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Message from Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation – **Dr Donald Wilson**

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Staff of the Office of
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Welcome to this edition of the
Office of Research and Innovation
Newsletter.

It is a privilege to write to you for the first time as Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation. After one month in the role of Executive Director Research & Innovation from being ADR-CMNHS, I stepped into this new role on 1 July 2026, and I do so with a deep appreciation for the strong foundation on which we now build.

I wish to record my sincere gratitude to Professor Paul Iji, who has diligently led and shaped Fiji National University's research profile over the past three years. Under his stewardship the University expanded its research output, strengthened research training, hosted its inaugural Research Symposium, and elevated FNU's standing as a research-intensive institution in the Pacific. On behalf of the entire research community, I thank Professor Iji for his leadership, his mentorship, and his lasting contribution, and we wish him every success in his future endeavours.

As we move forward, my commitment is to sustain this momentum: to advance our strategic research priorities, to strengthen research excellence and integrity, and to foster a vibrant, collaborative research culture across all five Colleges. The recent transition of the Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research (FIPHR) to the Office of Research and Innovation places health research firmly within the University's wider research framework and supports the development of research institutes across our Colleges.

The 2025 Research & Innovation Excellence Awards were successfully held on 16 July 2026 at the Holiday Inn, celebrating the outstanding achievements of our researchers, innovators, supervisors, and research teams. The event recognised the exceptional contributions of individuals and teams whose work continues to strengthen FNU's research profile and create meaningful impact for our communities and beyond.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all our researchers, academics, students, and support staff for your dedication and commitment. Your contributions are central to our vision of becoming a leading research-intensive university in the Pacific region.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and look forward to sharing more of our research achievements and successes in the months ahead.

Dr Donald Wilson
Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research &
Innovation)
Fiji National University

1.0 Community Information

1.1 New Appointments



1.1.1 Interim Director Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research (FIPHR)

Ms. Avelina Rokoduru

The Office of Research & Innovation is pleased to welcome Ms Avelina Rokoduru as Director of the Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research. A PhD candidate at the University of Otago, her research focuses on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, Pacific migration, and Indigenous and Pacific research. Ms Rokoduru has authored and co-authored numerous regional and international publications and has led major research initiatives funded by organisations including UNFPA, the World Bank, DFAT, SPC, and UNAIDS. Her extensive experience will further strengthen the University's research excellence and regional engagement.



1.1.2 PACT Project Manager

Ms. Talei Aloesi Caucau

Ms. Caucau is the Project Manager for the Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT) Partnership at Fiji National University. She is an experienced researcher and development practitioner whose work focuses on social equity, climate resilience, Indigenous rights, environmental governance, and community-led research across the Pacific region. FNU is pleased to welcome Ms. Caucau to the Office of Research and Innovation and looks forward to her valuable contributions.



1.2 Professional Milestone

Our Dedicated Office of Research and Innovation staff members, proudly graduated with Master's in Entrepreneurship and Management. As part of the programme requirements, they successfully completed a Supervised Research Project (mini thesis), further strengthening their research, analytical, and problem-solving skills in the areas of entrepreneurship and management. Balancing a fast-paced work environment, family responsibilities, and academic commitments along the way, but through determination they successfully completed their studies. Appreciation to: Ms. Rashika Kumar - Senior Executive Officer and Ms. Varsha Dutt - ACIAR Graduate & Scholarship Officer.

From left: Ms. Rashika Kumar and Ms. Varsha Dutt

1.3 Transition of Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research (FIPHR) to the Office of Research & Innovation



The Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research (FIPHR) team with the FNU Senior Leadership Team and Vice-Chancellor Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba.

After seven years under the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), the Fiji Institute of Pacific Health Research (FIPHR) has transitioned to the Fiji National University's Research Office. This move aligns with FNU's goal of strengthening research leadership and excellence across all disciplines, placing FIPHR at the centre of the University's research framework and supporting the development of research institutes across its five Colleges. Additionally, FIPHR's founding Director, Dr Donald Wilson, has been appointed Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) from 1 July 2026, overseeing research activities across all five Colleges.

1.4 Visitors

- Prof. Rod Hill: Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science will be giving seminar, conduct workshops and training sessions on research development, including research design, academic writing, and grant proposal preparation to strengthen research capacity within the colleges.



- Dr. Helen & Ms. Michelle from Monash University, Australia

The University aims to strengthen its research administration capacity and capability to effectively access, manage, and maximise opportunities arising from the increasing availability of international research funding. The enhancement of FNU's research administration framework will be guided by the findings and recommendations of the initial research administration review, this follow-up progress review, and relevant outcomes from broader University reviews relating to finance and human resource management.

A key objective of these reviews, and the successful implementation of their recommendations, is to enhance the University's research performance, operational effectiveness, and institutional capability. Ultimately, this will position FNU to further strengthen its role and reputation as a

leading regional university, recognised for excellence in research, innovation, and academic impact.

2.0 Conferences and Seminars

2.1 Office of Research and Innovation and PACT Workshop



The Fiji National University (FNU), through its Office of Research and Innovation, held a Strategic Planning Workshop on 1-2 April 2026 at Hideaway Resort, with partial funding from the Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT). Led by the Former Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Innovation, Professor Paul Iji, the workshop brought together college Associate Deans Research, the Acting Dean of the Centre for Graduate Studies, and University Research Committee members to review 2025 achievements and establish strategic priorities for 2026 and beyond.

The discussions were guided by FNU's strong research performance in 2025, including increased research publications, expanded research training initiatives, and the successful hosting of the

University's inaugural Research Symposium. Participants focused on aligning research and innovation activities with institutional goals, national development priorities, and regional needs.

Key outcomes included identifying priority research areas, strengthening strategies to increase research funding, enhancing staff research capacity, promoting interdisciplinary and international collaborations, advancing the development of an academic workload model, exploring postdoctoral fellowship opportunities, improving participation in global rankings, and expanding adjunct academic and volunteer schemes.

The workshop also highlighted the importance of translating research into practical outcomes, strengthening community engagement, and increasing the visibility and impact of research. FNU reaffirmed its commitment to fostering a strong research culture that supports national development and addresses key challenges across the Pacific region.

2.2 Global South Seminar Series_ Topic: Delivering Remote Learning Using Low-Tech Solutions



Professor Asad Islam is a Professor of Economics at Monash University and a senior member of Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT). His research sits at the intersection of education, climate resilience and sustainable development, with a focus on designing scalable, cost-effective interventions that strengthen human capital in vulnerable and resource-constrained settings.

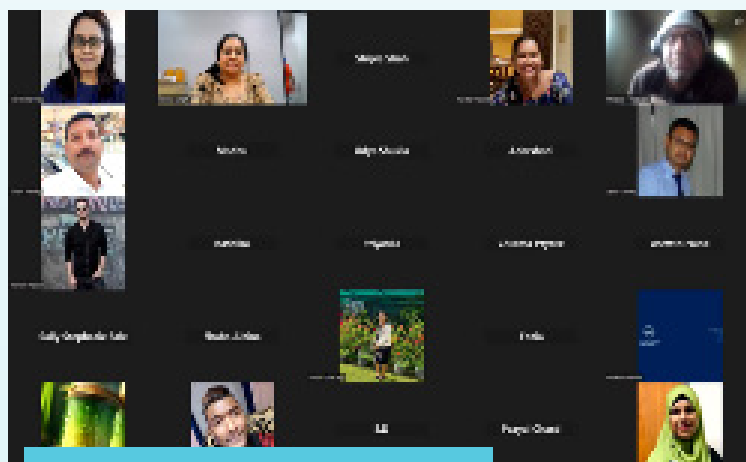
He has led large-scale randomized controlled trials across Asia and the Pacific evaluating remote learning, tutoring, and low-tech education delivery models that expand access for disadvantaged communities. His work combines rigorous empirical methods with close policy engagement to support governments in building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable education systems.

2.3 Human Research Ethics Workshop

The Office of Research and Innovation- Human Research Ethics Committee, in collaboration with the Centre for Graduate Student, facilitated an online training session focused on Human Research Ethics. The primary objective of this initiative was to equip participants with a comprehensive understanding of ethical principles, regulatory frameworks, and Universities mandates that underpin responsible research conduct within the academic environment. The training also offered practical instruction on navigating the ethical review and clearance procedures, specifically detailing the necessary steps for preparing and submitting Human Research Ethics applications prior to the commencement of any study involving human participants.



Human Research Ethics Facilitators



Online participants

3.0 Internal Research Grants

Internal research grants awarded to colleges between Jan-Jun 2026

Year	Grant	Colleges					Number of Projects	Total
		CBHTS	CAFF	CMNHS	CHEL	CETVET		
2026 (Jan-Jun)	Seed Funding Scheme	\$28,710.00	-	\$60,040.00	\$28,839.00	\$41,800.00	12	\$159,389.00
	Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme	-	-	\$50,000.00	-	-	2	\$50,000.00
	International Visiting Fellowship Scheme	-	-	\$7,695.00	-	-	1	\$7,695.00
	Research Preparatory Funding Scheme	-	-	\$5,000.00	-	-	1	\$5,000.00

4.0 PACT Grants

4.1 PACT Small Research Grants awarded to colleges between January – June 2026

Year	Grant	Colleges					Number of Projects	Total
		CBHTS	CAFF	CMNHS	CHEL	CETVET		
2026 (Jan-Jun)	Seed Funding Scheme	\$54,000.00	\$45,000.00	-	\$44,835.00	\$74,670.00	15	\$218,505.00
	Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme	-	-	-	\$25,000.00	-	1	\$25,000.00
	International Visiting Fellowship Scheme	-	-	-	\$10,000.00	-	1	\$10,000.00
	Research Preparatory Funding Scheme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

4.2 PACT Large Grants Awarded between January – June 2026

Project No.	Project Names	Total Value
1	PACT Large project grant: Socioeconomic enhancement of communities resettled in response to climate change events.	\$436,083
2	Melanesian Climate Smart Indigenous Food Centre	\$550,615
3	South Pacific Extension & Development Institute (SPEDI)	\$120,000
4	Valuing the Invisible Using Machine Learning and GIS. A Non-Market Valuation of Climate Change Impacts in Savusavu, Fiji	\$70,000
5	Integrating Climate Change Learning into Secondary Education in Fiji	\$100,000

5.0 Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) PASS-CR Scholarship Students and Fiji National University Graduate Scholarship Students

5.1 PVCR&I Engages with ACIAR PASS Students and Supervisors on Research Progress and Student Success

The Office of Research and Innovation convened a meeting with ACIAR PASS students and supervisors on Thursday 12 February 2026 from 10.00am to 12.00pm at the CAFF Boardroom, Koronivia Campus, with participants also joining virtually via Zoom. Led by Former Pro Vice Chancellor – Research & Innovation (PVCR&I) Professor Paul Iji, the session provided an important platform for open discussion on key areas including time management, candidature duration, milestone tracking, examiner selection, and thesis examination processes. Professor Iji emphasized the importance of students taking ownership of their research timelines and encouraged supervisors to work closely with students to establish and regularly review milestones to ensure completion within prescribed timeframe.

The meeting also addressed practical challenges faced by students, including research assistance during fieldwork, data sharing concerns, thesis examination feedback, and enrolment matters for students nearing the end of their contracts. Discussions highlighted the importance of understanding graduate studies policies and procedures, maintaining strong supervisor-student communication, and fostering peer support among scholars.

The engagement reaffirmed FNU's commitment to supporting postgraduate scholars and strengthening research excellence through collaboration and proactive supervision.



ACIAR PASS scholars, supervisors, college representatives, and the Office of Research and Innovation.



5.2 PASS Scholars Celebrate Academic Excellence: Dr. Atish Chand and Ms. Regina Singh Graduation



(From left) Ms. Regina Singh (PASS Scholar), Ms. Mai Alagcan (Regional Manager - Pacific) and Dr. Atish Chand (PASS Scholar).

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Pacific Agriculture Scholarships and Support (PASS) Programme continues to empower emerging researchers and professionals, with two outstanding scholars, Dr. Atish Chand and Ms. Regina Singh, marking significant academic milestones through their recent graduations in May 2026 at Fiji National University (FNU).

Dr. Atish Chand made history as the first-ever ACIAR PASS scholar to graduate with a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) from Fiji National University. Graduating from the College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF), his research focused on “Value Chain Analysis and Climate Change Intervention in the Fijian Dairy Industry.” His study addressed key challenges affecting Fiji’s dairy sector, particularly climate change impacts and greenhouse gas emissions, while exploring ways to improve productivity, sustainability, and farmer livelihoods.

Joining the successful PASS graduands is Ms. Regina Singh, who graduated with a master’s qualification following her research on blacklip oysters and nama,

contributing valuable insights into Fiji’s marine and aquaculture sector. Regina’s research focused on species important to Fiji’s marine ecosystem and local livelihoods, supporting broader efforts toward sustainable fisheries and marine resource management. Her work reflects the increasing importance of scientific research in understanding marine biodiversity and strengthening food security in Pacific communities.

As PASS scholars continue to graduate and contribute to their respective sectors, their journeys inspire aspiring researchers to pursue academic excellence and create meaningful change for communities across Fiji and the Pacific. The ACIAR PASS Programme remains committed to strengthening research capacity, supporting postgraduate education, and fostering solutions that contribute to sustainable development in agriculture, fisheries, and related sectors.

5.3 FNU Graduate Scholarship Success: Ms. Fazilat Bibi Celebrates Academic Milestone



(From left) FNU graduate Fazilat Bibi with her supervisor, Dr. Sofia Ali.

The Fiji National University (FNU) Graduate Scholarship Programme continues to support aspiring researchers, with Ms. Fazilat Bibi celebrating a significant academic milestone as a recent graduand under the programme.

Ms. Fazilat successfully completed her Master by Research in ICT and Science Education, with research focused on enhancing chemistry education through innovative digital learning approaches. Her study explored the use of ChemSketch software to improve students’ understanding of complex chemistry concepts, reflecting her passion for strengthening science education and improving student learning outcomes in Fiji.

Ms. Fazilat’s success highlights the transformative impact of the FNU Graduate Scholarship Programme in supporting aspiring researchers and fostering solutions that contribute meaningfully to national development. Her journey serves as an inspiration to future scholars seeking to create positive change through research, education, and innovation.

5.4 Post Graduation Commendation Ceremony

The FNU & ACIAR Scholarship Graduates Commendation Ceremony was organised by the Office of Research and Innovation to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Fiji National University (FNU) and Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) scholarship graduates.

Held at Tiri Restaurant, Nasese Campus, the event brought together graduates, supervisors, college representatives, the Centre of Graduate Studies, and the Office of Research and Innovation to acknowledge the successful completion of the scholars' studies and the supervisors' academic contributions.

The ceremony served as an opportunity to commend graduates and their supervisors for their hard work, dedication, and research accomplishments in celebration of this important milestone.



ACIAR & FNU Scholarship Graduates, supervisors, college representatives, the Centre of Graduate Studies, and the Office of Research and Innovation.

6.0 Publication Metrics

Our researchers, including graduate students, continue to produce high-impact publications across a range of scholarly outlets. From January to June 2026, Fiji National University published 4 book chapters, 63 journal articles, and 3 conference papers, as reported in SciVal. In addition, 9 review articles were produced during this period

Publication	Number
Book chapter	4
Journal paper	63
Conference paper	3
Total	70

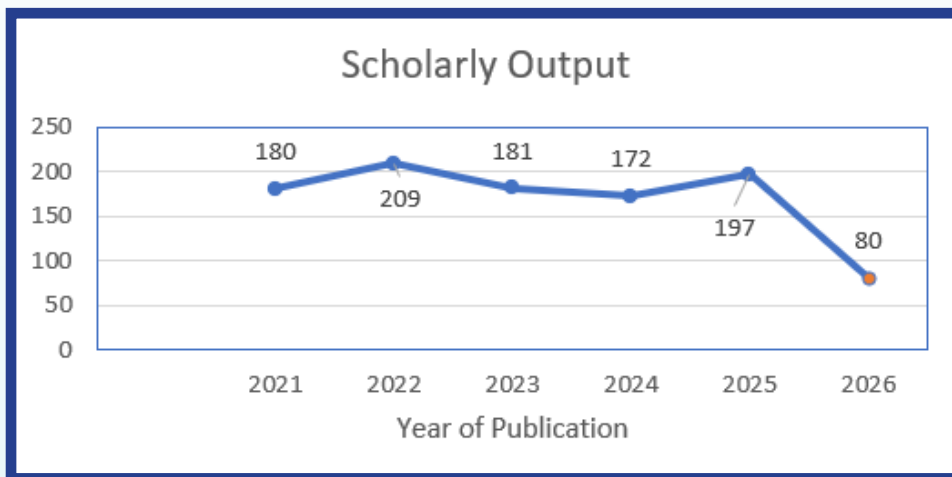
Source: Scopus (updated as of 10 June 2026)

(a) Scholarly Output

Scholarly Output in SciVal indicates the prolificacy of an entity: number of publications the entity has indexed in Scopus.

FNU publications (in Scopus only)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (Jan-Jun)	Overall
Scholarly Output	180	209	181	172	197	80	1,019

Source: Scopus (updated as of 10 June 2026)



Note: 2026 is an incomplete year (i.e. from Jan-10 Jun)

Between 2021 and June 2026, Fiji National University produced 1,019 Scopus-indexed publications, demonstrating sustained research productivity and scholarly engagement. Publication output remained consistently strong throughout the period, peaking at 209 publications in 2022 and recovering to 197 publications in 2025. Coupled with improvements in journal quality and citation impact indicators, these results reflect the University's continued commitment to enhancing both the quantity and quality of its research outputs.

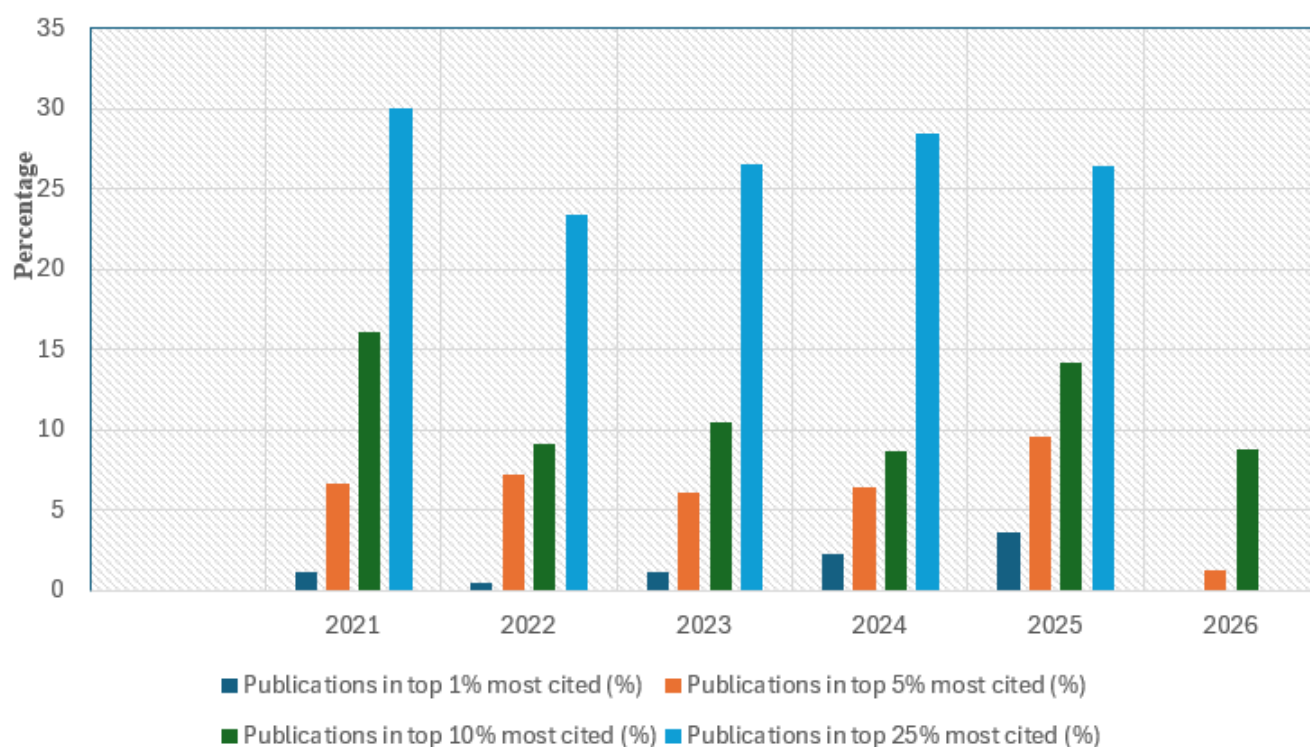
(b) Outputs in Top Citation Percentiles

Share of publications at Fiji National University that are among the most cited publications worldwide

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Overall
Publications in top 1% most cited	2	1	2	4	7	0	17
Publications in top 1% most cited (%)	1.1	0.5	1.1	2.3	3.6	0	1.6
Publications in top 5% most cited	12	15	11	11	19	1	76
Publications in top 5% most cited (%)	6.7	7.2	6.1	6.4	9.6	1.3	6.8
Publications in top 10% most cited	29	19	19	15	28	7	132
Publications in top 10% most cited (%)	16.1	9.1	10.5	8.7	14.2	8.8	11.5
Publications in top 25% most cited	54	49	48	49	52	-	286
Publications in top 25% most cited (%)	30	23.4	26.5	28.5	26.4	-	24.7

Note: 2026 is an incomplete year (i.e. from Jan-10 Jun)

Outputs in Top Citation Percentiles



Note: Incomplete year – 2026

FNU's citation performance reflects a growing global research influence. Across the reporting period, the University consistently exceeded world benchmarks for highly cited publications, with particularly strong performance in the top 1%, 5%, and 10% citation categories. The exceptional results achieved in 2025 demonstrate increasing research excellence and international recognition, while the lower figures for 2026 should be interpreted cautiously due to the incomplete year and the time required for citations to accumulate.

(c) Publications in Top Journal Percentiles at Fiji National University by CiteScore Quartile from 2021 – 2026 (Jan-Jun)

CiteScore quartile	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (Jan-Jun)
Q1 (top 25%)	73	82	81	87	106	51
Q2 (top 26% - 50%)	39	52	28	29	44	18
Q3 (top 51% - 75%)	32	25	23	18	16	5
Q4 (top 76% - 100%)	12	14	12	12	8	3
Total	156	173	144	146	174	77

Source: Scopus (updated as of 10 June 2026)

The University's publication profile demonstrates a strong and improving trend towards publishing in higher-ranked journals, particularly those in the first quartile (Q1), which represents the top 25% of journals globally based on CiteScore rankings.

The University's publication quality has improved significantly between 2021 and 2026, as evidenced by the increasing concentration of outputs in higher-ranked journals. The proportion of publications in Q1 journals increased from 46.8% in 2021 to 60.9% in 2025, reaching 66.2% in the first half of 2026. Concurrently, publications in lower-ranked Q3 and Q4 journals have steadily declined, demonstrating a strategic shift towards publishing in more prestigious and impactful scholarly outlets.

7.0 Upcoming Events and Conferences

University Research Committee Workshop – Date(s) TBC
THE Impact Ranking Awareness Workshop – Date(s) TBC
Ethics Workshop – Date(s) TBC

8.0 Staff of the Office of Research & Innovation

For any research support and questions, please contact the Office of the PVC Research & Innovation:

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