



Life as a Clinician-Scientist

VICTORIA 2023 Symposium



Australian Academy
of Health and
Medical Sciences

Melbourne Exhibition Centre **Saturday 19 August 2023**

Thank you to our sponsors

This event is part of the *Life as a Clinician-Scientist* program run by the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences. This program is unique in Australia – inspiring, encouraging and supporting individuals across the country to pursue research careers in the health and medical sciences.

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Welcome to Life as a Clinician-Scientist

We are delighted to welcome you to our *Life as a Clinician-Scientist* symposium.

Our speakers will share their unique journeys that have led to a rich and rewarding career, filled with challenges and discovery.

Why consider life as a clinician-scientist?

Clinician-scientists are uniquely placed to solve the most challenging health problems facing our modern society. They work at the cutting edge of health, combining clinical skills with trailblazing research. They lead the discovery and development of new treatments, reveal insights into health and disease, and their work significantly impacts patient care.

The diverse and exciting careers that you will hear about today involve collaboration with multidisciplinary teams including clinicians, scientists, consumers and policy makers. While the challenges in medical research appear to be increasing, clinician-scientist careers remain rewarding and offer you the opportunity to create your own niche and pursue your passions.

The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences was established in 2014 to provide an impartial and authoritative voice for health, informed by the highest quality evidence and expert advice from the best and brightest in health and medical research. One of the Academy's missions is to grow and mentor Australia's future generations of clinician-scientists and leaders in health and medical science.

Today's symposium aims to do just that. We are honoured that such a group of exemplary clinician-scientists, at different stages of their careers, have generously agreed to share their wisdom and expertise. We are also very grateful to our event sponsors for helping to facilitate this symposium highlighting these fascinating careers.

We encourage you to join the Twitter conversation by tagging the @AAHMS_Health handle. We hope the AAHMS Victoria symposium, *Life as a Clinician-Scientist*, inspires you to consider becoming a clinician-scientist in the years ahead.

We would like to thank all of our sponsors who make the *Life as a Clinician-Scientist* possible, in particular for this event – platinum sponsors, Barwon Health and Deakin University, Murdoch Children's Research Institute and The University of Melbourne, and gold sponsors, Centre for Eye Research Australia, The Doherty Institute, Monash University and WEHI.

 @AAHMS_Health



Australian Academy
of Health and
Medical Sciences


About the Academy

The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences is the independent expert voice for health and medical sciences in Australia. We advance research and innovation in Australia to improve everyone's health.

We are the nation's Learned Academy for the health and medical sciences: an interdisciplinary body of Fellows, who are Australia's most influential researchers in health and medicine. Each Fellow is elected by their peers for their outstanding contributions to the health and medical sciences in their respective fields.

The broad experience of our Fellows ensures that our advice is independent, expert and evidence-based. We use our knowledge and networks to drive change and provide leadership to ensure the most pressing health issues facing society can be addressed for the benefit of all.

We actively engage with the community to raise awareness and ensure that everyone can participate in, and benefit from, health and medical research. Through our work, we seek to reduce health inequities in Australia.

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8.30am	REGISTRATION
SESSION 1	MAKING AN IMPACT AS A CLINICIAN-SCIENTIST <i>Chaired by Laureate Professor Ingrid Scheffer AO FRS FAA FAHMS</i>
9.00am	Welcome Laureate Professor Ingrid Scheffer AO FRS FAA FAHMS Chair of Paediatric Neurology, The University of Melbourne
9.10am	Plenary Professor Clare Scott AM FAHMS Medical Oncologist and Laboratory Head, Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research
9.50am	Plenary Professor Roger Byard AO FAHMS Forensic Pathologist and Marks Chair of Pathology, University of Adelaide
10.30am	MORNING TEA
SESSION 2	LEADERSHIP AS A CLINICIAN-SCIENTIST <i>Chaired by George Zographos</i>
11.00am	Professor Kanta Subbarao FAHMS Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza, The Doherty Institute
11.30am	Professor Elif Ekinci Sir Edward Dunlop Professorial Fellow, The University of Melbourne, Austin Health
12.00pm	Professor Peter Vuillermin Chair of Medicine, Barwon Health
12.30pm	LUNCH <i>Spot mentoring sessions</i>
SESSION 3	THE ART OF COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING <i>Chaired by Abigail McGovern</i>
1.45pm	Professor Stephen Nicholls FAHA FAHMS Cardiologist and Director, Monash Heart Hospital
2.15pm	Professor Sophia Zoungas FAHMS Endocrinologist and Head of the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University
2.45pm	Dr Sandro Demaio Chief Executive Officer, VicHealth
3.15pm	AFTERNOON TEA

SESSION 4	PANEL DISCUSSION – MANAGING THE MULTI FACETED LIFE OF A CLINICIAN-SCIENTIST <i>Chaired by Laureate Professor Ingrid Scheffer AO FRS FAA FAHMS</i>
3.45pm	<p>Professor Shomik Sengupta Urologist, Eastern Health, Professor of Surgery, Eastern Health Clinical School, Monash University</p> <p>Dr Jessica Green, Consultant Psychiatrist, Peninsula Health; PhD Candidate, Food and Mood Centre, IMPACT</p> <p>Associate Professor Ada Cheung Endocrinologist, Austin Health; NHMRC Research Fellow, The University of Melbourne</p> <p>Dr Annie Chiu Paediatric Neurologist, Hong Kong Children’s Hospital; Honorary Paediatric Fellow, Austin Health</p>
4.45pm	EVENT CLOSE



Speakers



**Laureate Professor
Ingrid Scheffer
AO FRS FAA FAHMS**

***Chair of Paediatric Neurology,
The University of Melbourne***

Laureate Professor Ingrid Scheffer AO FRS FAA FAHMS is a physician-scientist whose work as a paediatric neurologist and epileptologist at the University of Melbourne and the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health has led the field of epilepsy genetics over more than 27 years, in collaboration with Professor Samuel Berkovic and molecular geneticists. This resulted in identification of the first epilepsy gene and many genes subsequently.

She has defined many new epilepsy syndromes and refined the phenotypic spectrum of many others, and her major interests are in the genetics of the epilepsies, epilepsy syndromology and classification, and translational research.

Professor Scheffer collaborates on research on the genetics of speech and language disorders, autism spectrum disorders, cortical malformations and intellectual disability. She led the first major reclassification of the epilepsies in 28 years in 2017, for the International League Against Epilepsy.

In 2014, Professor Scheffer was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and was a co-recipient of the 2014 Prime Minister's Prize for Science.

In 2018 she was elected to the Royal Society (London) and in 2019 was elected as President of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.



Professor Clare Scott AM FAHMS

**Medical Oncologist
and Laboratory Head,
Walter and Eliza Hall Institute
of Medical Research**

Professor Clare Scott AM FAHMS is a clinician-scientist, Chair of Gynaecological Cancer at the University of Melbourne and Joint Division Head of Clinical Translation at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research.

She is a Consultant Medical Oncologist at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Royal Women's and Royal Melbourne Hospitals. Her clinical expertise is in gynaecological cancers, including clinical cancer genetics and in coordinating care for patients with rare cancers. Her laboratory generates pre-clinical models in which to study drug resistance in rare gynaecological cancers, employing genomics, imaging and transcriptomics to better understand therapeutic targeting. Mechanisms of platinum and PARPi resistance across gynaecological cancer types continues to be a major focus.

She initiated the national WEHI Stafford Fox Rare Cancer Program in order to study many rare cancer types which are poorly researched, and the Australian Rare Cancer Portal which enables streamlining of expert rare cancer care and research for individuals throughout Australia.

Professor Scott is chair of the Australia and New Zealand Gynaecological Oncology Group and the Board of the International Rare Cancer Initiative. In 2018, she received the Cancer Australia Jeannie Ferris Recognition Award in Gynaecological Cancer and in 2021 she was awarded the MOGA Novartis Oncology Cancer Achievement Award.



Professor Roger Byard AO FAHMS

**Forensic Pathologist
and Marks Chair of Pathology,
University of Adelaide**

Professor Roger Byard AO FAHMS is the Professor of Pathology at The University of Adelaide and a Senior Specialist Forensic Pathologist at Forensic Science SA.

After qualifying in medicine, he undertook five years of clinical practice including Flying Doctor work in the Northern Territory, and training and qualifying in family practice, as well as studying physical and medical anthropology in Canada. He then trained in pathology and has since published more than 1,000 chapters and papers/short communications/letters in peer-reviewed journals and coedited/written 11 textbooks in the field.

He was the Editor-in-Chief of Forensic Science Medicine & Pathology (Springer Publishers, New York) from 2008–2021. In addition to his basic medical and other post graduate qualifications, Professor Byard has three higher doctorates: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Science (DSc).



Professor Kanta Subbarao FAHMS

***Director of the WHO
Collaborating Centre for Reference
and Research on Influenza,
The Doherty Institute***

Professor Kanta Subbarao FAHMS is virologist and a physician with specialty training in paediatrics and paediatric infectious diseases.

She is currently the Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza. She has worked on molecular virology and vaccine development for emerging viruses that pose a potential pandemic threat, including influenza viruses, SARS and MERS and now SARS-CoV-2 coronaviruses in a career spanning 30 years.

Previously, she was Chief of the Molecular Genetics Section of the Influenza Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta (1997–2002) and Chief of the Emerging Respiratory Viruses Section of the Laboratory of Infectious Diseases, of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), NIH in the USA (2002–2016). In November 2016, she moved to Melbourne and the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity.

She is an internationally recognised leader in the field of influenza with a sustained record of research excellence having published 234 peer-reviewed publications in leading international biomedical journals and 92 reviews, chapters or commentaries. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, American Academy of Microbiology and the Infectious Diseases Society of America. She serves on the Editorial Board of PLoS Pathogens, Cell Host and Microbe, Journal of Virology, Med, and Cell.





Professor Elif Ekinci

***Sir Edward Dunlop Professorial Fellow,
The University of Melbourne,
Austin Health***

Professor Elif Ekinci is a clinician-researcher and academic endocrinologist in the field of diabetes. Her research is focused on the detection and management of diabetes complications, undertaking observational and clinical trials. Through multi-disciplinary collaborations with basic scientists, engineers, people living with diabetes and other scientists, Professor Elif hopes to pave a translation pathway for novel discoveries in diabetes, into routine clinical practice.

Professor Ekinci is the inaugural director of the Australian Centre for Accelerating Diabetes Innovations (ACADI). Led out of the University of Melbourne, ACADI is delivering novel interventions for timely diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications with the access to clinical evaluation, leadership and networks, research commercialisation experience and workforce training. ACADI's design responds to key barriers slowing Australian development of innovations.

Professor Ekinci is also the Head of Diabetes at Austin Health, where she co-ordinates the clinical care of inpatients and outpatients with diabetes. She is the Weary Dunlop Medical Research Foundation Principal Research Fellow in Metabolic Medicine and Dame Kate Campbell Fellow at the University of Melbourne, Department of Medicine, Austin Health. The Dame Kate Campbell Fellowship is given to researchers recognising incredible contributions to the University of Melbourne for outstanding research and wider involvement in our local community and across the globe.

She has supervised more than five PhD students to completion and is currently supervising more than 10 PhD students. She has 180 peer-reviewed publications in leading diabetes, obesity and metabolism journals. She has attracted more than \$25million in research funding and received multiple awards for her work including Australian Diabetes Society Ranji and Amara Wikramanayake Clinical Diabetes Research Award given to leading early and mid-career diabetes researchers in Australia.



Professor Peter Vuillermin

***Chair of Medicine,
Barwon Health***

Professor Pete Vuillermin is a general paediatrician who is the Director of Research at Barwon Health, the Chair in Medicine at Deakin University, and currently holds an NHMRC Career Development Fellowship. Professor Vuillermin's team target the prevention of immune mediated diseases in the modern environment.

He co-leads the Barwon Infant Study, in which his team have assembled a depth of biological samples and clinical phenotyping which is unmatched anywhere in the world. Professor Vuillermin is the foundation Co-Chair of the Children's Inpatient Research Collaboration of Australia and New Zealand and led the establishment of the Adrian Costa Clinical Trials Centre in Geelong and the Pregnancy Research and Translation Ecosystem in the southwestern region of Victoria. His talk will focus on opportunities to develop a career as a clinician-scientist beyond the metro.



Professor Stephen Nicholls FAHA FAHMS

***Cardiologist and Director,
Monash Heart Hospital***

Professor Steve Nicholls FAHA FAHMS is Program Director of Monash Heart, Intensive Care and the Victorian Heart Hospital at Monash Health and Director of the Victorian Heart Institute and Professor of Cardiology at Monash University.

He is a preventive cardiologist, who leads a translational research program focusing on the role of metabolic risk factors in cardiovascular disease that includes lab-based research on mechanisms of atherosclerosis, plaque imaging and leadership of clinical trials of novel therapies.

He has raised more than \$160million in research funding and has published more than 1100 manuscripts, book chapters and conference proceedings. He opened and leads Australia's only dedicated heart hospital. He is President of the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand and an inaugural Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.



Professor Sophia Zoungas
FAHMS

***Endocrinologist and Head
of the School of Public Health
and Preventive Medicine,
Monash University***

Professor Sophia Zoungas FAHMS is the Head of Monash University's School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, and Professor of Diabetes, Vascular Health and Ageing.

She is an endocrinologist with clinical appointments at both Alfred Health and Monash Health. She leads large-scale clinical trials and health services research groups with a focus in the areas of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, and healthy aging. She served as President of the Australian Diabetes Society from 2016 to 2018 and Clinical Director of the National Association of Diabetes Centres from 2009 to 2019.

Professor Zoungas has more than 290 publications in peer-reviewed journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet Diabetes Endocrinology, Annals of Internal Medicine and Nature Medicine.



Dr Sandro Demaio
**Chief Executive Officer,
VICHealth**

Dr Sandro Demaio is a medical doctor and globally-renowned public health expert and advocate.

Having held the role of Medical Officer for non-communicable conditions and nutrition with the Department of Nutrition for Health and Development at the World Health Organization, Dr Demaio was previously the CEO of the EAT Foundation, the science-based, global platform for food systems transformation.

He has published more than 50 scientific papers including in The Lancet and the BMJ, and is the author of the Doctor's Diet, a cookbook based on science and inspired by a love of good food. Dr Demaio also co-hosts the ABC television show Ask the Doctor – an innovative and exploratory factual medical series broadcasting across Australia and around the world. Dr Demaio originally trained and worked as a medical doctor at The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne.

He holds a Masters degree in public health, a PhD in non-communicable diseases and has held fellowships at both Harvard Medical School and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.



Professor Shomik Sengupta

Urologist, Eastern Health

**Professor of Surgery, Eastern Health
Clinical School, Monash University**

Professor Shomik Sengupta is Professor of Surgery and deputy Head of School at the Eastern Health Clinical School, Monash University and a consultant urologist, Uro-Oncology lead and currently acting co-director of the Department of Urology, Eastern Health. Professor Sengupta has a practice with a uro-oncology subspecialty interest – including open, laparoscopic and robotic cancer surgery. He completed his urological training through the Victorian Section of the Urological Society of Australia & New Zealand (USANZ) and subsequently completed a Uro-Oncology fellowship at the prestigious Mayo Clinic, USA. He has also completed a Masters in Surgery (2002) and a Doctorate in Medicine (2014) through the University of Melbourne

Professor Sengupta is a strong contributor to USANZ, having been the Chair of the Victorian training subcommittee from 2014 to 2016, and the leader of the GU Oncology advisory group from 2013 to 2019. Professor Sengupta also has a strong interest in urologic research, including involvement in clinical trials through the Australian and New Zealand Urogenital & Prostate (ANZUP) cancer trials group, where he is a member of the Board and the Scientific Advisory Committee. Professor Sengupta has more than 150 original publications to date and has been an invited speaker/session chair at a number of scientific meetings.

Professor Sengupta was convenor of the ANZUP Annual Scientific Meeting in 2013, the scientific program director for the USANZ Annual Scientific Meeting in 2017 and scientific co-chair of the Urological Association of Asia annual congress in 2022.



Dr Jessica Green

**Consultant Psychiatrist,
Peninsula Health**

**PhD Candidate with the Food
and Mood Centre, IMPACT**

Dr Jessica Green is a Consultant Psychiatrist currently working in the public health sector in adult mental health, and functional gut disorders.

She has a sub-specialisation in Psychotherapy, specifically brief, structured therapies such as CBT. She is also a PhD Candidate at the Food and Mood Centre, IMPACT, Deakin University. Her research is focused on the gut-brain-axis, and she led a trial investigating the use of Faecal Microbiota Transplants for Major Depressive Disorder.

Dr Green is passionate about delivering holistic psychiatric care including psychotherapy, gut-brain-axis medicine and other novel evidence-based treatments.



**Associate Professor
Ada Cheung**
*Endocrinologist, Austin Health
NHMRC Research Fellow,
The University of Melbourne*

Associate Professor Ada Cheung is a clinician-scientist; endocrinologist at Austin Health and a NHMRC/Dame Kate Campbell Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne.

She is a Councillor of the Endocrine Society of Australia and a member of the Global Leadership Academy and Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CoDI) at the US Endocrine Society. Since completing her PhD in 2017 and listening to numerous barriers to health faced by her patients, she established and leads the Trans Health Research Group at The University of Melbourne (www.transresearch.org.au) which aims to improve the health and well-being of the transgender and gender diverse community.

Committed to evidence-based medicine and policy, her diverse team undertakes co-created quantitative and qualitative studies in gender-affirming hormone therapy, mental health and wellbeing as well as research in healthcare delivery. Her research has had significant impact over the last five years, leading to the development of new gender clinics in Victoria, a statewide training program for health professionals and national guidelines on hormone therapy.

Her commitment to co-creation to improve trans health was recognised recently with the GLOBE LGBT Ally of the Year. She was awarded the University of Melbourne Excellence in Engagement – Public Value Award in 2022 as an avid science communicator engaging extensively with mainstream media, social media and international federations to guide trans health-related policy.



Dr Annie Chiu
*Paediatric Neurologist,
Hong Kong Children's Hospital
Honorary Paediatric Fellow,
Austin Health*

Dr Annie Chiu is a paediatric neurologist from Hong Kong. She started her training at a university-affiliated hospital in Hong Kong. As an extension of her paediatric neurology training, she has come to Melbourne as a short-term honorary paediatric fellow at Austin Health. Dr Chiu has enjoyed working with fellow clinician-scientists at the Austin and now wishes to pursue a PhD.

Having initially intended to pursue a career in pure science before joining medical school, Dr Chiu found herself increasingly drawn toward medical research during her paediatric training. She is fascinated by the workings of the brain, particularly epilepsy, and empathises strongly with the plights of affected children and their families.

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Barwon Health – Deakin University

Barwon Health is one of the largest and most comprehensive regional health services in Australia. The primary catchment for Barwon Health services has a population of 350,000 across south west Victoria, extending to 500,000 for some tertiary services to the South Australian border.

Quality research is embedded in every aspect of care at Barwon Health. Our clinical departments have established research links and programs, and many of our research groups are world class. We have a strong track record in community-based research, and our clinical trials groups are well organised and productive. Our programs leverage Barwon Health's unique position in providing of whole-of-system and whole-of-life care to a large, diverse and engaged population. We have a clear vision in our Research Strategic Plan 2022–2032: to make internationally important contributions to research that have a measurable impact on the health of our community.

As a Health Care Worker, you will be encouraged to join active research projects within your Clinical Directorates. You will be mentored by experienced and recognised senior medical and research staff, and supported by experts in biostatistics, research design and ethics. If you are interested in a more formal research experience, Barwon Health offers opportunities in partnership with Deakin University, such as a Masters in Surgical Research or a PhD within internationally renowned Research Centres.



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Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Murdoch Children's Research Institute is the leading child health research institute in Australia recognised in the top three worldwide for the quality and impact of its research.

For more than 35 years, Murdoch Children's Research Institute has been tackling some of the biggest health issues facing children. Their foundational work in genetics, pioneering discoveries in stem cell medicine, ambitious population health studies, commitment to health equality and agile clinical translation of research are changing what's possible for families and communities worldwide.

Today, their researchers work across more than 150 common and rare diseases and conditions affecting children. From allergies, asthma and mental health to cancer and rare genetic disorders, they vigorously pursue the answers

that will improve the lives of all children from pre-conception through to early adulthood.

Murdoch Children's goal is to ensure all children, everywhere, are given the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilled life. Operating in a unique model with The Royal Children's Hospital and The University of Melbourne, Murdoch Children's is part of a great circle of healthcare and discovery – helping transform child health from the labs to clinics and out into communities.



The University of Melbourne

The University of Melbourne's Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences is a global leader in higher education. Across our campuses we convene brilliant minds from different disciplines and sectors to come together to address the most important health challenges of a changing world.

Our vision is to equip our students with a distinctive, future-facing education personalised around their ambitions and needs, enriched by global perspectives and embedded in a richly collaborative research culture.

As active citizens and future leaders, our students represent our greatest contribution to the world, and are at the heart of everything we do.

We serve society by engaging with our communities and ensuring education and research are inspired from the outset by need and for the benefit of society, while remaining committed to allowing academic freedom to flourish.

Through our work, we remain true to our purpose and fulfil our mission as a public-spirited

organisation, dedicated to the principles of fairness, equality and excellence in everything we do.

We strive for an environment that is inclusive and celebrates diversity. Beyond our campuses we imagine an Australia that is ambitious, forward thinking and increasing its reputation and influence globally.

We are committed to playing a part in achieving this – building on our advantageous location in one of the world's most exciting cities and across the state of Victoria, in a region rapidly becoming a hub for innovative education, research and collaboration.



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The Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) is an independent Medical Research Institute, proudly affiliated with the University of Melbourne and based at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne.

CERA is deeply committed to conducting eye research with real-life impact and finding ways to prevent people from going blind.

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Finding solutions to prevent, treat and cure infectious diseases and understanding the complexities of microbes and the immune system requires innovative approaches and concentrated effort.

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Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (Doherty Institute); a centre of excellence where leading scientists and clinicians collaborate to improve human health globally.



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*Center for World University Rankings 2017

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As a leading international medical research university with the largest medical faculty

in Australia and integration with leading Australian teaching hospitals, we consistently rank in the top 50 universities worldwide for clinical, pre-clinical and health sciences.



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WEHI brings together diverse and creative people with different experience and expertise to solve some of the world's most complex health problems. With partners across science, health, government,

industry and philanthropy, we are committed to long-term discovery, collaboration and translation. At WEHI, we are brighter together.

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