BIG IDEAS
I have never forgotten the moment when I first visited the Smithsonian. It was the mid-1960s and we were driving back to New Jersey after a family vacation. I was too young to understand why we couldn’t stop at many historic sites I wanted to visit in the still-segregated South. But when we drove through Washington, D.C., we made a detour to the Smithsonian.

My dad explained that I could visit the Smithsonian and not worry about being turned away because of race. It was then that I first understood the power of this institution where anyone, regardless of who they were, could become something more than who they had been.

Since its inception, the Smithsonian has been a gift to America, telling the nation’s stories through our collections, scholarship and educational initiatives. Our scientific research—examining everything from Earth’s prolific biodiversity to distant galaxies—also tells stories about the human condition, our place in the universe, and where we might be headed next.

Now, as an institution, we are working to become more than we have been. That entails more fully occupying the digital realm, more robustly enhancing our educational capabilities, and more deeply examining the world’s most pressing challenges. All are goals that have become more urgent with the advent of dual pandemics: the deadly novel coronavirus contagion and the persistent virulent racism that may have finally galvanized a nation into confronting its tortured racial past.

For us to be the institution Americans need and deserve, we must use our reputation and expertise to stimulate dialogue about some of the most important collective challenges we face. Clearly one of these is the challenge of race in all its dimensions. In the wake of the horrific killing of George Floyd and the unified outcry for change, the Smithsonian is leading the discussion with a couple of new initiatives.

The first, Race, Community and Our Shared Future, is a Smithsonian-wide project that will examine the impact of racial inequality in our communities and nation and inspire conversation about how Americans understand and experience race. And the new digital platform Talking About Race by the National Museum of African American History and Culture is helping diverse audiences better understand and discuss the lived realities of race with a variety of digital tools, instructional videos and multimedia resources.

Also, at the top of our minds right now is the uncertainty of a global pandemic. As of June 2020, more than 2 million people have contracted COVID-19 in the United States. Many in our communities face unprecedented hardships: dealing with illness or the loss of loved ones, balancing the care of others with the unfamiliarity of working from home, feeling isolated from friends and families, or dealing with economic anxiety.

The Smithsonian is preparing for what comes next with two task forces and a COVID-19 response team working to identify how we can gradually reopen, guided foremost by the safety and health of our employees and the public. Despite the hurdles inherent in our “new normal,” they have not prevented us from finding new ways to engage and inspire. We will never replace our tangible objects that tell a story when you see them up close. But for the millions of people who cannot visit our museums, a virtual Smithsonian can be at their fingertips no matter where they are. The value of being a more digital institution has been made clear during this time of isolation. We are uniting people by hosting online events, providing invaluable Smithsonian digital assets, and staying connected through social media.

One of the ways we are able to inspire creativity among all socially distant learners is through our new Open Access initiative. By releasing an unprecedented amount of free Smithsonian digital resources into the public domain—more than 3 million 2-D and 3-D images—we are ushering in a new era of educational and research endeavors, creative reuse, computational analysis and innovative exploration.

As we continue to make new discoveries, produce groundbreaking exhibitions, and initiate thought-provoking discussions, we must share them with future generations. Already, we create educational materials based on our science and scholarship that enhance student and teacher engagement in 21st-century learning. Smithsonian education materials are used by teachers in all 50 states, but we can do more.

To that end, I plan to bolster the Smithsonian’s role in lifelong learning by working to transform it into a national leader in pre-K-12 education. That is why we are developing a model for the future of education by working with the Washington, D.C., public school system. In time, we plan to share that model on a national and international stage.

As an educational organization, we have an obligation to make education a priority, no matter if learners get their education in classrooms or online.

The crises we are facing have reinforced the importance of what we hold most dear, starting with the health and safety of our families and loved ones. But they also have reminded us that our human connection extends beyond the walls of our homes, beyond the color of our skin, and beyond the borders of our nations. We long for the comfort of culture, the perspective of history, the beauty of art, and the answers to questions about our universe and ourselves that science provides. These, too, are more precious than ever, and the Smithsonian is unique in its ability to bring these endeavors to people everywhere.

I have been so fortunate to be a part of this remarkable institution for the better part of my career. I am honored to lead it as we approach the Smithsonian’s 175th anniversary in 2021. In this time that feels so fragile, so precarious, we must heed what one of my favorite authors, James Baldwin, said: “The challenge is in the moment; the time is always now.” I believe there is no better time than now to make the Smithsonian the best version of the institution it can be.

Thank you for your continued commitment and support.

Lonnie G. Bunch III
Secretary of the Smithsonian
Shep Doeleman has been chasing black holes for years. More than a decade ago, this Smithsonian astronomer and other visionary scientists asked: Was it possible to capture an image of one? Black holes by their very nature are invisible, predicted by Albert Einstein but never directly observed. And the resolution required to record such a distant object—fearsome in mass but tiny in size, invisible or not—would necessitate a lens the size of the entire Earth. Doeleman likened the endeavor to photographing the date on a quarter in Los Angeles while standing in New York City.

An international team of scientists including Katie Bouman, a former Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory computer scientist, created a set of algorithms to piece together the puzzle of data taken by eight telescopes around the world, creating the first image of a black hole. This is an early equation Bouman developed and presented in a TED Talk.
Incredibly, that is what the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) team he directs—an international consortium that has grown to involve more than 200 scientists at 13 research institutes around the world—accomplished. The EHT linked eight radio telescopes on four continents to swivel in perfect synchrony and train their sights on a luminous swirl of hot gases and debris orbiting a supermassive black hole 55 million light years away in the center of the galaxy called Messier 87.
This is a unique strength of the Smithsonian: the ability to convene partners around the globe to create a virtual observatory the size of the planet in pursuit of what was once thought impossible. For Doeleman and his colleagues it was the discovery of a lifetime. Their research opens new windows into our understanding of space-time, the origins of galaxies, and the very workings of the universe.

For the rest of us, that image shared around the world is a discovery that brings us together as human beings—an awe-inspiring reminder that we are all here together on this small blue sphere looking out at a vast and mysterious cosmos.
His idea of our shared place in the universe—our shared history—was embodied in 2019. The heft of the Smithsonian—its unparalleled collections, its diverse and deep-rooted expertise, and its outsized ability to connect with millions of people—is being brought to bear on the most critical issues of our time: conversations about democracy, identity, climate change and more.

The challenges we face today, as a nation and as a planet, call for creative and collaborative interdisciplinary solutions—big ideas. The Smithsonian, a place that belongs to all of us, has the capacity to unite us by drawing on the material legacy of the past to imagine a brighter and more just and sustainable future. This is what drives the institution forward to be, as Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III explains, “the glue that helps to hold us together.”

Martha, the last descendant of the once-abundant passenger pigeon population, is one of the most famous birds in the world. Her death helped inspire the modern conservation movement. Today, her 100-year-old remains have been digitized and rendered in 3-D for viewers to study, download, reuse or remix. Martha is one of nearly 3 million digital items in the Smithsonian collection now available copyright-free through our Open Access initiative. PHOTO DONALD E. HURLBERT

Panel from Hokusai: Mad about Painting (on view November 2019–January 2021) at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, the National Museum of Asian Art, which is home to one of the largest collections of the artist’s work. The Katsushika Hokusai-painted panel features a crane perched on a snowy limb. Detail from Twelve Months.
Fifty years ago another image captivated the world and galvanized our faith in human ingenuity and wonder at the universe around us: the extraordinary sight of astronaut Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon. His gloves and spacesuit were conserved and digitized thanks to the first-ever Kickstarter campaign by a museum, Reboot the Suit. They were displayed at the National Air and Space Museum for the 50th anniversary of the lunar landing. PHOTO MARCO GROB / TRUNK ARCHIVE

The National Air and Space Museum, whose first director, Michael Collins, was also one of the three Apollo 11 astronauts, spearheaded the production. And now the museum is embarking on the most substantial renovation in Smithsonian history in order to redouble its capacity to inspire new generations to reach for the stars. This is the power of the Smithsonian: to spark wonder and lifelong learning, make accessible the artifacts of history, and bring us together around a shared culture.
The museum that Secretary Bunch shepherded into being, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, has already become a treasured place of pilgrimage in the almost four years since its opening. It is an indispensable source of excellence and expertise, helping direct the nation in a vital discussion about race and American history. Naturally, The New York Times partnered with the Smithsonian as it embarked upon a major examination of the pervasive legacy of slavery and the ways it has shaped American society.

The 1619 Project marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in British North America. Curator Mary Elliott selected objects from the museum collection for a special broadsheet section of the newspaper, sharing the powerful stories they represent to tell a fuller, more truthful story of slavery and freedom. “This is a shared history, everyone inherited the legacies of slavery,” Elliott says. “This project—like the museum itself—enables each of us to confront this history and seek to learn more, to be thoughtful about moving forward as a nation.”
New partnerships and platforms propel the Smithsonian toward the goal of reaching as broad an audience as possible, taking the institution beyond the National Mall. The American Women’s History Initiative is a digital-first project for precisely this reason. The Smithsonian has teamed up with Wikipedia to bring unsung stories of women in American history to people all over the world who might not ever come to the nation’s capital. Facilitated by a new open knowledge coordinator partly funded by the Wikimedia Foundation, the initiative is hosting a series of Wikipedia edit-a-thons alongside exhibition openings and digital image releases.

Already, for instance, images and biographies of women uploaded from the National Portrait Gallery’s exhibition Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times. Curator Kate Clarke Lemay dug deep to tell the story of women’s struggles for equality, highlighting activists from the 1830s through the 1960s, and shining new light in particular on African American women’s fight for full citizenship.

In conducting her research, she asked, “When I read the accounts of women’s suffrage, I wondered where are the African American women in what arguably is one of the longest reform movements in American history? What of Latinx, Native American or Asian American women? Why has women’s history never been recognized as the needle on the barometer of American history?”
As the institution sets a course to tell a fuller story, the most vital arena in which we can do that work is with K–12 education. The Smithsonian seeks to inspire a generation of confident, creative problem solvers who connect their knowledge to complex challenges. Establishing a more inclusive and expansive understanding of what it means to be American opens up possibilities of deeper engagement. It’s an investment in the nation’s children and their capacity to see themselves in history and imagine a better future.

At the National Museum of the American Indian, a new Native Knowledge 360° education initiative seeks to inspire an expanded understanding of Native American cultures past and present and inform the ways American history is taught. Through online materials and teacher training opportunities held around the country, the platform offers students and teachers a K–12 framework to modernize the teaching of history, social studies, arts, culture and more—one that centers Native voices, is geographically and culturally diverse, and builds on the premise that this is a personal history we all share.

The Smithsonian has entered into a two-year partnership with the Washington, D.C., public school system, aligning Smithsonian content with the schools’ existing curricula to support the social and emotional needs of students. This effort to strive for equity and access by reaching students who have the least access to resources will empower learners with experiences that aid in their academic work and overall development. This comprehensive education initiative begun in 2019 was put to the test in 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the Smithsonian closed its museums and research centers to mitigate the spread of the virus, the institution quickly adapted to create an easy-to-use library of learning resources for various age levels and those with access to high-tech, low-tech or no-tech tools. The impact was immediate, as teachers already comfortable with our digital teaching tools such as Learning Lab flocked to our sites, as did students and caregivers.

The Smithsonian’s mission to educate and inspire is more important than ever in moments of crisis and change. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic closed our doors, but the Smithsonian remained open, active and responding to learners and visitors through our distance learning resources and interactive virtual tours. The Smithsonian American Art Museum is one of many museums that offer 360° images of art, objects and full exhibitions online. Whether you are at home, at school, across the world or across the country, Smithsonian resources, expertise and experiences are just a click away.
The Smithsonian has always been committed to supporting students and teachers, and we want to ensure that school closures do not get in the way of students’ ongoing education,” notes Ruki Neuhold-Ravikumar, the Smithsonian’s acting undersecretary for education. "We formed an education response team to support schools facing closures around the country by connecting them with free and relevant resources. And the response has been tremendous.”

All across the institution, scientists are undertaking remarkable projects to build a more sustainable and resilient future. They are studying the emergence of coronaviruses similar to COVID-19 to try to stem the next pandemic, researching the impact of solar ultraviolet radiation on phytoplankton in the Antarctic, pioneering new cryogenic technologies to preserve coral reef ecosystems around the globe, documenting indigenous peoples’ ecological knowledge of icescapes in Alaska and the Bering Strait region, monitoring air pollution from satellites in space, and so much more. These studies regularly involve scientific and cultural partners; they often involve the public, too—citizen scientists such as Gabon schoolchildren working with forest researchers to measure how tree growth responds to weather and climate, or American volunteers mailing in ginkgo leaf samples as part of last summer’s National Science Foundation–funded Fossil Atmospheres project. The Smithsonian Conservation Commons now links these investigators and living laboratories together in an action network that amplifies efforts to sustain Earth’s biodiversity and convened to discuss and share solutions at the April 2020 Earth Optimism Summit.

Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute fellow Jennifer Gil-Acevedo understands that people do not always appreciate what they cannot see, taste or touch. Microalgae power entire ecosystems but are invisible to the naked eye—so Gil-Acevedo created glowing images using microscopes, printed touchable 3-D models and baked cookies with edible microalgae. Her work offers everyone a way to experience microalgae through one or more of their senses.

Nature—Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial (on view May 2019–January 2020) celebrated the power of design to transform our understanding of and relationship with the natural world. To create Fantasma, design studio AnotherFarm collaborated with scientists who make transgenic glowing silk, engineered by injecting silkworm eggs with jellyfish DNA.
Many of these studies have been ongoing for decades. The data and the specimens amassed join the limitlessly rich archives that are the national collections, where they are preserved for future researchers who will conduct inquiries we can’t even begin to imagine.

Nowhere is this vast record of our planet more powerfully demonstrated than in the new Deep Time exhibition in the David H. Koch Hall of Fossils, which transmits the revolution in recent thinking about the history of life on earth directly to visitors. While Deep Time showcases many of the museum’s most famous and historic specimens, often posed in dramatic new stances, the fossils are presented within the context of new scientific research: a 500-million-year survey of extreme changes in climate showing how the planet’s changing environment has affected ecosystems through time and providing a new framework for understanding the climate crisis of today.
This skeleton of a woolly mammoth is posed clearing snow from vegetation in the David H. Koch Hall of Fossils–Deep Time exhibition at the National Museum of Natural History. Mammoths lived across northern Eurasia and North America until a few thousand years ago, when a lethal combination of shifting climate, changing food sources, and a brand-new predator—humans—drove them to extinction. The skeleton provides a window into our own recent past on planet Earth and reminds us that no species—regardless of size—is invincible. PHOTO GARY MULCAHY
Paleobotanist Scott Wing explains that Deep Time is “helping people to see that their actions today leave a legacy that ripples thousands of generations into the future.” He studies fossil plants that date to the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM), a period of intense global warming some 56 million years ago that most closely approximates the rapid anthropogenic environmental changes of today.

Those very same plants were alive around the time that the brilliant orange-yellow light encircling the black hole and captured by the Smithsonian’s Event Horizon Telescope began its journey to us. It is coincidence, but nevertheless a measure of the scale of Smithsonian research, that the scientists using the Event Horizon Telescope are studying light that left the colliding black holes at almost the same time PETM fossils were part of a living ecosystem stressed by the Earth’s last great warming event.

Understanding this shared history on a global scale brings us together in the spirit of the Smithsonian’s 18th-century chemist and geologist founding donor, James Smithson, and his dream of a place for the increase and diffusion of knowledge for all—one that inspires us to model the future we wish to see: creative, agile, innovative, diverse, and accessible to everyone.
A photographer captured images of visitors to the National Museum of American History on a single day. Millions of people—from South Carolina, Kansas, Cameroon, Honduras and more—cross through the Smithsonian’s physical and digital doors each year. They and our generous donors are the lifeblood of the Smithsonian, which is supported through a public-private partnership with the American people, Congress and donors who make possible our thought-provoking exhibitions, engaging public programs and vital research. Photos: Stephen Voss.

WE ARE

CREATIVE

AGILE

INNOVATIVE

DIVERSE

ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

THANKS TO YOU
visitors of all ages are captivated each year by the experiential programs that spark curiosity and build awareness collection, knowledgeable curators and expert research staff to years. These crucial positions use each museum's extensive education programs and exhibitions, and establishes an endowed Curatorial Fund for Culture. American Express is a continuing partner of the National Museum of African American History and Culture and has also supported the National Museum of the American Indian.

Jere and Bonnie Broh-Kahn further this essential purpose with a $1 million gift through their Hillside Foundation, Allan and Shelley Holt are helping to bring the thrill and wonder of flight to a new generation by supporting a comprehensive revitalization of the National Air and Space Museum's galleries, collections and educational programs. The Hillside Foundation sponsored an open house in 2012, will be a centerpiece of the transformed museum, delving into groundbreaking technologies that fuel the aerospace industry. The gift also establishes the Allan and Shelley Holt Innovations Series of annual lectures and demonstrations. These will explore how innovative ideas create new fields of science, art and industry—and change the course of history. The Holts have been extraordinary benefactors of the National Air and Space Museum for more than a decade, generously supporting the Holt Scholars Program and the museum's Trophy awards. Allan Holt is chair of the museum's board and a member of the Board of Regents’ Advance Committee.

The Hillside Foundation – Allan and Shelley Holt SPACE FOR INNOVATION

Since its founding in 1954, the Archives of American Art has sought to build a diverse collection that tells the full story of the visual arts in the United States. In fiscal year 2019, the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation contributed $5 million to create an endowment that enables the Archives to process and digitize more material on historically underrepresented artists, including the papers of Jeff Donaldson, co-founder of the African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists (AfriCOBRA) in 1968, and the Tomás Ybarra-Frausto research material on Chicano art, one of the most consulted collections for the study of Latino art. By ensuring that resources like these are available online, the Archives provides greater access to the legacies of underrecognized artists and shares a more inclusive story of the visual arts in the United States. In fiscal year 2019, the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation records and Roy Lichtenstein papers to the Archives.

American Express A CULTURAL LEGACY

The galleries on the fourth floor of the National Museum of African American History and Culture explore African American and African diasporic cultural expression across genre, place and time. Objects range from fashions by iconic designer Ann Lowe to the literary arts of author and playwright Ntozake Shange. A major gift from American Express expands the impact and scope of these galleries, named the American Express Culture Galleries. Two endowed curators—the American Express Curator for Culture and the American Express Curator of the Center for the Study of the African Diaspora—will shape the galleries’ exhibitions and programs, providing support for travel and research, collection care, acquisitions, educational programs and exhibitions, and establishes an endowed Curatorial Fund for Culture. American Express is a continuing partner of the National Museum of African American History and Culture and has also supported the National Museum of the American Indian.

Jere and Bonnie Broh-Kahn PASSING KNOWLEDGE TO THE FUTURE

Education is at the heart of all Smithsonian museums. Jere and Bonnie Broh-Kahn further this essential purpose with a $1 million gift to the National Air and Space Museum and a $1 million gift to the National Museum of Natural History to fund the Broh-Kahn Weil Director of Education at each institution for five years. These crucial positions use each museum’s extensive collection, knowledgeable curators and expert research staff to implement programs that spark curiosity and build awareness about the history—and possible futures—of our planet, its people and the universe beyond. Hundreds of thousands of visitors of all ages are captivated each year by the experiential educational opportunities at these museums. In addition, the donors plan to leave generous bequests to each museum to endow the positions. Jere and Bonnie Broh-Kahn have supported numerous Smithsonian museums since 1992.

The Hillside Foundation – Allan and Shelley Holt SPACE FOR INNOVATION

With an $11 million gift through their Hillside Foundation, Allan and Shelley Holt are helping to bring the thrill and wonder of flight to a new generation by supporting a comprehensive revitalization of the National Air and Space Museum’s galleries, collections and educational programs. The Allan and Shelley Holt Innovations Gallery, scheduled to open in 2025, will be a centerpiece of the transformed museum, delving into groundbreaking technologies that fuel the aerospace industry. The gift also establishes the Allan and Shelley Holt Innovations Series of annual lectures and demonstrations. These will explore how innovative ideas create new fields of science, art and industry—and change the course of history. The Holts have been extraordinary benefactors of the National Air and Space Museum for more than a decade, generously supporting the Holt Scholars Program and the museum’s Trophy awards. Allan Holt is chair of the museum’s board and a member of the Board of Regents’ Advance Committee.

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John and Adrienne Mars INSPIRING HOPE

John and Adrienne Mars have been involved with the Smithsonian for decades, supporting a number of Smithsonian museums and research centers. This year, their gifts to the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute and the Arts and Industries Building affirm their legacy. The Mars’ $5 million gift to the National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute allows the Smithsonian to endow the director’s position, named in their honor. Their gift of $1 million for the Arts and Industries Building will make possible the development of Futures, a landmark exhibition to celebrate the Smithsonian’s 175th anniversary in 2021. The exhibition will highlight a new mission for the building—to inspire people to think more optimistically about the future.

David M. Rubenstein CONNECTING PAST AND FUTURE

A $10 million gift from David M. Rubenstein, former chair of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, will transform the iconic Arts and Industries Building into a national hub for exploring ideas and questions about the future. Constructed in 1881 to house the U.S. National Museum, the building’s reincarnation begins in 2021—the Smithsonian’s 175th anniversary—with a yearlong exhibition Futures featuring visions for the future. After the exhibition, a multi-year renovation will preserve this architectural gem while adapting the interior to accommodate future-facing technologies and experimental programs that require flexible spaces. Rubenstein also gave $1 million this year to the Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative, which illuminates women’s pivotal roles in building and sustaining our country. A board member of the National Museum of American History and the National Museum of Natural History, Rubenstein has provided generous support to a wide array of Smithsonian museums and centers over the last 15 years.

Texttron Inc. THE SCIENCE OF FLIGHT

The How Things Fly gallery in the National Air and Space Museum sparks curiosity about forces such as gravity as well as the technologies that seem to defy it. A $10 million gift from Texttron Inc. to aid the museum’s multiyear transformation will also fund a major redesign of the How Things Fly gallery, to be named in recognition of Texttron. The gallery will Gian 1,000 square feet of exhibition space and more immersive, interactive exhibits, including an expanded design makerspace and a new Cessna 172 with a cockpit open for exploration by visitors. Once designed, the redesign gallery will present challenging science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) concepts with the goal of inspiring future innovators in air and space travel.

Walmart A VISION FOR VISITORS

More than 7 million people have visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture since it opened in 2016, making it one of the most visited museums in the United States. Walmart helps ensure that every visitor can fully engage with exhibitions illustrating how African American stories both reflect American values and shape what it means to be American. The ground-floor Walmart Welcome Center has greeted visitors with information on navigating the building’s eight levels. A $1 million gift establishes the Walmart Director of Visitor and Guest Services, a unique position responsible for enhancing all aspects of the visitor experience including accessibility, exhibition technologies and opportunities for social interaction. The grant also provides funding to support the director’s work as well as the museum’s overall mission of documenting African American life, history and culture.
LEADERSHIP GIFTS

We thank 2019’s most generous donors for their gifts of $1 million or more.

**William and Valerie Anders Foundation**

Scientists are exploring deep time on Earth and in space with the help of a $1 million gift from the William and Valerie Anders Foundation. The gift establishes the William and Valerie Anders Foundation Fund at the National Air and Space Museum, supporting research on the geologic history of the moon and Mars. The gift also funds the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute’s paleontological research in the Amazon. The Panama-based institute has named its Amazonia Field Station and a seminar room for Valerie Anders in recognition of this contribution. William and Valerie Anders have supported the Smithsonian as volunteers and donors for two decades.

**Analytical Graphics, Inc.**

The National Air and Space Museum uses hands-on interactives to engage visitors with the latest information about aerospace missions. Through an in-kind gift from Analytical Graphics, Inc., the museum has been able to customize and modernize interactives in several galleries, including a video interactive for an innovative multiyear, multi-institutional exhibition with $2 million from the Art Bridges + Terra Foundation Initiative for American Art has fostered exploration, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts of the United States. A joint initiative provided by the two foundations brings these ideas to life. The Smithsonian American Art Museum received nearly $2 million from the Art Bridges + Terra Foundation Initiative for an innovative multiyear, multi-institutional exhibition with five museums in the western region of the United States. The partnership allows the Smithsonian American Art Museum to loan its artworks to each museum and also develop an exhibition with all participating museums that will travel starting in 2022.

**Boeing**

In July 2019 Boeing provided a $2 million gift to the National Air and Space Museum in support of Apollo 11, a series of programs culminating with a three-day festival on the National Mall to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first human steps on the moon. To commemorate this great leap, the National Air and Space Museum displayed astronaut Neil Armstrong’s newly conserved spacesuit and other artifacts from the lunar missions; projected a multimedia display of the Saturn V rocket on the Washington Monument; and hosted thought-provoking discussions, including conversations about America’s powerful new rocket to take astronauts to deep space, the Space Launch System (SLS), which will inspire wonder and spark a national dialogue about the past, present and future of space exploration. Boeing has been a significant Smithsonian donor for 35 years.

**Ferring Pharmaceuticals**

Through social and economic globalization connect us in new ways, these forces can pressure traditional cultures to assimilate and risk losing their indigenous languages, arts and crafts, and economic self-sufficiency. Ferring Pharmaceuticals has provided a $1.75 million gift to scale the impact of the Cultural Sustainability Program at the Smithsonian’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. The center’s work with communities across the United States and around the world ensures that cultural heritage and endangered languages are not only preserved but can thrive and contribute to global cultural vitality. Ferring has supported the center since 2012.

**Ford Foundation**

The Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative, Because of Her Story, breaks ground not only as the nation’s most comprehensive effort to unearth women’s stories, but also for its digital-first approach to sharing these stories. A $1 million gift from the Case Foundation supports the initiative’s digital outreach and strategies program. This includes an online platform to help scholars and educators access Smithsonian collections, research and educational resources focusing on women’s contributions. The Case Foundation’s gift helps ensure that millions of people around the nation and the world hear the complete, compelling story of women in America.

**The Douglass Foundation**

For 50 years, scholars in residence at the Smithsonian American Art Museum have generated new research and shared fresh ways of seeing American art, aided by the museum’s prestigious fellowship program. A $1.045 million gift from The Douglass Foundation and its president, Dr. Laurel Douglass, endows one of the core fellowships for predoctoral researchers, The Douglass Foundation Fellowship in American Art, established by former foundation president and SAAM American Art Forum member Donald Douglass. SAAM Fellows spend up to one year in full-time residence at the museum, conducting research in the collection of more than 44,000 works. Their discoveries advance their professional careers while helping the museum reveal America’s rich artistic history.

**The Case Foundation**

Art Bridges + TERRA + SAAM

**Art Bridges + Terra Foundation Initiative**

In 2017, Alice Walton created Art Bridges to share American art across the country and strengthen collaboration among art institutions. For more than 40 years, the Terra Foundation for American Art has fostered exploration, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts of the United States. A joint initiative provided by the two foundations brings these ideas to life. The Smithsonian American Art Museum received nearly $2 million from the Art Bridges + Terra Foundation Initiative for an innovative multiyear, multi-institutional exhibition with five museums in the western region of the United States. The partnership allows the Smithsonian American Art Museum to loan its artworks to each museum and also develop an exhibition with all participating museums that will travel starting in 2022.

**Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes**

A $1 million gift from the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes will help create the National Native American Veterans Memorial to honor the patriotism, valor and sacrifice of Native Americans who have served our country. The design centers on a large steel circle balanced on a stone drum, and includes sacred elements of water and fire as well as lances to which visitors can tie prayer cloths. Harvey Pratt, Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal citizen and Vietnam veteran, designed the memorial as a place to gather, remember and heal. It will be dedicated at the National Museum of the American Indian on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2020.

**Ford Foundation**

The Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative, Because of Her Story, rewrites the narrative of American history by spotlighting women’s achievements, reaching diverse audiences and empowering future generations. The Ford Foundation, which has supported the Smithsonian for more than 35 years, provided a $1 million grant to help launch this institution-wide initiative. Because of Her Story encompasses exhibitions that commemorate the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage; publication of Smithsonian American Women, a book of Smithsonian artifacts illustrating women’s contributions; care and cataloguing of collections; and digital strategies that bring American women’s stories to global audiences.

**Ferris State University**

Through the generosity of Dr. Peter Buck, the National Museum of Natural History has acquired the largest diamond ever discovered in the United States, the Uncle Sam Diamond, a 40.23-carat stone unearthed in Arkansas in 1924. Now a 12.42-carat emerald-cut jewel, this magnificent stone helps illustrate the beautiful history of our planet. Dr. Peter Buck has been a benefactor of the National Museum of Natural History since 2003 and is an emeritus member of the museum’s board.

**Boeing**

Diamonds, formed under extreme heat and pressure deep within the Earth, are among the planet’s most treasured objects of beauty and value. With a $1.75 million gift from Dr. Peter Buck, the National Museum of Natural History has acquired the largest diamond ever discovered in the United States the Uncle Sam Diamond, a 40.23-carat stone unearthed in Arkansas in 1924. Now a 12.42-carat emerald-cut jewel, this magnificent stone helps illustrate the beautiful history of our planet. Dr. Peter Buck has been a benefactor of the National Museum of Natural History since 2003 and is an emeritus member of the museum’s board.
**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

A grant of $1 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation greatly advances the Smithsonian’s ability to tell the stories of American women and show how they have shaped our history. The Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative, Because of Her Story, features exhibitions, symposia, publications and digital media that share the stories of women such as Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, 19th-century abolitionist and women’s suffrage leader; Zitkala-Sa, early 20th-century Sioux activist; and Nancy Grace Roman, NASA’s first chief of astronomy. The Gates Foundation has generously funded Smithsonian education, history, culture and arts initiatives for more than a decade.

**Johnson & Johnson**

A $1 million gift from Johnson & Johnson provides vital support for the Smithsonian Science Education Center’s mission to bring inquiry-based science, technology, engineering, math, manufacturing and design (STEM|ED) education into K-12 classrooms worldwide. This funding enables the center to expand its proven STEM|ED curricula and digital resources; increase targeted outreach to girls, who remain underrepresented in these fields; and bolster systemic reform needed to revolutionize science education and inspire young students from diverse backgrounds to pursue STEM|ED careers. This gift continues Johnson & Johnson’s generous support of the center’s important work; the company has been a Smithsonian donor since 1991.

**W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

A three-year, $3.5 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation enables the National Museum of African American History and Culture to expand its Early Childhood Education Initiative, which creates programs and resources to empower, enrich and educate young children from birth to eight years old. These age-appropriate programs about identity, race and the African American experience are designed to uplift each child’s positive sense of self, illuminate similarities and celebrate differences, and inspire children to see how what is unfair can be made fair. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has supported several Smithsonian museums and educational initiatives.

**HFPA.**

Hollywood Foreign Press Association awarded its first ever grant to the Smithsonian—a $1 million contribution to the National Museum of American History. The gift benefits the exhibition *Entertaining America*, opening in 2021, which will explore how entertainment shapes American culture through film, theater, television, music and sports. Entertainment can explore how entertainment shapes American culture through hundreds of dreamers and explorers.

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**Frank and Susan Mars**

Frank and Susan Mars’ $1 million gift to the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute benefits species large and small. The gift enables the Panama Amphibian Rescue and Conservation Project to build captive populations of frog species at risk of extinction from the deadly amphibian chytrid fungus, and develop methods for successfully reintroducing captive frogs back into the wild in the future. The gift also supports efforts to save Asian elephants and bolster the National Zoo’s leadership in wildlife education and species conservation worldwide. Susan Mars is an active and dedicated member of the National Zoo’s advisory board.

**Wick and Bonnie Moorman**

A $1 million gift from Wick and Bonnie Moorman will support a broad range of endeavors that increase our understanding of the world and disseminate knowledge. The gift primarily benefits the seven-year transformation of the National Air and Space Museum. It also provides the Secretary of the Smithsonian discretionary funds; supports the Smithsonian’s 21 libraries; strengthens the Archives of American Art, a vast trove of primary sources for art history; and enhances the Cultural Sustainability Program at the Smithsonian’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, including its work to revitalize endangered languages. Wick Moorman is a member of the Smithsonian National Board.

**Jacqueline B. Mars**

What will our future look like? Who gets to decide? The *Futures* exhibition, coming to the Arts and Industries Building in 2021, will encourage visitors to explore such questions as they see, touch, taste and design diverse visions of the future. A $2 million gift from Jacqueline B. Mars funds exhibition development. Curators will draw from innovation hubs around the country as well as Smithsonian collections and expertise to identify art-tech installations, speculative designs, performances, talks and other experiences that inspire future thinking. A former Smithsonian National Board member, Jacqueline B. Mars has also supported the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and a dozen other Smithsonian museums and centers.

**Colin and Alma Powell**

Colin and Alma Powell made a $1 million gift in support of the endowment of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The museum tells the dynamic story of the African American experience through diverse, powerful and accessible exhibitions such as *Musical Crossroads*, which illustrates how African American music has been a vehicle of cultural survival, change and creative expression, and *Double Victory: The African American Military Experience*, which shows how military service has shaped opportunities for the African American community and strengthened the nation as a whole. The Powells are founding donors of the museum, and Colin Powell serves on the museum’s advisory council.

**PNC Bank**

Since 2016, the National Museum of African American History and Culture has welcomed more than 7 million visitors, providing opportunities to connect with the American story through an African American lens. With a $1 million donation, PNC Bank joins the museum’s Corporate Leadership Council, a group of corporate donors with a shared commitment to supporting the museum’s ongoing operations. This donation strengthens the museum’s ability to partner with universities, libraries and individuals, extending the museum’s reach and deepening the study of African American and African Diasporic history and culture worldwide.

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founding donor, has been a major funder for this project. A what it means to be American. Target, the gallery's corporate nation since before its founding. Visitors will reexamine what the inaugural exhibition will reveal how Latinos have shaped the Through powerful bilingual installations and digital experiences, Gallery opens in the National Museum of American History. The Smithsonian Latino Center will have its first physical space enemies but caring for others and helping the community thrive. the traditional warrior's role, which includes not only fighting over the last century, they have served at an extraordinary rate—at times higher than any other ethnic group. Many Native Americans consider military service an extension of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community helps ensure lasting recognition for the proud and courageous tradition of Native American military service. During World War II, more than 10 percent of Native Americans saw active military duty; over the last century, they have served at an extraordinary rate—at times higher than any other ethnic group. Many Native Americans consider military service an extension of the traditional warrior’s role, which includes not only fighting enemies but caring for others and helping the community thrive.

**U.S. Bank**
Faced with systemic racism and exclusion, African American communities developed their own thriving network of organizations and institutions. Black businesses, churches, schools and universities, fraternal and service organizations, and the Black press all grew out of these communities’ resilience, resourcefulness and determination to improve opportunities for African American citizens. A $1 million gift from U.S. Bank enables the National Museum of African American History and Culture to continue telling these powerful stories and demonstrate how the struggles for personal liberty, social freedom, economic opportunity and educational equity changed our nation and consistently moved us toward a truer democracy.

**Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation**
With a gift of $1 million for the Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative, Because of Her Story, the Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation participates in a monumental endeavor to document, research, collect, display and share the complex story of women in the United States. The initiative encompasses exhibitions at multiple museums—including *Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence* at the National Portrait Gallery and *Gallivant (US Complicated)* at the National Museum of American History—as well as online collections and Wikipedia edit-a-thons. Together, these programs fill gaps in our national narrative and expand our shared history. Elaine Wynn is a member of the initiative’s advisory committee.

**Target**
The Smithsonian Latino Center will have its first physical space on the National Mall in 2022 when the Molina Family Latino Gallery opens in the National Museum of American History. Through powerful bilingual installations and digital experiences, the inaugural exhibition will reveal how Latinos have shaped the nation since before its founding. Visitors will reexamine what they know about Latinos and expand their understanding of what it means to be American. Target, the gallery’s corporate founding donor, has been a major funder for this project. A longstanding Smithsonian donor, Target has given significant support to the institution’s arts and cultural initiatives.
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In 2019, the Asian Pacific American Center launched the "Artistic Initiative" and "Gen J" projects, presenting gallery exhibitions in Washington, D.C., and fund curators, interns and programs dedicated to the Asian Pacific American experience.
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Dr. Peter Buck
The Emil Buehler Trust
The Ronald Burke Family Foundation
William A. Burleson
Burroughs Wellcome Fund
The Morris and Gwenethlyn Cafritz Foundation
Hacker and Kitty Caldwell
Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
Susan and Jim Cargill
Meghann and Patrick Harker
Christian Harker
Carnival Corporation
The E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation
Maverick Carter
The Case Foundation
Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee
Kenneth I. and Kathryn Chernuheit
Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
The Chickasaw Nation
CIGNA
CIT
A. James and Alice B. Clark Foundation
Joe Clark
Linda and Pete Claussen
Clear Channel Media and Entertainment
The Coca-Cola Company
David A. and Mary Ann H. Cofrin
The Bynum and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation
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Sara and Bruce Collette
The Comer Foundation
Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation
Wallace H. Coulter Foundation
Ted and Marian Craver
Lee H. Cruse Trust
Elissa F. and Edgar M. Cullman, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Cullman, 3rd
Jeffrey P. Bunin
The Daniels Fund
Peggy and Richard M. Danziger
Richard Darman
Marcel and Serge Dassault
Florence Coulson Davis
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The Delta Air Lines Foundation
Luisita L. and Franz H. Denghausen
Dick and Becky DeVos Family Foundation
Bern Dibner
Frances K. Dibner and the Dibner Family
Jim and Janet Dise
Valerie and Charles Diker
Discover Financial Services, Inc.
Discovery, Inc.
Ralph L. and Patricia R. Dixon
Patricia C. Dodge
Dagmar Dolby
Donald J. and Helen D. Douglass
The Douglass Foundation
Andreas C. Dracopoulos
Draeger
DuPont

In 2019, the National Postal Museum hosted the North American celebration of the Royal Philatelic Society London’s 150th anniversary. The event honored the 1939 state visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to Washington, D.C., marking the only time the world’s two most famous stamp-collectors—the king and President Franklin D. Roosevelt—met face to face.
In 'I Am...Contemporary Women Artists of Africa', women artists explore community, faith, politics and the environment, on view June 2019–July 26, 2020.
LEADERSHIP

Board of Regents

The Smithsonian was created by an act of Congress in 1846 in accordance with the terms of the will of James Smithson of England, who in 1826 bequeathed his property to the United States of America “to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.” After receiving the property and accepting the trust, Congress vested responsibility for administering the trust in the Smithsonian Board of Regents. It consists of the Chief Justice of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, three members of the United States Senate, three members of the United States House of Representatives and nine citizens.

The Chief Justice of the United States
Ex officio, Chancellor

David M. Rubenstein
Citizen of Maryland, Chair

Steve Case
Citizen of Virginia, Vice Chair

John Boozman
Senator from Arkansas

Patrick J. Leahy
Senator from Vermont

David Perdue
Senator from Georgia

Doris Matsui
Representative from California

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Representative from California

John Shimkus
Representative from Illinois

Barbara M. Barrett
Representative from California

Roger W. Ferguson, Jr.
Citizen of Washington, D.C.

Michael Govan
Citizen of California

Risa J. Lavizzo-Mourey
Citizen of Pennsylvania

Michael M. Lynton
Citizen of New York

John W. McCarter, Jr.
Citizen of Illinois

Porter N. Wilkinson
Chief of Staff to the Regents

Cathy Helm
Inspector General

In fiscal year 2019

An ongoing exhibition, Magnificent Obsessions: Why We Collect, highlights the unique passions of Smithsonian Libraries collectors. The exhibition opened in 2019.

In fiscal year 2019

SMITHSONIAN 2019

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019

SMITHSONIAN LIBRARIES

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SMITHSONIAN 2019
LEADERSHIP

Smithsonian National Board
LEASED IN ADE & PHILANTHROPY

The Smithsonian’s institution-wide volunteer advisory board advises the Secretary and other Smithsonian leaders, acts as an ambassador for the Smithsonian in communities across the country, and sets an example of philanthropic leadership that inspires giving in others.

Through its 47 members and 180 alumni, the National Board’s volunteers also serve the Smithsonian by contributing their advice and service through committees and ad hoc working groups. In 2019, 28 members and alumni served on 16 Smithsonian advisory boards and as non-Regent members of committees of the Board of Regents, and 39 members served on seven Regional Councils. Their extraordinary commitment to philanthropy is shown through gifts totaling $17.2 million. This figure includes $1.84 million in unrestricted board annual giving.

LEADERSHIP

Robert D. MacDonald, Chair
Edward R. Hintz, Vice Chair
Dennis J. Keller, Vice Chair
Denise M. O’Leary, Vice Chair

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Wendy W. Dayton
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Sakurako Fisher
Patricia Frost
Jean B. Mahoney
Paul Neely
Sandra Day O’Connor
Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Lloyd G. Schermer
David J. Skorton
Frank A. Weil
Gay Firestone Wray

Membership year 2019

FINANCIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPT. 30, 2019

The Smithsonian receives funding from federal government appropriations, other governmental entities and private sources. Public dollars conserve national collections, sustain basic research, educate the public, provide for administrative and support services and operate, maintain and protect the Smithsonian museum and research complex. Private funds leverage federal dollars and provide the critical difference for carrying out innovative research, developing and building new facilities, opening groundbreaking exhibitions, reaching out to America’s diverse communities, endowing positions and strengthening national collections. The 2019 annual audit was conducted by KPMG LLP and is available at si.edu/about/policies.

REVENUE

in percent, FY 2019

EXPENSES

in percent, FY 2019

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

in millions of dollars, in FY 2019 and FY 2018

GROWTH IN NET ASSETS

in millions of dollars, over five years
The Smithsonian's first endowment dates to 1846, underscoring the institution's focus on the long term. The Endowment’s value on Sept. 30, 2019, was $1,700.7 million, and its return for fiscal year 2019 was 9.3 percent. Contributors to the Endowment’s performance were investments in venture capital, private equity and real estate as well as selection of investment managers. In fiscal year 2019, receipts from gifts and bequests added $23.6 million to the Endowment while contributing $71.9 million in payout. Since 2005, investment gains and gifts were $1.7 billion. During the same period, the Endowment has contributed $825 million in private support to Smithsonian-wide programs.

**Current Asset Allocation as of FY 2019**

- Real Assets: 15.4%
- Global Equity: 18.0%
- Emerging Markets: 7.5%
- Marketable Alternatives: 16.8%
- Fixed Income & Cash: 11.0%
- Private Equity & Venture Capital: 33.0%

**Comparative Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trailing 1 Year</th>
<th>3 Years</th>
<th>5 Years</th>
<th>10 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smithsonian Endowment</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Benchmark</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Endowment Value Over Time**

- September 1974: $28.0 million
- September 2019: $1,700.7 million

Since September 1974, the endowment has produced a 9.6 percent compounded annual growth rate.

**Funds Raised by Source**

- Individuals: $115.0 million (60%)
- Corporations: $39.5 million (21%)
- Foundations: $25.6 million (13%)
- Other: $12.5 million (6%)

**Funds Raised by Purpose**

- Exhibitions, Education & Public Programs: $54.3 million (26%)
- Smithsonian General Support: $10.7 million (10%)
- Research: $17.3 million (9%)
- Acquisitions & Collections: $9.3 million (5%)

This report gratefully acknowledges the transformative generosity of our donors. Thousands of individuals, members, foundations, corporations and others have made gifts to the Smithsonian this year. Every gift advances the institution’s ambitious vision to discover new knowledge and educate and inspire future generations. These charts provide information on the sources and uses of private dollars contributed to the Smithsonian in fiscal year 2019.
Generations of donors have brought the Smithsonian to where it is today. In a rapidly changing world, the Smithsonian matters more than ever as a force for civic engagement in America that reaches people where they are. Your gifts power our impact.

Smithsonian Academy
The recognition society for the Smithsonian’s most generous donors is open to individuals who give $1 million or more to Smithsonian museums, research centers and programs. Smithsonian Academy members’ extraordinary generosity enables the institution to thrive and continue to diffuse knowledge across the nation and around the world. They participate in one-of-a-kind opportunities and explore the ideas, discoveries and new knowledge that make the nation’s premier institution a national treasure. To learn more, contact Lynn Hephburn, director of donor and volunteer engagement, at 202.633.8009 or smithsonianacademy@si.edu.

Membership
With members from across the nation, the Friends of the Smithsonian and James Smithson Society provide support for the institution’s mission and strategic plan priorities. Those who join may enjoy a wide variety of benefits and events. Annual membership levels range from $75 to $35,000 and above. 800.391.2266, membership@si.edu or online members

Many individual Smithsonian museums and research centers offer their own memberships. To learn more, visit the website of the museum that interests you.

Online Giving
Donating to the Smithsonian online is fast, easy and secure. Make your tax deductible gift at: si.edu/onlinegiving

Gift Planning
Those who provide for the Smithsonian through their estate plans or life income gifts build a strong future for the institution. Smithsonian Legacy Society members are kept well informed of the latest exhibitions, programs and scientific discoveries and have exclusive opportunities to participate in member-only events.

Corporate Memberships and Sponsorships
Corporations play a vital philanthropic role in today’s Smithsonian. We welcome corporate engagement and offer membership through the Smithsonian Corporate Membership Program. Contact us to learn more about how a Smithsonian partnership can complement your corporate objectives.

For Further Information
To learn how you can support the Smithsonian and its dynamic mission “for the increase and diffusion of knowledge,” please contact:

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Assistant Secretary for Advancement
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Washington, D.C. 20037-3012
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