



U.S.-Israel Science & Technology Foundation Summer 2003 Request for Proposals in Information, Communication, and Electronics (ICET) and Dual Use Technologies

Deadline for Submission – September 30, 2003

I. Introduction:

The U.S. Israel Science and Technology Foundation (the “Foundation”) invites submissions of proposals for funding of projects in the fields of Information, Communication and Electronic Technologies (ICET) and “Dual Use” technologies, which further the goals and objectives of the Foundation, as stated below.

The Foundation welcomes both new proposals, as well as resubmission of proposals from its Spring 2003 Biotechnology RFP, revised to address the current fields of interest. The Foundation is a Washington D.C.-based 501 (c) (3) non-profit foundation established by the U.S.-Israel Science and Technology Commission (the “Commission”), a bi-lateral program funded by the governments of the United States and Israel. The Commission mandates programs which the Foundation implements on its behalf, therefore, all final awards and grants are subject to ratification by the Commission.

The Foundation’s mission is to:

- Promote the advancement of science and technology for the benefit of the general public of the United States and Israel.
- Encourage scientific exchanges between institutions in the U.S. and Israel.
- Stimulate mutually beneficial scientific and technical collaboration.
- Reduce barriers to bi-national cooperation on scientific and technical matters.
- Foster the growth of high technology industries in the U.S. and Israel.
- Promote the free flow of commerce and trade between the U.S. and Israel.

II. ICET Program Objectives:

In this current round of funding, the Foundation is accepting proposals in the areas of Information, Communication and Electronic Technologies (ICET) and “Dual Use” technologies (technologies for domestic, commercial, and security applications). These include the disciplines of software, hardware, IT applications, appliances, mobile communications, optics, electronics miniaturization, nanotechnology, process optimization, remote sensing and surveillance technologies, imaging technologies, continuous monitoring technologies, secure cyber infrastructure, chemical and biological sensing and diagnostic equipment, and bioinformatics fields. All proposals must have a bilateral focus, clearly showing benefit to both the U.S. and Israeli ICET industry sectors. Preference is given to projects that are conducted jointly by entities from both countries. If requested, the Foundation may offer guidance and assistance in identifying appropriate partner entities in the other country after an award has been granted. The Foundation seeks to support projects that offer broad benefits to the ICET industry in the U.S. and Israel, rather than solely the proposing entities. The Foundation encourages proposals from organizations that have developed proven models, methods, and tools to support the high tech sectors. In essence, the Foundation seeks to fund projects that assist the Foundation in building a broad-based self-sustaining infrastructure for collaboration between U.S. and Israeli government, academia, and particularly industry in ICET and that meet the following Foundation objectives:

- Fostering cooperation between leading U.S. Israel ICET industry, by means of technology transfer, strategic alliances, exchanges, virtual tools, workshops, and seminars.
- Promote programs involving mentoring, coaching, networking activities, and consortia building between U.S. and Israeli hi-tech companies, as well as multiplier organizations (e.g. university technology transfer and entrepreneurship programs, professional associations, etc.).
- Remove impediments and barriers to cooperation among companies and organizations engaged in the field of ICET.
- Develop the infrastructure for collaboration between U.S. and Israeli ICET industries.

Proposals should address one or more of the following priority areas.

- **Strategic Alliances**

Proposals addressing this priority area should establish specific and sustainable products, projects, and initiatives that systematize the matchmaking process between Israeli and U.S. companies or expand the opportunities for strategic collaboration among industries in both countries. These programs should more effectively introduce Israeli entrepreneurs, companies, and products to U.S. companies (and vice versa) in order to increase strategic partnerships and business development. The Foundation encourages programs that create a sustainable infrastructure for alliance building, fostering entrepreneurship and increase the visibility of U.S. and Israeli companies among private and institutional investors, venture capital funds and other alliance partners in each country for the other. Multi-regional approaches within the U.S. are encouraged, as well as consortia approaches leveraging the resources and capabilities of the multiplier organizations operating in the ICET arena.

- **Business Development, Entrepreneurship, and Marketing**

Proposals in this priority area enhance the competitiveness of U.S. and Israeli businesses in the international marketplace. Technology-based entrepreneurship, the need for infrastructure development, and skills building are essential to properly manage and grow companies; and to achieve visibility which will lead to external alliances. Projects are directed at improving business operations, management, and marketing skills, as well as identifying and evaluating market needs to create a sustainable infrastructure that will foster entrepreneurship. The Foundation encourages programs that create sustainable bilateral programs and alliances that promote the educational, business, and marketing skills and networking required to support a competitive ICET industry sector in the U.S. and Israel. This includes programs and tools directed at human resource development through business internships, mentoring, seminars, and training programs. Multi-regional approaches within the U.S. are encouraged, as well as consortia approaches.

- **Joint R&D / Tech Transfer / Education**

Proposals in this priority area may be directed to increasing collaboration, coordination and joint commercialization among U.S. and Israeli technology transfer efforts, whether government, academic or industry-based. There is a need to achieve a better communication and understanding of the processes involved in technology transfer. Such programs might identify “best practices”, coordinating opportunities for joint R&D projects within academic and industry settings, and expand opportunities for exposing new and emerging technologies in both countries to industries and strategic investors. The Foundation seeks to establish frameworks for joint research and development in academic and/or commercial settings that will capitalize on the respective advantages of Israel and US academic excellence, innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as share resources and contacts to facilitate academic-industry R&D and technology transfer opportunities.

Proposals in this area also address the academic, R&D, and commercialization requirements to support a vibrant ICET sector and accelerate the implementation of dual-use technologies. Projects must be directed at establishing multi-disciplinary approaches and networks that address scientific, regulatory, business, and entrepreneurial factors enhancing the commercialization of dual-use technologies; and supporting the ICET sector. The Foundation seeks to expand successful multi-disciplinary approaches to support U.S.-Israel collaborations in academic, business, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer programs. Multi-regional approaches within the U.S. are encouraged, as well as consortia approaches.

- **Harmonization**

Proposals in this priority area address the need for the harmonization of regulations and business practices between the U.S. and Israel. There is a need to establish mechanisms of dialogue to assure “best practice” guidelines and to facilitate collaboration, and the creation of consensus on “process protocols” related to binational collaboration. Projects are encouraged that foster standardization and harmonization practices and provide training in the areas of intellectual property and copyright protection, ethics and privacy, security, consumer protection regulations, patent laws, cyber terrorism protection, and secure cyber infrastructure.

Projects addressing the establishment of standards for the development, testing, demonstrating, deployment, and implementation of dual-use technologies are encouraged.

- **Intellectual Property Asset Creation and Management**

Proposals in this priority area should establish specific and sustainable tools, projects, and initiatives to support increased awareness and efficiency to the process of protecting, marketing, buying and selling intellectual property. Projects may be directed primarily to start-up companies in both the U.S. and Israel and may involve technical assistance, expert teams, mentoring, workshops or seminars. All projects should tend to increase intellectual property value optimization through strategic planning, development, marketing and protection of intellectual property and patent portfolios. The Foundation welcomes projects that address the need for technical assistance to emerging companies with a focus on integration of IP into corporate strategic planning; fundamentals of patent applications; defense and offensive filing strategies; working with international counsel; and managing growth in the U.S., Israel, and in international markets.

- **Financing**

Proposals in this priority in this priority area may address the critical need for capital in Israeli ICET companies. Projects must expand opportunities for exposing Israeli ICET companies to U.S. investors. Many entrepreneurs and companies seeking capital still need to better understand who are the key players in the field and how to best approach individual angel investors, VCs, and institutional leaders. Projects should address training and mentoring of ICET start-ups to provide initial screening and review of business plans; securing angel investment and early stage venture capital seed investments; securing funding as needed; and conducting specific networking activities within the financial community.

III. General Proposal Submission and Selection Guidelines:

1. Eligibility

The Foundation makes competitive grants in the United States and Israel. Eligible grantees include institutions of higher education; non-profit organizations; commercial companies, consultants and other accredited entities or individuals with a presence in the U.S. and/or Israel. Preference is given to joint proposals submitted as a partnership, joint venture, or other form of collaboration between U.S. and Israeli organizations. It should be clearly understood that the Foundation will take an active role in the performance of each project, not merely in monitoring and financial oversight. At the same time the Foundation, may at its option offer assistance in locating appropriate partners for proposals it otherwise finds address particularly critical needs, or make the finding of a partner the condition of an award. Furthermore, the Foundation reserves the right to condition any grant on the consolidation of one or more proposals into a single project.

Proposals may be submitted with a request for Foundation assistance in identifying appropriate partners either in the U.S. or Israel after an award is granted. These proposals must include details of partnering requirements and the anticipated role of the partner(s). The proposal should also provide a timeframe and budget details for partnering activities, as well as appropriate budget allocations for the partners' role.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

All proposing organizations must certify at the time of submission of the proposal that the performance of the proposed project does not constitute any real or apparent conflicts of interest. The Foundation's policy on conflicts of interest is more fully described in the Foundation's "Code of Conduct" and "Policies and Procedures for the Awarding of Funding Agreements" (available on the Foundation's website or upon request). In short, all proposing organizations must affirmatively certify that no Foundation employee, officer, Board member, Commission member or associate, Foundation review panel member, or any of their agents; any member of his or her immediate family; his or her partner; or an organization which employs or otherwise engages, or intends to employ or otherwise engage any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other direct interest: (i) that would reasonably appear to be affected by the program for which the USISTF funding is sought; nor (ii) in entities whose financial interests would reasonably appear to be affected by the

program. All relevant disclosures must be at the time of submission and updated during the period of the award.

3. What the Foundation does not fund

While the Foundation endeavors to maintain a high degree of flexibility in its programming, it observes the following limitations:

- Support is not given to projects solely or primarily focused on research and development of technology or products.
- Projects focusing primarily on routine operating costs or technology or physical infrastructure development are not eligible for consideration under this program.
- Support is not given to projects that solely support the operations of the proposing organizations and do not have a broader application or benefit.
- Support is not given for supplementary funding for otherwise already approved and funded efforts that do not provide a distinct, additional, and new component; nor funding solely for maintenance of existing programs.
- Support is not extended for lobbying, religious, or political activities or programs.

4. Inquiries and Frequently Asked Questions

For further information, you should consult the accompanying "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs) and/or contact in writing Dr. Marc Siegel, the RFP Program Manager at email: siegel@usistf.org. Prospective applicants with questions about this Spring 2003 RFP are strongly encouraged to communicate about their proposals with the RFP Program Manager.

The Foundation invites interested parties to submit informal letters of inquiry or to contact the RFP Program Manager by email. The Foundation welcomes inquiries from all interested parties. All communications with interested parties will be handled directly and only by the RFP Program Manager. Upon the written request of any entity interested in submitting a proposal in response to this Spring 2003 RFP, the RFP Program Manager may conduct face-to-face meetings, teleconferences and correspondence with representatives of any such interested entities. All aspects of the proposals are subject to discussions, including costs, technical and substantive plans and methodologies, past performance, and contractual terms and conditions. In addition, the Foundation offers all interested parties programmatic advice for the purpose of obtaining proposals of the highest possible quality that most closely fulfill the Foundation's goals, the objectives of this RFP, and its funding priorities and mission.

The Foundation publishes FAQs and the Foundation's responses on its website (<http://www.usistf.org>). The Foundation's responses will become an integral part of this Spring 2003 RFP. Interested parties are encouraged to consult the website from time to time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals.

5. Proposal Format:

All applicants must provide the information requested below. Proposals that do not provide the required certifications, information, and technical substance; or do not follow the format and submission guidelines, may not be reviewed.

Any information that the applicant desires to maintain confidential must clearly marked as "Confidential and Proprietary".

Full proposals should be emailed to RFP@usistf.org, preferably as PDF or MS Word and MS Excel attachments. Electronic versions of the proposal must be received by the Foundation by 11:00 pm EST on the closing date. A hardcopy version with accompanying diskette or CD containing an electronic version of the proposal must be received by the Foundation within 7 days of the closing date.

Complete applications must include the following:

A. "Application Title Page" form.

B. Title and Executive Summary of purpose and objectives, the methodology, and the anticipated results (not to exceed 750 words; attach separate sheet).

C. Narrative Description of Project (not to exceed 10 typed, Letter-Size (8.5" x 11"), single-spaced pages, 12-point font). This section is intended to provide you with the flexibility to be creative and does *not* require any specific format for describing your project. However, you should address the following to ensure that grant reviewers can fully comprehend and score your project. Address all criteria in any sequence that best demonstrates the strengths of your project.

- A description of the project, including clear and measurable objectives that will be pursued; specific outcomes expected; and a clear methodology and plan of work describing the activities to be undertaken and deliverables by phase.
- A description of the anticipated benefits and enhancement of private sector development in the U.S. and Israel.
- A description of how the project supports and enhances the Foundation's strategic objectives and the specific objectives within the program areas described in Section II above.
- Benefits to the proposing parties and the missions they serve.
- Monitoring and evaluation plan (the indicators and mechanisms to be used to evaluate outcomes and to assess progress).
- Nature of institutional cost-sharing commitments.
- Anticipated follow-up and post project sustainability plan, if any, including explanation of future funding sources, if any.
- An outline for reporting and disseminating results of how the project met its objectives.

D. Appendices

- **Timetable of activities with milestones or completion dates** (funding not to exceed 12 months) of all proposed activities, grouped by phase and specifying results associated with each phase to be met before funding for the next phase is released.
- **Detailed line-item budget and narrative** to explain figures presented in budget charts using the attached budget form. Budget charts should provide a detailed line-item breakdown (Sheet #2) of personnel, fringe benefits, travel, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and totals. The budget should clearly indicate the grant funds and confirmed cost-share designated. If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources for the proposal and indicate the specific funding to be provided by component of a larger program, identify other funding sources for the proposal and indicate the specific funding to be provided by those sources. By activity phase, provide a budget narrative.
- An organization with an audited indirect cost rate negotiated with federal government agency should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement as an addendum to the budget.
- If appropriate, a request for Foundation assistance in identifying appropriate partners either in the U.S. or Israel, including details of partnering requirements and the anticipated role of the partner(s).
- **Information about the organization(s) seeking funds**, including institutional background, qualifications of main project personnel, its staff, board of directors, legal classification, history and accomplishments, and an annual report (provide web address only if this is available electronically), if available.
- **Resumes** (not more than two pages) of the project director(s) and other key personnel involved.
- **Signed letters of support** from the presidents, chancellors, rectors, or chief executive officers of the cooperating institution(s) and organization(s) in the U.S. and Israel.

Note: Extraneous attachments beyond the stated appendices will not be read nor taken into consideration.

6. Funding Amounts and Cost-sharing:

The Foundation will consider grant request amounts of up to \$150,000. During this current round of grant proposal review, the Foundation anticipates making multiple awards, up to a maximum total allocation of \$1,000,000. Preference will be given to applicants who match up to 50% the Foundation's grant with their own funds or with funds from other sources.

The Foundation gives preference to programs that involve cost-sharing, which may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. The recipient of an award must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost participation, as well as costs to be paid by the Foundation. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Foundation's Policies on Cost Allowability and should be described in the proposal. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, the Foundation's contribution will be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

The commitment of all participants to the proposed project should be reflected in the cost-sharing which they offer in the context of their respective institutional capacities. Although the contributions offered by U.S. and Israeli institutions with relatively few resources may be less than those offered by applicants with greater resources, all participating institutions should identify appropriate cost-sharing. These costs may include estimated in-kind contributions.

Preference is given to applicants proposing to waive or substantially cost-share indirect expenses in order to utilize the highest possible proportion of funds for direct program costs.

All contributions, including cash and third party in-kind, shall be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the following criteria.

- Are verifiable from the recipient's records.
- Are not included as contributions for any other federally assisted project or program.
- Are necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives.
- Are allowable under the applicable cost principles.
- Are not paid by the Federal Government under another award, except where authorized by Federal statute to be used for cost sharing or matching.
- Conform to other provisions of this announcement, as applicable.

7. Program Duration:

Projects must begin within 60 days of the signing of the Foundation's standard Funding Agreement. The duration of any project should not exceed 12 months.

8. Application Deadline

Full proposals should be emailed to RFP@usistf.org, preferably as PDF (recommended) or MS Word and MS Excel attachments. Electronic versions of the proposal must be received by the Foundation by 11:00 pm EST on the closing date. In addition to the email submission of the proposal, a hardcopy version with accompanying diskette or CD containing an electronic version of the proposal must be received by the Foundation within 7 days of the closing date. **Proposals must be received via email by September 30, 2003.**

9. Review and Selection Process

The selection procedure for awards is a multi-step process based on criteria listed in Section III.10. Although more fully described in the Foundation's "Policies and Procedures on the Awarding of Funding Agreements" and "Proposal Evaluation Process" documents (available on the Foundation's website or upon request) the process involves the following:

A. Step One: Proposals are screened by the Foundation to assure compliance with basic requirements and guidelines, including the certification on conflicts of interest referred to in Section III.2, above, and to eliminate proposals that do not meet the threshold Project and Eligibility Requirements listed above. Preliminary screening criteria include:

- Administrative Screening. Proposals will be screened to determine responsiveness to the specific requirements of the RFP. Non-responsive proposals will be returned to the proposer without further consideration. A proposal will be deemed ineligible for consideration if:
 1. It does not fully adhere to the guidelines established in this document and/or the Foundation's Policies and Procedures in Awarding Funding Agreements.
 2. It is not received by the deadline.
 3. It is not submitted by a U.S. or Israeli entity.
 4. One of the partner institutions is ineligible.
 5. Funds requested for expenses incurred before or after specified dates of the grant.
 6. Proposal is inconsistent with the USISTF conflicts of interest policy.
 7. Projects designed to advocate religious or political views.
- Technical Screening. The following technical screening criteria will be applied to proposals. If the answer to any of the questions below is "NO", the proposal will be returned to the proposer without further consideration.
 1. Does the proposal provide sufficient technical substance to enable review?
 2. Does the proposal fall within the scope of program objectives as delineated in Section II. "ICET Program Objectives"

B. Step Two: A Bi-national Proposal Review Panel consisting of U.S. and Israeli subject matter experts will review the proposals for technical and substantive merit. The proposals will be evaluated and ranked in conformity with the evaluation criteria set forth in Section III.10 below, utilizing point scores and written critiques. Review Panel members may request that the Foundation seek clarifying information from any applicant organization. A list of ranked finalists is submitted to the Foundation for final review.

C. Step Three: Referred to as the "selection of awardees," the Foundation's Board of Directors or Official Selection Committee selects funding recipients from among the finalists, based upon the rank order of the applications. Although technical and economic value is paramount in this RFP, a final best-value analysis may be performed, taking into consideration the results of the technical and substantive evaluation, cost and past performance analyses, and ability to complete the work within the Foundation's required schedule, as appropriate. The Foundation reserves the right to make awards to the best advantage of the Foundation, all factors considered. The decision of the Foundation's Board or Official Selection Committee is not open to appeal. Applicants not selected will be notified appropriately.

D. Step Four: After the Foundation's Board reviews the evaluation results and makes decisions concerning approval or rejection, the final funding decision is subject to ratification of the US-Israel Science and Technology Commission.

10. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria

In its grant making process, the Foundation is particularly interested in:

- Supporting innovative outcome-based approaches that address bilateral needs in defined priority areas.
- Proposals that build a broad-based self-sustaining infrastructure for U.S-Israel collaboration and private sector competitiveness.
- Developing approaches that can generate long-term support from other sources or that can become self-sustaining.
- Programs and activities that lead to measurable benefits for both Israel and the U.S.
- New ICET initiatives that may not be adequately addressed or supported by existing governmental institutions or other funding entities.
- Proposals submitted in collaboration between or among US and Israeli entities.
- Proposals that supplement the Foundation's grant with matching funds.
- Proposals that promote the Foundation's strategic objectives.

Grant proposals are evaluated based on the following criteria:

% of Total

- A. Scientific, Technical and/or Economic Merit of the Proposal **40%**
- Quality and innovativeness of the proposed program.
 - Feasibility of the project (i.e. are the objectives realistic)?
 - Coherence of project plan, clarity of vision and measurability of outcomes and deliverables.
 - Extent proposal meets needs not adequately addressed by other government institutions or other funding entities.
 - Clear and concise, well organized proposal.
- B. Qualifications of the Proposing Organizations, Level of Partnership and Commitment **20%**
- Quality and appropriateness of the organization's management and other resources.
 - Proven track record with successful models in other applications and industry sectors.
 - Level of organizations' commitment as demonstrated by previous experience in subject area.
 - Organizations' staff quality and expertise to carry out the proposed program.
 - Strategic fit between/among the proposing organizations in terms of composition of participants and existing relationships among the parties.
 - Likelihood of continued cooperation between/among partners beyond project completion.
 - Level of collaboration between U.S. and Israeli organizations and relative responsibilities and budgets of each organization.
 - Ability of the organizations to market project activities to a wide-clientele base and address currently underserved groups.
- C. Broad and Enduring Significance of Proposal Objectives **20%**
- Extent to which the Proposal meets Foundations goals and objectives.
 - Sustainability plan.
 - Plan to assess project success.
 - Broad benefits to the ICET industry in the U.S. and Israel
 - Impact greater than individual entities and in more than a single locality.
 - Plan for dissemination of results and to create long-term sustainable project.
 - Long-term benefit to the Foundation and its strategic objectives.
- D. Matching resources contributed by the Proposing Organization(s) **10%**
- Contribution of personnel, equipment, facilities, and matching funds
 - Relevancy of matching resources and level of commitment
- E. Mutuality and Quality of Benefit to U.S. and Israel **10%**
- Level of meeting bilateral needs
 - Quality of benefits to both U.S. and Israel
 - Extent of measurable benefits
 - Ability of proposed program to generate long-term support or to become self-sustaining.

IV. Funding Agreements, Reporting, and Monitoring:

1. Funding Agreement

Funding will be made directly to the organization(s) selected for awards in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Foundation's standard Project Funding Agreement, which is available on the Foundation's website or upon request. The Foundation reserves the right to negotiate with applicants selected to receive awards over the cost and scope of the proposed project; to seek consolidation of one or more proposals into a single project; or to require proposals to add or delete a task(s) in order to improve the probability of success and the fulfillment of the Foundation's goals and objectives.

To the extent that a proposal selected is intended or projected to generate income to the participants, the Foundation reserves the right to negotiate an equitable cost recovery formula to share any such income.

2. Cost Allowability

Foundation funds may only be used for costs that are allowable under the Foundation's Policies on Cost Allowability, which are available on the Foundation's website or upon request.

3. Payment Schedule

Payment schedules are included in each Funding Agreement. In general, payments are contingent upon submission and review of quarterly reports. At least 10% of the grant may be reserved pending the submission and approval of a final project report.

4. Project Monitoring and Reporting

The Foundation monitors all grants and grant reports and makes site visits as appropriate. Quarterly progress reports are required within 15 days of quarter-end. Reports must be submitted in writing addressing specific milestones identified in the proposal timeline. The Foundation views itself as an active partner in each project and therefore may participate in project planning and implementation, at its discretion to enhance the prospects for success. At the conclusion of the project, a final report (both electronic and hardcopy versions) must be submitted by the grantee(s) within 30 days of project completion, including outcome measures and recommendations for next steps. Reports should preferably be submitted as a combined report where more than one organization is involved.

A publishable two-page project summary should be provided along with the final report for dissemination by the USISTF.

5. Other Requirements

- A. Each grantee will comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the United States of America or the State of Israel according to the residence of each participant, and will apply for and obtain all licenses and permits necessary for carrying out its work under the Funding Agreement.
- B. A false statement on an application is grounds for denial or termination of funds and appropriate legal recourse.
- C. The role of the Foundation must be highlighted in all public activities and publications. The USISTF logo should be displayed and a written acknowledgement to the specific award given in all public activities and publications.
- D. Preference will be given to proposals that include an active role and participation of a USISTF representative at proposal-related conferences, seminars, and/or workshop activities.
- E. Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for further clarifications, located on the Foundation web site: <http://www.usistf.org>

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