



Sustainable Apparel and Textiles Conference USA

Reclaiming sustainability and redefining good business:

How to reframe sustainability as opportunity, innovation and competitive edge

June 3-4th 2026 | New York City

This conference brings together brands, manufacturers, investors, policymakers, and innovators to define what credible, resilient sustainability looks like in today's volatile market. Over two days, we focus on the practical actions needed to strengthen supply chains, safeguard workers, finance net-zero pathways, and secure board-level commitment.

Held behind closed doors, the program centers on clear, solutions-driven discussion. Sessions explore shared risk with suppliers, the realities of decarbonization financing, the incentives driving overproduction, the viability of circular business models, and the regulatory and governance tools required for measurable progress.

This is a focused, action-oriented meeting designed to help leaders navigate uncertainty, benchmark approaches, and accelerate real impact across the apparel value chain.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Niamh Campbell at
niamh.campbell@innovationforum.co.uk

Speakers:

1. Adolfo Lopez del Castillo, senior director, quality, compliance, sustainability & footwear operations, Lacoste
2. Alejandro Castillo Nolte, chief sustainability officer, Nettalco
3. Allie Glinski, senior manager, social sustainability, Target
4. Alicia Serrani, CEO and co-founder, T.W.I.N.
5. Annie Agle, vice president of impact and sustainability, Cotopaxi
6. Anwarul Islam, GM & group head of compliance & sustainability, Pacific Jeans Group
7. Brittainy McFarland, senior director of materials innovation, Under Armour
8. Camille Tagle, co-founder, FABSCRAP
9. Carmen Gama, director of circular design, Eileen Fisher
10. Christina Castle, senior manager, impact and product, Dôen
11. Elizabeth Spruell, owner, Spruell Farms
12. Evre Kaynak, global human rights due diligence leader, W.L. Gore & Associates
13. Hanna Reichel, director, sustainability, Centric Brands
14. Hannah Sherman, head of sustainability, Rothys
15. Jamie Grassi, senior director fabric, Fabletics
16. Janine Rubino, product director, Macy's
17. Jasmin Malik Chua, climate and labor editor, Sourcing Journal
18. Jason Judd, executive director, Cornell University ILR School
19. Jeannie Renne-Malone, vice president, global sustainability, VF Corporation
20. Jeffrey Fitzpatrick, director of corporate sustainability, Canada Goose
21. Jennie McMartin, senior director, innovation strategy, operations and management, Lululemon
22. Jennifer Gootman, global head of sustainability & ESG strategy, Tory Burch
23. Jimmy Summers, vice president – EHS and sustainability, Elevate Textiles
24. Julia Kirschner, impact and innovation director, ARMEDANGELS
25. Jo Maiden, founder and CEO, SOKO Kenya
26. Katie O'Hare, vice president, sustainability, J.Crew
27. Katy O'Brien, head of sustainable innovation, New Balance
28. Kehkshan Usman, chief sustainability officer, MG Apparel
29. Lisa Diegel, director – global sustainability, Faherty Brand
30. Liz Hershfield, executive director, COTTON USA™ and U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol
31. Liz Lipton-McCombie, head of ESG and sustainability, Nordstrom
32. Lori Stamm, director, supplier assessment and improvement programs, Verité
33. Meital Peleg Mizrachi, postdoctoral fellow, department of economics, Yale University
34. Milene Firbank, sustainability consultant, RSM Canada
35. Miranda Morrison, VP of sustainable design, Steve Madden
36. Mobeen Chughtai, group head – ESG, CSR & corporate communications, Soorty Enterprises
37. Naurin Muzaffar, strategic advisor sustainability, Crescent Bahuman
38. Olivia Morgan, director of operations and sustainability, Subset
39. Pablo Hernandez, vice president of strategy, brand & manufacturing, SIERRA
40. Sarah Allibhoy, associate director of strategy and insights, Nuuly
41. Sarah Baker, principal advisor, CSR, La Vie En Rose

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42. Sarah Coulter, US program director, Accelerating Circularity
43. Sarah Moore, associate vice president, ESG strategy, Victoria's Secret & Co
44. Solange Vazquez, US sector head, global trade solutions, HSBC
45. Steven Bethell, co-founder, Bank & Vogue
46. Tara Gilson, CEO, North America, Veja
47. Tensie Whelan, founding director and senior advisor, NYU Stern Centre for Sustainable Business
48. Raz Goelnic, associate professor of strategic design and management, Parsons School of Design
49. Randi Marshall, head of sustainability and public affairs, Americas, H&M
50. Yelena Mogelesky, senior vice president of sourcing and production, Komar

Day 0 – Tuesday, June 2nd

3:00-5:00pm Visit to Ferrara Manufacturing

The visit will include a guided facility tour and introduction to Ferrara's end-to-end manufacturing capabilities, from design and prototyping through to production. Attendees will see how their operations focusing on traditional tailoring expertise since 1987 have since combined with advanced technologies, including CAD-supported development, embroidery, and laser cutting.

We'll then break into small-group roundtable discussions exploring the future of apparel manufacturing, innovation, production resilience, and how businesses are adapting in a rapidly changing global market. Discussions will be held under Chatham House rules to encourage open and practical exchange.

Participation is open to up to 30 conference participants on a first-come, first-served basis, with one participant per organisation to ensure a diverse mix of perspectives.

5:00- Networking drinks at Ferrara Manufacturing

Day 1 – Wednesday, June 3rd – Supply chain resilience and long-term business value

8.00–9.00 **Arrival and light breakfast**

9.00–9.05 **Opening remarks**

9.05–9.20 **Showing up in the short-term: What is our responsibility as individuals and corporations amid global turmoil?**

Geopolitical tension, tariffs, and political uncertainty have intensified pressure on the industry, and the pushback against sustainability reinforces a core truth: meaningful change has never aligned easily with today's systems. The absence of sustainability from the [State of Fashion Report 2026](#) shows how quickly priorities shift, underscoring the need to embed sustainability into top business concerns like supply chain volatility, circularity, operational efficiency, and reputational risk.

Despite the turbulence, businesses still have significant influence. Leaders can act with focus and in tandem, using their collective leverage across purchasing, innovation, policy, and culture to drive progress where it matters most.

In our opening keynote, we'll examine what credible leadership looks like under pressure and how – and why – industry leaders can continue to push for progress.

Speakers:

- Annie Agle, VP of impact and sustainability, **Cotopaxi**
- Jeannie Renné-Malone, VP, global head of sustainability, **VF Corporation**

Moderated by: Tanya Richard, COO and head of stakeholder engagement, **Innovation Forum**

9.20–10.00 **Shared risk, shared resilience: What do genuine supplier-brand partnerships look like amid tariff uncertainty?**

2025 became the year of the tariff. Average US duties on apparel and footwear jumped from 13 percent to 54 percent and still remain above historic norms ([Business of Fashion](#)). The impact was immediate: sudden cost spikes, disrupted planning, and stalled improvements to purchasing practices, as reflected in the [Better Buying 2025 Garment Industry Scorecard](#).

The shock exposed how fragile dominant sourcing models are and underscored the need for a reset. Payment terms, price floors, volume commitments, and accurate forecasting are effectively climate and resilience policy because they determine whether suppliers across tiers can invest in efficiency, decarbonization, and worker support. Resilience cannot be built on short-term contracts.

Brands that collaborate closely with suppliers have weathered the disruption best. But what does real partnership look like?

Our multi-stakeholder panel will explore:

- How brands and suppliers can navigate tariff-driven volatility and move from reactive decisions to shared, co-created sourcing strategies
- What credible partnership looks like in practice, including behaviors that improve stability and reduce risk across tiers

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- Which changes would most strengthen resilience for 2026 and how both sides can align internally to deliver them

Speakers:

- Yelena Mogelevsky, senior vice president of sourcing and production, **Komar**
- Mobeen Chughtai, group head – ESG, CSR and corporate communications, **Soorty Enterprises**

Moderated by: Joleen Ong, senior director, brand and retailer membership, **Cascale**

10.00-10.40 **Achieving net-zero as an industry: Realigning ambition and investment for long-term decarbonization success**

Many industry climate targets were set in 2019 in a very different operating landscape to today. Companies have since faced global disruption, shifting political winds, and updated scientific guidance. The result is a widening gap between what organizations expected to achieve and where emissions actually stand with growing production volumes. Industry emissions rose 7.5 percent from 2022 to 2023 alone ([Aii](#)), underscoring how far the sector still has to go.

With climate impacts already disrupting manufacturing hubs and 2030 approaching fast, the question for 2026 is clear: what does ambitious yet achievable net-zero look like now?

One reality remains unchanged. No company can reach net-zero alone. Progress requires shared investment, aligned expectations, and pathways that can withstand economic and environmental volatility without losing ambition.

Our multi-stakeholder panel will discuss:

- How companies can decouple emissions from growth—setting ambitious targets that keep emissions falling even as the business scales
- Which stakeholders are essential for designing climate pathways and long-term delivery, and what meaningful engagement truly looks like
- Practical examples of supply chain mapping and where emissions hotspots can be jointly tackled
- The forecasting tools and financing models that ensure capital investment costs are shared fairly

Speakers:

- Katie O'Hare, vice president, sustainability, **J.Crew**
- Jimmy Summers, vice president – EHS and sustainability, **Elevate Textiles**
- Solange Vazquez, US sector head, global trade solutions, **HSBC**

Moderated by: Bryant LaPres, senior director of industry engagement, **Apparel Impact Institute**

10.40-11.20 Break and speed networking

11.20-12.00 **Collapsing the E and S in ESG: Protecting workers' rights in the push to net-zero**

As trade disputes and sourcing diversification dominate meetings, climate impacts are intensifying pressure across key manufacturing hubs. In Bangladesh alone, 36 percent of garment workers have been displaced by climate impacts, with women hit hardest ([Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies](#)).

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At the same time, brands' climate goals can unintentionally create pressure on suppliers to cut costs in ways that undermine labour standards, just as new human rights and forced labour rules raise expectations for social performance.

For sustainability teams, the challenge is how to make climate progress in a way that protects workers and supports suppliers in a warming world, while staying ahead of regulation. This means clearer shared planning, fairer responsibility, and partnerships that safeguard the people who hold supply chains together.

Our panel will explore:

- The latest research on climate impacts in key manufacturing regions
- What a just transition means in practice for brands, suppliers, and workers
- Which impact measures and benchmarks best signal real improvements in worker welfare
- Case studies of initiatives that strengthen support workers and their families

Speakers:

- Jason Judd, executive director, **Cornell University ILR School**
- Jasmin Malik, editor, **Sourcing Journal**

Moderated by: Tiffany Rogers, vice president of research and development, **Fair Labor Association**

12.00-12.30 **Brand values vs consumer value: Can sustainability drive business growth on the demand side?**

"Consumer is king" is proving true once again. While surveys Zalando's ['It takes many'](#) report shows that 74 percent of consumers want to shop more sustainability, record-breaking Black Friday sales in 2025 confirm that price, convenience, and emotional reward still dominate decision-making.

Behavioral change takes time, and consumers respond to incentives that reflect their real priorities. Sustainability can gain traction when it is reframed around [price-per-use](#), ease, cultural relevance, [meaningful stories](#) and product performance.

This session examines how brands can meet consumers where they are and build loyalty in a crowded, skeptical marketplace. We will explore:

- The core values shaping consumer choices and how brands can authentically connect these to sustainability
- How sustainability and marketing teams can collaborate confidently without crossing into greenwashing
- The most compelling storytelling case studies and how to make sustainability genuinely exciting for consumers

Speakers:

- Tara Gilson, chief executive officer, north America, **Veja**
- Jennifer Gootman, global head of sustainability and ESG strategy, **Tory Burch**

Moderated by: Hanna Halmari, head of conferences, **Innovation Forum**

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12.30 -1.30 Lunch

1.30-2.15 Breakout sessions

* Join us in the 'This house believes' for high-energy debates where participants are randomly assigned a side to argue. Limited to 15 participants per room for more intimate, engaging discussion.

1. Just transition – Due diligence fatigue: How do we shift from compliance checkbox to real impact for people and planet?

- Evre Gaynak, global human rights due diligence (HRDD) leader, **W.L. Gore**
- Adolfo Lopez del Castillo, senior director – quality, compliance, sustainability operations, **Lacoste**
- TBC, **TextileGenesis**

Moderated by: Hanna Reichel, director of sustainability, **Centric brands**

2. Hotspot analysis – Preferred materials: How to use LCA data and navigate trade-offs for impact?

- Christina Castle, senior manager, impact and product, **Dôen**
- Jeffrey Fitzpatrick, director, corporate sustainability, **Canada Goose**

Moderated by: Katina Boutis, independent

3. Regulatory readiness and opportunities – Supply chain disclosure and resilience: Are we overcomplicating traceability?

- Kehkeshan Usman, chief sustainability officer, **MG Apparel**
- TBC, **SWEEP**

Moderated by: Karimah Huddah, founder and chief catalyst, **illumine.earth**

4. This house believes* – Circularity distracts the industry from achieving net-zero

Moderated by: Liz Alessi, founder, Liz Alessi Consulting

2.15-3.00 Breakout sessions

1. *Just transition* – **Water stewardship: How can we identify and address blind spots in the value chain?**

- Akbar Ali, senior manager, responsible business projects, **Artistic Milliners**
- Janine Rubino, product director, **Macy's**

Moderated by: Tricia Carey, COO, **Avalo**

2. *Hotspot analysis* – **The change management challenge: How do you actually embed sustainability into business value creation?**

- Liz Lipton-McCombie, head of ESG and sustainability, **Nordstrom**
- Pablo Hernandez, vice president of strategy, brand & manufacturing, **SIERRA**

Moderated by: Karimah Huddah, founder and chief catalyst, **illumine.earth**

3. *Regulatory readiness and opportunities* – **How do we navigate fragmented textile EPR systems – and turn compliance into value?**

- Randi Marshall, head of sustainability and public affairs, H&M Americas, **H&M**
- Milene Firbank, sustainability consultant, **RSM Canada**

Moderated by: Danielle Holly, executive director, North America, **Ellen MacArthur Foundation**

4. *This house believes** – **Biodegradable synthetics are greenwashing dressed up as innovation**

Moderated by: Tanya Richard, COO and head of stakeholder engagement, **Innovation Forum**

3.00-3.45 Networking break

3.45-4.15 Breakout sessions – Case study round

1. *Just transition* – **Gender equity: How to move from isolated programs to procurement priority?**
2. *Hotspot analysis* – **Reverse logistics: Building the infrastructure, data systems and collaborations to convert returns into value**
3. *Regulatory readiness and opportunities* – **DPPs: How to turn compliance into competitive advantage**
4. *This house believes** – **Transaction certificates create paper trails, not supply chain accountability**

Moderated by: Hanna Reichel, director of sustainability, **Centric Brands**

4.15-5.00 Breakout sessions

1. *Just transition* – **Dignified work: How can the apparel and textiles industry empower workers and uplift communities?**
 - Jo Maiden, founder, **SOKO Kenya**
 - Hannah Sherman, head of sustainability, **Rothy's**
 - Lisa Diegel, director of sustainability and impact, **Faherty Brand**

Moderated by: Dana Davis, founder, **Dana Davis Consulting**

2. *Hotspot analysis* – **Innovation opportunities: What are the small tweaks in our supply chain that can have big impact?**
 - Katy O'Brien, head of innovation, **New Balance**
 - Alejandro Castillo Nolte, chief sustainability officer, **NettalCo**
 - TBC, **Livinguard Technologies**

Moderated by: Tricia Carey, COO, **Avalo**

3. *Regulatory readiness and opportunities* – **ESPR: Can circular design requirements eliminate waste from supply chains?**
 - Miranda Morrison, VP of sustainable product design, **Steve Madden**
 - Julia Kirschner, impact and innovation director, **ARMEDANGELS**

Moderated by: Liz Alessi, founder, **Liz Alessi Consulting**

4. *This house believes** – **"Luxury fashion is sustainable by nature"**

Moderated by: Niamh Campbell, senior project manager, **Innovation Forum**

5.00- Networking drinks

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Day 2 – Thursday, June 4th – System transformation and critical engagement

8.00–9.00 **Arrival and light breakfast**

9.00–9.20 **Board room buy-in: How can we present the business case to the C-suite without selling sustainability short?**

Sustainability and the business case are often treated as competing narratives, yet both matter. Too often the moral argument dominates, while the commercial upside is underplayed. At the same time, many companies struggle to measure ROI in a way that reflects the full value sustainability delivers.

When assessed with the right metrics, sustainability drives clear financial returns: lower material and energy costs, greater supply-chain resilience, reduced exposure to volatility, and new avenues for growth and innovation. The challenge is presenting these benefits in a way that resonates with leaders who are under pressure to deliver short-term results.

In this session, experts will share practical methods and real case studies that show how to quantify the value of sustainability in business terms that the C-suite cares about. We will also explore how teams can make a compelling case for long-term strategic investment in an environment where shareholders often prioritise quarterly performance.

Speaker: Tensie Whelan, founding director and senior advisor, **NYU Stern Centre for Sustainable Business**

Moderated by: Chana Rosenthal, principal and founder, **reDesign Consulting**

9.20–10.00 **Overproduction: Where's the incentive (and solution) to slow the system down?**

Marginal product impact improvements are being outweighed by overall production growth, with ultra-fast fashion driving an industry-wide surge in volume. Yet even establishing the scale of the problem is difficult: only 9 percent of brands disclose their annual production volumes (Fashion Revolution's [What Fuels Fashion? Vol 2](#)).

What we do know is that between 15 and 45 billion garments go unsold every year ([WGSN](#)), reflecting deep inefficiencies in a planning model that asks buyers to product demand months ahead with minimal evidence. The financial risk of under-ordering encourages brands to overproduce, making surplus a built-in feature rather than an exception. At the same time, unused stock presents a clear opportunity to improve margins, increase efficiency, and reduce waste.

This session will explore:

- How greater transparency can help pinpoint where and why overproduction occurs
- The practical solutions available today, including AI-enabled forecasting, production efficiency, and more local, demand-led manufacturing
- How these improvements stack up in an industry still driven by high consumption and constant product refresh

Ultimately, we ask what it will take to build an industry where producing less is not only possible, but capable of sustaining long-term business success.

Speakers:

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- Olivia Morgan, director of operations and sustainability, **Subset**
- Alicia Serrani, CEO, co-founder, **T.W.I.N**

Moderated by: Tricia Carey, COO, **Avalo**

10.00-10.45 **The reality of resale, repair, rental: Can circular business models actually scale to complete with the linear system?**

Circular business models promise a genuine shift in how the industry creates and captures value. They aim to extend product use, decouple revenue from resource consumption and move the sector away from the linear take-make-waste model. They've become mainstream in brand strategies and cultural norms have evolved, but when it comes to sustainability, what role do they actually play?

Research shows that secondhand and new purchases often rise together. Many take-back and resale programs depend on incentives that encourage additional buying. Some rental schemes carry high transport footprints. Repairs risk becoming niche services rather than drivers of reduced production. As of yet, no circular business model offers a commercially viable alternative to the linear system. In some cases, they enable a moral license to consume more.

In this session we'll hear from industry leaders on where circular models genuinely outperform linear approaches, where they fall short, and what it will take to scale beyond pilots for system-wide change.

Speakers:

- Peter Whitcomb, CEO, **Tersus Solutions**
- Meital Peleg Mizrachi, postdoctoral fellow, **Yale University**
- Sarah Allibhoy, associate director of strategy and insights, **Nuuly**

Moderated by: Danielle Holly, executive director, North America, **Ellen MacArthur Foundation**

10.45-11.15 Networking break

11.15-12.00 **T2T targets: Would a fully recycled closed-loop textiles system truly benefit everyone?**

In 2017, the [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#) found that less than 1% of material was recycled back into new clothing. The industry hasn't made sizeable improvements since ([Textile Exchange](#)). A major barrier is a long-standing supply and demand deadlock. Brands say they cannot access enough affordable recycled fibres, while recyclers say they cannot scale without stronger, more reliable demand. As a result, textile waste continues to build and reliance on virgin fossil-fuel fibres persists.

Momentum is building through long-term offtake agreements, new state-level disposal bans and the EU's Waste Framework Directive, and uncertainties around bottle-to-fibre that are pushing the sector toward true textile-to-textile (T2T) solutions.

With capabilities scaling, this is a key moment to consider how to build T2T systems that genuinely reduce environmental impact, avoid normalizing over-consumption, and prevent burdens from shifting to communities in the global south.

We'll discuss:

- Practical examples already emerging from first movers. What do they reveal about real-world feasibility?

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- What structural changes are required to unlock reliable demand and build a commercially viable T2T industry?
- The operational realities of overhauling textile waste systems, from collection to processing to end markets
- Unintended consequences: What are they, and how can we avoid them?

Speakers:

- Matt Allen, head of business development North America, **Reju.**
- Carmen Gama, director of circular design, **Eileen Fisher**
- Jennie McMartin, senior director, innovation strategy, operations and management, **Lululemon**
- Steven Bethell, founder, **Bank & Vogue**

Moderated by: Liz Alessi, founder, **Liz Alessi Consulting**

12.00-12:30 **Regenerative cotton: If it really is a win-win for all, why is it not more widespread?**

Regenerative cotton is increasingly demonstrating practical benefits, from healthier soils and improved biodiversity to greater carbon sequestration and more resilient farming systems. Evidence from the field shows more stable yields for long-term fibre supply and new income opportunities for growers.

Yet despite this potential, adoption remains limited. Cost pressures and the rise of ultra-fast fashion continue to drive demand toward cheaper virgin polyester ([Textile Exchange](#)). At the same time, farmers face real risks when transitioning, including up-front investment costs, labor intensity, uncertain yields and increasing exposure to climate volatility. Without the right support, the shift can feel too financially and operationally uncertain to pursue.

In this session, we will hear from US cotton farmers about the realities of regenerative practice, and consider what brands, suppliers and other stakeholders must do to accelerate adoption. The central question is unavoidable: will the industry commit to building a fiber system that supports farmer livelihoods and long-term resilience, or continue relying on a model that leaves both people and supply chains increasingly exposed?

Speakers:

- Liz Hershfield, executive director, **COTTON USA™ and U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol**
- Sarah Moore, associate vice president, ESG strategy, **Victoria Secret & Co**
- Elizabeth Spruell, owner, **Spruell Farms**

Moderated by: Tanya Richard, COO and head of stakeholder engagement, Innovation Forum

12.30-1.30pm **Lunch**

1.30–3.00pm **Roundtables**

These roundtable sessions are focused discussions for deeper engagement and learning. The sessions aim to drive collaborative problem-solving across some of the key issues we've been discussing throughout the two days, sharing case studies on company initiatives and partnerships.

We'll run 2 x 45-min rounds of each session on a first-come first-served basis.

Labor and justice:

A. Living wages: What will it take to deliver living wages?

B. Responsible exits: When factories relocate who protects the workers left behind?

- Led by Lori Stamm, director, supplier assessment and improvement programs, **Verité**

Materials innovation:

C. Fiber shedding: Until our data sets improve, what assumptions should guide our material choices?

- Led by Brittainy McFarland, senior director of materials innovation, **Under Armour**

D. Next-generation materials: How do we balance performance and price parity in lower-impact fibres?

- Led by Jamie Grassi, senior director fabric, development, innovation and sourcing, **Fabletics**

Climate progress

E. Shared purchasing power agreements: How can collective action unlock renewable energy investment in supply chains?

- Led by **Ralph Lauren**

F. SBTi implementation: How do we navigate SBTi services and integrate FLAG into our inventories?

- Led by Sarah Baker, principal advisor, corporate social responsibility, **La Vie En Rose**

Circularity

G. T2T feedstock: How does 'design for disassembly' work in practice?

- Led by Sarah Coulter, Americas program director, **Accelerating Circularity**

H. FABSCRAP sorting station: A collective opportunity to recharge amid industry burnout

- Led by Camille Tagle, co-founder, **FABSCRAP**

3.15–3.45pm **Key takeaways and closing remarks**

Speaker: Raz Goelnic, associate professor of strategic design and management, **Parsons School of Design**

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