

2024-2027

STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING PLAN

**CONNECTING
FOR STUDENT
SUCCESS**



**COLLÈGE
AURORA
COLLEGE**

TOWARDS A UNIQUE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY IN ARCTIC EDUCATION

As a public post-secondary institution in Canada's Northwest Territories (NWT), Aurora College is a cornerstone of education and applied research in the North. With campuses and research centres in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife, the College offers diverse programming, ranging from trades and apprenticeship training to academic upgrading, certificate and diploma programs, and degree offerings in partnership with other institutions. Aurora College is committed to providing quality education, applied research, and training that are relevant to the needs of NWT communities and foster personal, cultural, and professional growth among its students, faculty and staff.

Aurora College's mission is to "demonstrate leadership in the delivery of relevant and meaningful education, research and reconciliation actions rooted in strong connections to Northern land, traditions, communities, and people." This mission is central as the College transforms into a polytechnic university — for the North, by the North — creating equitable opportunities for all NWT residents to help them reach their full potential and compete globally.

The College's vision emphasizes respect, inclusiveness, diversity, and innovation to reach the highest standards of academic and research integrity and ethics. Indigenous knowledge and practices will be incorporated into curricula and operations to ensure education and research are deeply embedded with the cultural and environmental contexts unique to the many NWT regions. By fostering applied research potential in the North, Aurora College aims to be recognized as a leading post-secondary institution whose applied research and teaching programs focus on the needs of Northerners. Collaboration with other Arctic universities will continue to create a comprehensive education and research portfolio that enhances opportunities and outcomes for all Northerners.

The transformation into a polytechnic university will yield significant benefits, including expanded research capabilities and promoting cutting edge studies that address Northern challenges and opportunities. This expansion will contribute to the global knowledge base and will directly benefit local communities through solutions tailored to their

environment and worldviews. As a polytechnic university, Aurora College's range of programs will integrate practical skills with academic knowledge and experiential learning opportunities in applied research, preparing students to meet the demands of a modern workforce, particularly in key Northern sectors such as natural resources, remediation, social and health services, education environmental science, and technology.

To prepare for transformation, Aurora College's governance structure has evolved to a tricameral system, consisting of an independent Board of Governors, an Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council, and an Academic Council, which ensures that governance reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of Northern communities. This new governance model will promote greater autonomy and responsiveness to the territorial and regional demands, positioning the NWT as a global leader in Arctic education.

VERS UNE UNIVERSITÉ POLYTECHNIQUE UNIQUE EN SON GENRE DANS LE DOMAINE DE L'ÉDUCATION DANS L'ARCTIQUE

Etablissement public d'enseignement postsecondaire aux Territoires du Nord-Ouest (TNO), le Collège Aurora est un pilier de l'éducation et de la recherche appliquée dans le Nord. Possédant des campus et des centres de recherche à Fort Smith, Inuvik et Yellowknife, le Collège offre des programmes diversifiés, allant des métiers et de la formation en apprentissage au perfectionnement scolaire, en passant par des programmes de certificats et de diplômes, et des diplômes en partenariat avec d'autres établissements. Le Collège Aurora s'engage à offrir une éducation de qualité, des activités de recherche appliquée et une formation qui répondent aux besoins des collectivités des TNO et qui favorisent l'épanouissement personnel, culturel et professionnel de ses étudiants, de ses enseignants et de son personnel.

La mission du Collège Aurora est de « faire preuve de leadership dans la prestation de programmes de formation et de recherche pertinents et utiles, fondés sur des liens solides avec les terres, les traditions, les collectivités et les résidents du Nord, tout en favorisant la réconciliation ». Cette mission est essentielle à l'heure où le collège se transforme en université polytechnique créée pour le Nord et par le Nord, ce qui générera des occasions équitables pour tous les Ténos afin de les aider à atteindre leur plein potentiel

et à être compétitifs à l'échelle mondiale.

La vision du Collège met l'accent sur le respect, l'inclusion, la diversité et l'innovation afin d'atteindre les normes les plus élevées d'intégrité et d'éthique dans l'enseignement et la recherche. Les connaissances et les pratiques autochtones seront intégrées aux programmes d'études et aux activités afin de garantir que l'enseignement et la recherche soient profondément ancrés dans les contextes culturels et environnementaux propres aux nombreuses régions des TNO. En ouvrant le potentiel de recherche appliquée dans le Nord, le Collège Aurora vise à être reconnu comme un établissement postsecondaire de premier plan dont les programmes de recherche appliquée et d'enseignement sont axés sur les besoins des Ténos. La collaboration avec d'autres universités de l'Arctique continuera de créer un portefeuille complet d'enseignement et de recherche qui multipliera les occasions et améliorera les résultats pour tous les Ténos.

La transformation en université polytechnique apportera des avantages importants, notamment l'élargissement des capacités de recherche et la promotion d'études nordiques avant-gardistes qui tiennent compte des enjeux et des occasions propres au Nord. Cet élargissement des capacités contribuera à enrichir la base

de connaissances mondiale et profitera directement aux collectivités locales en proposant des solutions adaptées à leur environnement et à leur vision du monde. En tant qu'université polytechnique, le Collège Aurora offrira une gamme de programmes qui permettra de combiner des compétences pratiques avec des connaissances académiques et des occasions d'apprentissage expérientiel en recherche appliquée, ce qui préparera les étudiants à répondre aux exigences d'une main-d'œuvre moderne, en particulier dans les secteurs clés du Nord, comme les ressources naturelles, l'assainissement de sites, les services sociaux et de santé, l'éducation, les sciences de l'environnement et la technologie.

En vue de cette transformation, la structure de gouvernance du Collège Aurora a évolué pour devenir un système tricaméral, composé d'un Conseil des gouverneurs, d'un Conseil des détenteurs du savoir traditionnel et d'une Commission des études indépendants, ce qui garantit que la gouvernance reflète les divers besoins et perspectives des collectivités du Nord. Ce nouveau modèle de gouvernance favorisera une plus grande autonomie et une plus grande capacité à répondre aux demandes territoriales et régionales, ce qui permettra aux TNO de se positionner en tant que leader mondial de l'éducation dans l'Arctique.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEMM AT AURORA COLLEGE – PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES	1
STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT (SEMM) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	2
SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIC ENROLMENT AND DECISION MAKING	4
CONNECTING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS.....	4
STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING (SEMM) LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE	4
GOALS, STRATEGIES & TACTICS	6
Goal 1	6
Goal 2	9
Goal 3	11
MEASURING SUCCESS – METRICS.....	14

SEMM AT AURORA COLLEGE – PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Aurora College has campuses in Fort Smith, Inuvik and Yellowknife, 19 community learning centres, and a growing population of distance students across the Northwest Territories. The college offers trades and apprenticeship, certificate, diploma and degree programs, and a broad spectrum of continuing education courses. Aurora College's research division, Aurora Research Institute (ARI), supports and engages in applied research across the NWT based out of three research centers: Western Arctic Research Centre, North Slave Research Centre, and South Slave Research Centre.

Aurora College implemented its first Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) plan in the spring of 2022, focusing on student recruitment, enrolment and persistence. This plan was developed after a lengthy environmental scan, student, staff and faculty engagement, and under the support and guidance of an expert in strategic enrolment management. The SEM plan has been the responsibility of each Aurora College staff and faculty member, guided by the Strategic Enrolment Management Leadership Committee. Much work has been accomplished to meet these first goals, with specific focus on admission and registration processes, and engagement with students to seek feedback about their experiences at Aurora College.

Issues were identified at the end of the first plan:

- Clean data is challenging to obtain, preventing sufficient data analysis and identification of trends. Absence of data impacts Aurora College's ability to make strategic directions.
- The number of territorial residents applying for Aurora College programs has decreased. The number of students registering for distance education has increased. The number of international applications has increased.
- Between 60-69% of Aurora College students are Indigenous. Indigenous and international students express the need for culturally safe spaces and a sense of community within the college.
- Direct from high school students continue to comprise less than 10% of the Aurora College student population. High school graduation rates in the Northwest Territories are 56% compared to the national graduation rate of 84%. In some small communities, this rate is 38%. Northwest Territories population and birth rates have not increased substantially in recent years.
- Great strides have been made in the application process, but students continue to express a lack of satisfaction with registration processes and housing.

STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT (SEMM) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

An evaluation of the 2021-2024 SEM plan was shared with staff and faculty. Focus groups were held with staff and faculty in March 2024, to seek feedback on the current plan, identify gaps, and confirm priorities. As recruitment is a key pillar of strategic enrolment management (SEM), it was felt that marketing should also be a core part of the next plan (SEMM).

Feedback from the staff and faculty focus groups identified that this next plan should:

- Be realistic. Reduce the number of goals and focus on what can be accomplished.
- Improve our ability to gather, analyze and report data to inform decisions about student recruitment, enrolment and persistence.
- Focus on increasing student numbers.
- Support improving our admission and registration processes and student persistence.
- Reflect current progress in implementing the TRC Calls to Action.
- Explore community-based learning options.

The SEMM Leadership Committee met weekly from April-June to draft goals, strategies and tactics based on these suggestions. This draft document was once again taken to staff and faculty for their feedback via focus groups and surveys. Goals and strategies, while numbered, are not listed in priority. Many strategies and tactics overlap. It is the complementary nature of these strategies and tactics that will promote success in strategic enrollment planning and marketing implementation.

Aurora College's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is the foundation of SEMM and builds on these specific strategic pillars and priorities:

- Academic and Research Excellence
 - Strengthen pathway options and transitional supports for all students to continue post-secondary education.
- **Learning Centered**
 - Strengthen and expand holistic learner support.
 - Ensure support and advising are consistent for all learners throughout their student life cycle.
 - Ensure programming, services and supports provide equitable and meaningful opportunities for Indigenous learners.
 - Provide a culturally safe and supportive learning environment for all.
 - Continue to strengthen learner-staff relationships to support academic success.
 - Demonstrate a college-wide-learner-centered approach through cross-departmental collaboration.

- Increase the availability of alternative learning pathways and supports to promote learner success.
- **Connections**
 - Maintain an open, welcoming, and respectful community within our institution.
 - Enhance our presence and visibility among NWT Primary and Secondary students to encourage interest in Aurora College programs.
 - Identify and promote the unique strengths and attractions of attending Aurora College in the NWT.
 - Create a clear pathway for potential students within communities to succeed in post-secondary programming and achieve their goals.
- **Organizational Effectiveness**
 - Create thriving campus locations and community learning centres that leverage the unique opportunities at each site.
 - Explore additional options and availability for students in campus communities, that support housing and childcare needs.
 - Expand, increase, and support processes to provide communication to and from internal and external stakeholders focused on institutional vision and direction.
 - Demonstrate responsive actions to the changing needs and opportunities of northern communities who seek to provide growth opportunities for their residents.
 - Modify and establish internal systems, structures, and support to allow for the institution's continued growth.

The SEMM plan also aligns with these additional key strategic Aurora College documents:

- 2021-2024 Academic Plan
- 2021-2026 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIC ENROLMENT AND DECISION MAKING

As Aurora College continues to transition into a vibrant polytechnic university, aims to grow its student population, and continues to provide quality supports to allow students to persist to completion, several factors will need to be considered to meet enrolment and persistence targets:

- Aurora College must have the staff and faculty to provide the services, resources, and programs that students need and expect;
- Available housing is a fundamental pre-requisite to student success; and
- The demand for additional student services and resources means funding formulas must also change to allow for this increase.

CONNECTING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

SEMM at Aurora College reflects a **framework of ways of knowing, being and doing** to increase student enrolment and to ensure **quality student experiences**, from inquiry to completion. SEMM is a **collaborative** effort with all staff, faculty, divisions, programs, community learning centres and campuses.

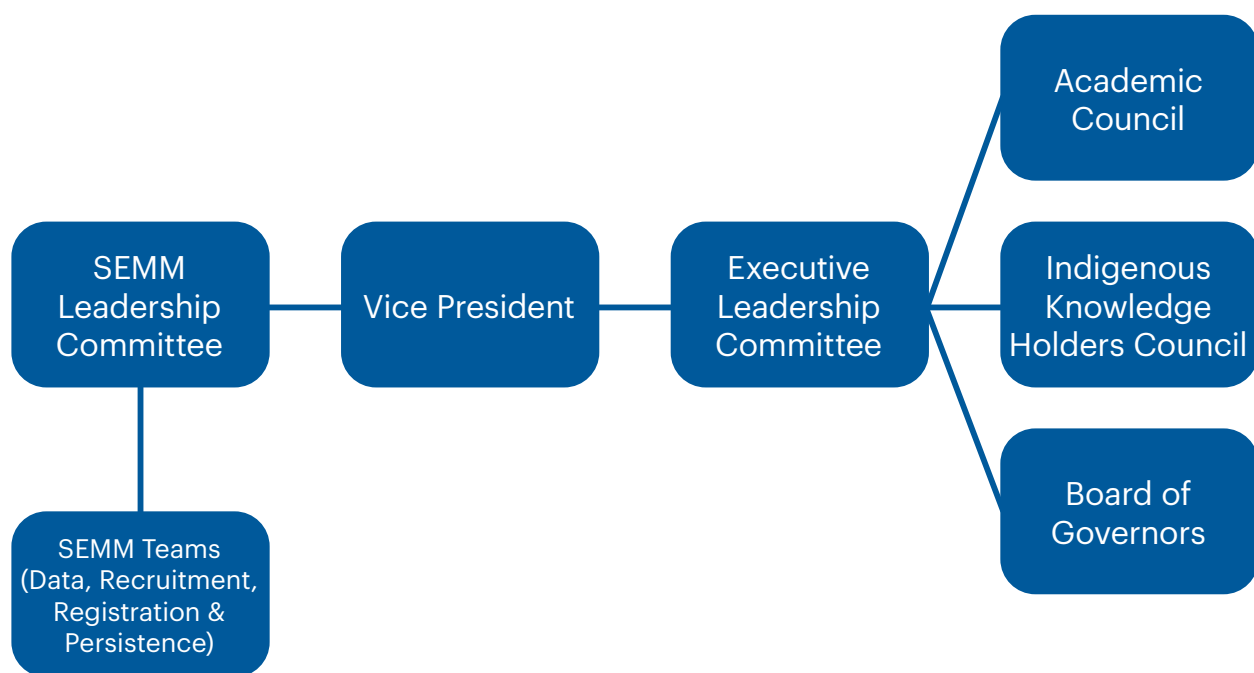
STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING (SEMM) LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The SEMM Leadership Committee is responsible for the ongoing implementation and evaluation of the SEMM plan. This team works with all college staff and faculty to cultivate a SEMM culture and assist in the development of SEMM processes throughout the College.

The Leadership Committee consists of:

- Executive Leader (Vice-President)
- SEMM Advisor/Coordinator
- Registrar/Associate Registrar
- Data Team Leader
- Recruitment Team Leader
- Registration Team Leader
- Student Success-Persistence Team Leader

Members of the Leadership Committee are appointed by the Executive Leadership Team. Members of the sub-teams (Data, Recruitment, Registration & Student Success/Persistence) are selected by the SEMM Leadership Committee after expressions of interest from any college staff and faculty.



GOALS, STRATEGIES & TACTICS

GOAL 1

Aurora College student enrolments increase by 15% over the next three years.	
STRATEGY 1	Implement an annual recruitment plan.
Tactic 1:	Create and share an annual recruitment plan identifying specific goals, activities and timelines, by August 31, for the next academic year that addresses: • goals focusing on marketing existing programs and the post-secondary experience. • current social and digital trends and strategies related to recruitment. • increased focus on high-school students across the northern territories and northern Alberta.
Tactic 2:	All departments and programs update webpages as per Communications and Marketing standard operating procedures.
Tactic 3:	Evaluate recruitment plans annually and share data to support decision making related to college recruitment.
Tactic 4:	Establish college campus and community-based recruitment teams.
Tactic 5:	Collaborate with local Indigenous groups and governments, and Aurora College's Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council, to identify strategies to attract Indigenous students.
STRATEGY 2	Increase the number of territorial residents who apply for courses/programs.
Tactic 1:	Collaborate and communicate regularly with GNWT Department of Education Culture and Employment regarding apprenticeship students.
Tactic 2:	Target high school students in grades 9-12 prior to their course selection in the fall and spring semesters.
Tactic 3:	Showcase alumni success within marketing and recruitment events and activities.

Tactic 4:	Collaborate with local Indigenous groups and governments and Aurora College's Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council to reach more territorial residents.
Tactic 5:	Form partnerships with other community groups such as literacy groups, newcomers to Canada, women's groups, etc., to support territorial applications.
Tactic 6:	Continue to meet with GNWT ECE Career Education Advisors at least twice per year to promote Aurora College.
Tactic 7:	Meet annually with NWT school superintendents to discuss Aurora College programs.
STRATEGY 3	Develop an international admissions and student support strategy.
Tactic 1:	Identify the number of international students to be accepted annually based on program seats and housing.
Tactic 2:	Identify a plan to address the support needs of international students, along with exploring processes for immigration advising.
STRATEGY 4	Increase accessibility of programming across the territory for community learning centres and campuses.
Tactic 1:	Identify a definition and establish direction for continuing education.
Tactic 2:	Increase promotion of continuing education courses and programming.
Tactic 3:	Existing programs to explore the possibility of dual-credit options for high school students.
Tactic 4:	Existing programs to explore the possibility of alternative learning options to support community-based learning.
Tactic 5:	Existing programs to explore continuing education possibilities.
Tactic 6:	Collaborate with Community Adult Educators to ensure information is available about programming and courses.

STRATEGY 5	Establish institutional wide data collection and reporting processes related to enrolment and registration.
Tactic 1:	Support creation of the institutional research office.
Tactic 2:	Utilize and share/report data to better understand enrolment trends for the past 10 years.

GOAL 2

Provide timely and smooth application and registration experiences for all students.	
STRATEGY 1	Ensure admission and registration processes are timely, effective and intuitive.
Tactic 1:	Seek ongoing feedback from students regarding their admission and registration experience.
Tactic 2:	Explore implementing point of contact surveys related to specific student experiences with college supports and/or resources.
Tactic 3:	Analyze and acknowledge feedback and seeks ways to meet student needs for admission and registration.
Tactic 4:	Communicate and evaluate admission service standards.
Tactic 5:	Improve processes, service standards and communication related to student IT accounts.
Tactic 6:	Identify registration and admission processes to accommodate a variety of student abilities.
Tactic 7:	Ensure student advising and academic plans are identified at least one month before pre-registration and shared with the Office of the Registrar.
Tactic 8:	Clearly communicate registration information for students in a timely manner, including website updates.
Tactic 9:	Communicate and adhere to the June 30, or earlier, application deadline (full time students).
STRATEGY 2	Identify processes to reduce the number of incomplete applications.
Tactic 1:	Seek ways to support applicants to submit complete applications.
Tactic 2:	Seek ways to increase applicant responsiveness regarding incomplete application requests.

STRATEGY 3	Knowing that early registration supports a successful start to the semester, aim that 50% of students complete early registration each semester.
Tactic 1:	Assess and analyze the number of students who complete early registration each semester by program.
Tactic 2:	Finance, Student Services and the Registrar's Office to establish clear processes to ensure student accounts are cleared prior to registration.
Tactic 3:	Ensure available supports, in person and online, for students during registration periods.
Tactic 4:	Implement an Academic Advisor program.

GOAL 3

Improve student persistence and success.	
STRATEGY 1	Increase services and resources for Indigenous students.
Tactic 1:	Implement recommendations from the Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council to support Indigenous students.
Tactic 2:	Collaborate with Indigenous governments and groups to identify and promote resources and supports for Indigenous students.
Tactic 3:	Plan and offer regular activities that support Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing for students, across the college.
STRATEGY 2	Establish institutional wide data collection and reporting processes related to student persistence.
Tactic 1:	Support creation of an institutional research office.
Tactic 2:	Collect, analyze, trend and report data regarding student persistence.
STRATEGY 3	Implement an early alert system to support students to complete their course of study.
Tactic 1:	Develop processes and policies for an interdisciplinary early alert system.
Tactic 2:	Implement the Symplicity Advocate and Insight programs to support early alert and advising processes.
STRATEGY 4	Adopt a collaborative and student-first approach to student support between divisions, programs, campuses and community learning centres.
Tactic 1:	Hold quarterly meetings between departments and schools to discuss processes impacting the student experience.
Tactic 2:	Celebrate student success and achievements.
Tactic 3:	Seek opportunities for students to learn about and engage in research activities with Aurora Research Institute.

STRATEGY 5	Foster a culture of well-being where students feel safe, supported and respected.
Tactic 1:	Implement student centric service standards in all divisions and programs.
Tactic 2:	Ensure timely, clear, empathetic and respectful communication in all interactions with students.
Tactic 3:	Seek feedback from students regarding their perceptions of safety, support and respect within the college community.
Tactic 4:	Create a welcoming and inviting environment (physical and/or virtual) for all students.
Tactic 5:	Develop and communicate a process for students to express and resolve concerns.
STRATEGY 6	Increase the types and availability of student services and the number of students accessing services.
Tactic 1:	Provide services and resources related to college and career preparedness and readiness.
Tactic 2:	Increase the accessibility of services available to students.
Tactic 3:	Increase communication regarding internal and external services available to students, using various modalities.
Tactic 4:	Review existing services related to writing and tutoring to determine how they can be improved.
Tactic 5:	Implement strategies to support mental wellness for Aurora College students.
Tactic 6:	Encourage increased student involvement in the college community through student groups and activities, including virtual options for distance and community students.
Tactic 7:	Analyze data related to requests for and access of writing and tutoring supports to better understand need and use of services.
Tactic 8:	Assess student satisfaction with services on an annual and as needed basis.

STRATEGY 6	Implement a proactive advising approach for all prospective and registered students.
Tactic 1:	Implement Academic Advisor program.
STRATEGY 7	Analyze program and college persistence data.
Tactic 1:	Collect data to identify issues impacting student readiness for college.
Tactic 2:	Create a process to track and understand student persistence.
Tactic 3:	Programs to track and assess semester and annual persistence rates and begin to identify trends.
Tactic 4:	Using annual data, programs to seek solutions to support student persistence.
Tactic 5:	Identify processes to track persistence of distance students to program completion.

MEASURING SUCCESS – METRICS

The following is a list of both qualitative and quantitative information (metrics) required to measure the success of the SEMM plan. A workplan will be developed to identify the department responsible for this data and how the data will be trended.

Quantitative Data	Timeline	Responsible Department/Person
Student demographics (i.e., age, gender, home community)	Annual	
Headcount (all programs, campuses, CLC and continuing education)		
*Headcount to be used to measure Goal 1	By semester	
Student persistence	By semester	
Admissions (applied, non-accepted, incomplete, unconditional, conditional, direct from high school, etc.)	Weekly during admissions period	
Alumni data	Annual	
ECE data on high school graduates	Annual	
# of students attending orientation	Annual	
Graduation/completion numbers	Annual	
Registration (pre-registration, registration, registrations after drop dates)	By semester	
UCAP/OCAP progression to parent programs	Annual	
Annual student survey data	Annual	
Student service utilization & requests	Annual	
Transfer credits requested and granted	Annual	

Withdrawal numbers and reasons	Annual	
Time to completion	Annual	
Conversion rate (# who apply, are accepted and register)	Annual	
Time from application to letter of offer	Weekly during admission period	
SFA data re. number of students leaving the NWT for post-secondary and the programs attending	Annual	
Declined/cancelled survey	Monthly during admissions	
'No-Show' survey	Each semester	
Number of Aurora College students engaging with research and ARI	Annually	
Student experience with admissions	By semester	
Student experience with registration	By semester	
Student experience with services and supports	Annual	
Graduation satisfaction/workplace survey	Annual	
Indigenous student experiences and satisfaction	Annual	
International student experiences and satisfaction	Annual	
Exit survey	As needed – compile annually	
Student perceptions of safety, support and respect at the college	Annual	



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