defined, may be competitive.

Critical Language Training:

The National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) is a U.S. government interagency effort to increase significantly the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages. In furtherance of the NSLI, Title VIII supports funding for U.S. graduate students to pursue advanced

Russian language study and as appropriate, studies of other languages of the independent states of the former Soviet Union.

Commitment to Government Service:

The Title VIII Program does not require that students or researchers make a commitment to federal service; however, competitive proposals may include innovative initiatives that promote collaboration and information sharing with the U.S. government and/or encourage pursuit of U.S. government career opportunities and internships.

Part II. Federal Award Information

Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this announcement	Approximately \$2,000,000
Anticipated number of awards	1-10
Expected amounts of individual awards	Awards depend upon the availability of funding, scope of work, number of proposed fellowships, and volume of activities. Awards granted in 2017 ranged from \$150,000 to \$650,000.
Anticipated start dates for new awards	September 2018, pending availability of funds
Anticipated period of performance	Project activities may extend from 1 – 3 years.
Funding Instrument Type	Grant
Type of Funding	Fiscal Year 2017 Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia

Table 1-Federal Award Information

Federal Award General Conditions:

1. Title VIII funds will support U.S. citizens and U.S. institutions, only.
2. Title VIII funds will support and sustain American expertise in the countries of Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union through language training and/or comprehensive research opportunities focused on U.S. foreign policy-relevant topics.
3. Title VIII funds will support graduate-level and post-doctoral advanced study/research. Students completing a bachelor's degree may receive funds for language training, provided they intend to pursue a graduate degree.
4. Title VIII funds will support training in advanced Russian language and as appropriate, studies of other languages of the independent states of the former Soviet Union.
5. Title VIII grant recipients are encouraged to serve as speakers in analytic exchanges and other similar seminars and events organized by INR's Office of Analytic Outreach to share their expertise and facilitate collaboration between U.S. government and non-government

specialists on the countries of Eastern Europe, the independent states of the former Soviet Union, and related cross-border areas and issues.

6. Title VIII grantee institutions will vet proposed research topics with organizations and individuals with U.S. foreign policy expertise within and outside the U.S. government to ensure U.S. foreign policy relevance.
7. Title VIII funds will not support journals, newsletters, or other periodical publications.
8. Title VIII grant recipients will facilitate access for U.S. scholars to research institutions, personnel, archives, documentation, and other research and training resources located in Eastern Europe and the independent states of the former Soviet Union (where applicable).
9. Title VIII grantee institutions will communicate regularly with the Department of State through formal program reports, financial reports, and quarterly updates, as stated in this NOFO.
10. Title VIII grantee institutions will inform all end-users (scholars) of the Title VIII program's authority and purpose and will acknowledge the U.S. Department of State as the funding source. The Department of State allows grantees to exercise judgment in cases where publicly acknowledging the funding source could hamper research efforts or jeopardize the personal safety of scholars.
11. Title VIII grantee institutions will provide data on end-users and activities in an electronically accessible format for the Title VIII Alumni Database.

All applicants must explicitly state in writing their understanding of and commitment to the Title VIII purpose, objectives, and conditions.

Funding Acknowledgement and Marketing Policy:

The Department of State wants to insure that programs implemented through grants suitably recognize U.S. government support and, to the extent practicable, incorporate the U.S. flag and/or the Department of State logo. Grantee institutions must make all end-users aware of the purpose of the Title VIII program, source of the funds, and acknowledge the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research as the program's sponsor. In addition, Title VIII-supported research products, advertising, recruitment tools, announcements, and other related electronic or written communications must include the Department of State logo. The Department allows grantees to exercise judgment in cases where publicly acknowledging the funding source could hamper research or jeopardize the personal safety of end users. The Grants Officer must approve any exceptions to waive the branding requirement.

Availability of Funds:

INR's Financial Management Officer must allocate and commit funds through all applicable authorities before successful proposals receive award funds. INR and the Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM) Grants Officer will ensure grantees meet all applicable requirements prior to authorizing the commitment of funds.

The Department of State cannot commit funds from future appropriations. However, a single year's appropriation may fund a multiple-year project. This NOFO allows for periods of performance from

1-3 years. No grantee may extend the period of performance beyond the period specified under the terms of the grant award without the Grants Officer's approval.

Successful applicants will receive a Form DS_1909 Federal Assistance Award (FAA) coversheet from the Grants Officer. The FAA will include all of the award specifics that accompany Department of State federal assistance. The FAA and the original proposal, with any subsequent modifications, shall be the only binding authorizing documents between the recipient and the U.S. government. The Grants Officer will sign the FAA and send it electronically to the grantee's authorizing representative listed on the SF 424.

III. Eligibility

U.S. Institutions of higher education or non-profit organizations that meet the provisions outlined in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC (501)(c) (3) may apply. Organizations may submit one (1) application in response to this NOFO.

Current Title VIII grantees are eligible to respond to this NOFO as a new funding opportunity. Grantees may not request, via this announcement, cost amendments, no-cost amendments, or extension for current awards.

IV. Application Instructions

Submission:

In 2017, the Department of State transitioned all of its federal assistance awards from GrantSolutions to the Domestic State Assistance Management System (SAMS Domestic).

Applicants may submit proposals electronically via SAMS Domestic (<https://mygrants.service-now.com>) or via Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) by 11.59 p.m. EST, **Friday, July 27, 2018**. INR will not accept proposals submitted via email, fax, the postal system, delivery companies, or couriers.

Applicants using SAMS Domestic for the first time should complete a "user organization registration". To register with SAMS Domestic, go to <https://mygrants.service-now.com> and follow the "create an account" link.

Applicants must have an active D-U-N-S® number and a current System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registration before you may submit an application. Any applicant listed on the SAM Excluded Parties List System is not eligible to apply for an award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 OMB - Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension. Verify registrations well in advance of the application deadline to ensure that they are active and accurate.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to initiate the electronic application process early and to submit proposals well before the due date. This will help address any problems with submissions prior to the application deadline. INR will not make exceptions for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps to submit applications to SAMS Domestic or www.grants.gov.

For assistance with Grants.gov, please call the Contact Center at **1-800-518-4726** or email support@grants.gov.

For assistance with SAMS Domestic, please contact the ILMS help desk at **1-888-313-4567** or through the ILMS Self Service Portal (<https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>).

Consultation period:

This NOFO offers a consultation period during which applicants may address technical questions regarding their application. The consultation period for this announcement is **July 9-15, 2018**. During the consultation period, applicants may list all questions in a single email and submit them to TitleVIII@state.gov. The subject line should read, "Title VIII 2018 NOFO Consultation Questions". Please note that once the NOFO deadline has passed, State Department staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process is complete.

Before you submit your application:

- Check the submission package, ensure all required forms and necessary attachments are present, page number and font size requirements are correct, and all documents are in the order described in the checklist below (see Table #4).
- Check spelling, check budget calculations, and confirm due dates.

Formatting and Additional Documents:

Please submit all forms in PDF format and upload them individually into Grants.gov or SAMS-Domestic. (Do not submit the forms as a single document.) Please number all pages, including budgets and attachments. Format all documents for printing to 8½" x 11" paper. All documents should be double-spaced, with noted exceptions, and adhere to the page limits in the checklist below. Please use Times New Roman font (12 point) with 1-inch margins. (Captions and footnotes may be 10-point TNR font.) Exceeding the page limit will not improve the competitiveness of your application. To ensure that all applications receive an equal evaluation, the review committees will review from the first page of each section up to the page limit, and no further. INR reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation.

V. Forms:

- **Mandatory Standard Forms:** SF-424; SF-424A, S-424B, and SF-LLL
- **SF-424:** Must include EIN and D-U-N-S Number. Please note – the authorized representative designated on the SF-424 will have sole signatory authorization to accept funds for this grant. Applicants can find instructions for completing the standard forms on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions.html>).
- **SF-LLL:** If your organization engages in lobbying the U.S. government, or pays another entity to lobby on your behalf, you must complete form **SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**.
- **Project Narrative:** INR strongly suggests that applicants structure the proposal to address all of the review criteria outlined in Part VI.
- **Executive Summary:** This is the narrative summary of the proposal and must include an overview of proposed work, the funds the applicant is requesting from the Department of State, and any funds or other support (cost sharing) the applicant and/or third party intends to provide, if applicable. Please note: Applicants must name third parties supporting the proposed program. The narrative must also include an estimated aggregate total of end-users, breaking out, as appropriate, the number of end-users in the following three categories: Research, Language Training, and Combined Research and Language Training.

- **Financial Management Survey:** The review committees will use the financial management survey to assess the organization's capacity to manage federal grant funds.
- **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA):** If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach the current agreement. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.
- **Scope of Work/Timeline:** This section must describe all proposed program components, linking each to the specific Title VIII goal(s). It should contain any milestones, reports, deliverables, and products that the grantee recipient will provide.
- **Key Personnel:** Include short bios that demonstrate relevant professional experience. Do not include full CVs in this section. Applicants must include contact info for the primary investigator (PI), assistant PI (if applicable), program managers (if applicable), and the authorizing official.
- **Budget Line Item:** The line-item budget will breakout costs under each of the nine main categories of the SF424A: Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Construction, Other, and Indirect. The budget must be responsive to the solicitation guidelines and reflect, as accurately as possible, costs associated with program activities outlined in the proposal. Additionally, provide any cost sharing and matching funds with the same level of detail as the federal funds (where applicable). Applicants must use the following format for line item budgets:

		Requested Federal Funds	Cost-share by Applicant	Program Total
A	Personnel	0.00		0.00
B	Fringe Benefits	0.00		0.00
C	Travel	0.00		0.00
D	Equipment	0.00		0.00
E	Supplies	0.00		0.00
F	Contractual	0.00		0.00
G	Construction	0.00		0.00
H	Other Direct Costs	0.00		0.00
I	Total Direct Charges	0.00		0.00
J	Total Indirect Costs	0.00		0.00
K	Total Project Costs			
L	Cost Share (If applicable)			

Table 2 - Line Item Budget OMB format

- **Budget Narrative:** The budget narrative should elaborate on the detailed budget, not simply repeat with words what is in the numerical budget and communicate any information that might not be readily apparent in the budget. If the program requests a multiple year period of performance, you must provide a budget and budget justification for each year.
- **Budget Overview:** The overview will depict program costs, administrative costs, number of participants, and costs per participant; to include any third party cost sharing (if applicable). Use the format of the following sample table:

	Title VIII	Cost Sharing	3rd Party Cost Sharing	Total
I. Program Costs	400,000	150,000	0	550000
Program Cost Per Participant	5,333	2,000	0	7333
II. Administrative Costs	125,000	75000	0	200000
Admin. Cost Per Participant	1666	1000	0	2666
III. Total Costs	525000	225000	0	750000
Approx. cost per participant	7000	3000	0	10000
Approx. number of participants	75			

Table 3 - Budget Overview

Required Documents Checklist		
Required documents in submission order	Format	File name
SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance	Grants.gov form	SF424.pdf
SF-424A Budget Information – Non Construction Programs	“	SF424A.pdf
SF-424B Assurances-Non Construction Programs	“	SF424B.pdf
SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (If applicable)	"	SFLLL.pdf
Project Narrative - 15-page maximum – double-spaced Times New Roman font. INR strongly suggests that applicants structure the proposal to address each review criteria. (Part VI)	PDF	Proposal.pdf
Monitoring Plan – 1-page maximum , double-spaced	PDF	Monitor.pdf
Evaluation Plan – 1-page maximum, double-spaced	PDF	Evaluation.pdf
Executive Summary – 2-pages maximum, double-spaced	PDF	ExecSum.pdf
Financial Management Survey	PDF	Finance.pdf
Scope of Work, double-spaced and Project Timeline (Table or Bullet format) - 2-page maximum	PDF	SOW.pdf
Budget – Line Item w/OMB approved budget categories (Table#2)	PDF	Budget_Line.pdf
Budget Narrative – (Table or Bullet format)	PDF	Budget_Nar.pdf
Budget Overview – (See Table #3)	PDF	Budget_View.pdf
Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)	PDF	NICRA.pdf
Single or A-133 Audit (Current)	PDF	Audit.pdf
Key Personnel – 2-page maximum, single-spaced	PDF	Bios.pdf
Appendix – The appendix may include letters of support, safety and security plans, additional CV's, organization charts, etc. Applicants may consolidate these documents into one appendix with an accompanying table of contents and numbered pages.		

Table 4 - Required Documents Checklist

VI Review Process and Criteria

Review Process:

Title VIII, as amended (codified at 22 U.S.C. 4501-4508) established within the Department of State an Advisory Committee, composed of the Secretaries of State (Chair), Defense, and Education, and the Presidents of the Association of American Universities and the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. The Advisory Committee recommends grants for proposals that will advance the purpose and objectives of the Title VIII Program. The Advisory Committee gives the highest priority to organizations with demonstrated expertise in conducting research and foreign language training on the countries of Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union and in disseminating the results of such research. In making its recommendations, the Advisory Committee emphasizes the development of stable, long-term research and foreign language training programs.

The Program Office will screen all proposals for technical eligibility at the close of this funding opportunity. Proposals that are incomplete or do not adhere to the stated guidelines will be ineligible for further review.

The Program Office, a Department of State grant review panel, and the Title VIII Advisory Committee will review all eligible proposals. The State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser and/or other Department entities may also review proposals. The Advisory Committee will make funding recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. The Assistant Secretary for INR has the final authority to recommend an applicant for funding. Signatory authority for grants resides with the Grants Officer.

Review Criteria:

The application review panels will evaluate how well the proposals respond to the purpose, objectives, and guidelines in this NOFO, the overall quality of the proposal, the applicant organization's capacity to implement the award, and the effectiveness and reasonableness of the proposed budget. The panelists will also evaluate the strength of the monitoring and evaluation plans. Competitive applications will be technically accurate and adhere to the NOFO submission guidelines. The review panels will use the following criteria to assess the Title VIII proposals and applications:

1. Overall Quality of Program Plan:

Competitive proposals will state the proposed program goals clearly and link them to the Title VIII purpose and objectives. Proposals will describe the research, foreign language training, or combined research and foreign language program; the number of anticipated scholars and/or students; the recruitment process; and the anticipated results. The proposal will also provide a calendar or timeline of major program activities, and clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of partner organizations.

2. Institutional Capacity:

Competitive proposals will reflect the applicant's expertise and knowledge in managing federal grants and in conducting nationwide competitive award programs. To ensure the academic quality and the policy relevance of the research and foreign language training programs, personnel and selection committees should have the appropriate level of expertise to achieve the proposed program's goals and include representatives from the academic community and experts in the fields of U.S. foreign policy and national security. Do not include CVs in this section. Please refer to the required document checklist in Part V – Forms.

3. Cost-Effectiveness:

Competitive proposals will ensure that direct administrative costs in the proposal budget are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and relative to the scope of the proposed program. If cost sharing is part of the applicant's proposal, the applicant must provide the sources of the match and the amount of the cost share and it will be included in the grant agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, the grantee must provide documentation of any expenses claimed as contributions or paid by the federal government. Applicants should justify all items deemed necessary and appropriate in the Budget Narrative. Refer to 2 CFR §200 for applicable administrative requirements and cost principles.

4. Monitoring Plan:

Proposals must include a sound plan to monitor the program's effectiveness. The proposal must specify the methodology used to measure the degree to which the outputs and outcomes fulfill Title VIII objectives. Grantees will submit monitoring results in the quarterly financial and program reports and as part of the final report upon completion of the program. Monitoring should describe successes and challenges in the program's operating environment, and any project setbacks or failures. Honest and accurate reporting of success and failure provides the Program Office an opportunity to learn and understand the trends that could influence future Title VIII Programs. Successful monitoring depends heavily on each grantee setting clear and measurable milestones and benchmarks that will help the applicant achieve the Title VIII's objectives. Program monitoring includes ensuring end-users receive adequate support throughout the course of their fellowships to meet Title VIII goals.

5. Evaluation Plan:

Proposals must include a sound plan for evaluating success in achieving Title VIII Program's goals and objectives. Evaluation mechanisms should track scholar progress before, during, and after the program to assess effectiveness. Evaluation techniques may be in any form; however, comprehensive assessments will use both quantitative (e.g., hard data, statistics) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, surveys, and observations) data, as appropriate, to measure and report results.

Foreign language study programs should provide criteria for evaluation, including levels of instruction, degrees of intensiveness, facilities provided, and proficiency measures (including pre- and post-testing); instructors' qualifications; and per capita costs. Indicators should provide a clear means of measuring achievement to help assess performance or to reflect changes. The evaluation plan and narrative should provide detailed timelines for collecting data and reporting short and long-term outcomes. Competitive proposals will provide evaluation plans that assess all levels of outcomes. Applicants should include a description of their evaluation methodologies along with their evaluation plans.

6. Reporting:

The Department of State requires that grantees submit quarterly financial and performance reports, as well as final financial and performance reports within 90 days after the grant period ends. Reporting will include scholars' activities, recruiting and selection methods, program evaluations, and scholar research papers. Grantees should structure the collection of recruitment and scholarship data to capture and provide demographic overviews of Title VIII recipients (end-users).

Grantees will immediately report to the Grants Officer any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that may materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the award. Grantees are not limited to quarterly reporting and may report favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at a lower cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned. Proposals should identify the individual who would be responsible for quarterly reporting.

Grantees will provide the Program Office with data on end-users and activities in an electronically accessible format for the Title VIII Alumni Database.

The Grants Officer will provide directions to successful applicants for any additional reporting requirements.

VII. Award Notification

Notification of Successful Awards or Unsuccessful Applications:

Upon completing the application review, the Title VIII Advisory Committee will make funding recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and are contingent upon his approval. The Committee will hold a public meeting to announce its funding recommendations. The Program Office will publish the date, time, and location of the public meeting, along with registration instructions in the *Federal Register*, 30 days in advance of the meeting. The meeting is open to the public, commensurate with available seating.

The Program Office will provide the Advisory Committees' funding recommendations via email to any applicant unable to attend the public meeting.

The Grants Officer will write, sign, award, and administer the ensuing grants.

To access the *Federal Register* go to <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

Disclaimer:

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Department of State, nor does it commit the Department of State to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Department of State reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If INR selects a proposal for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award.

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