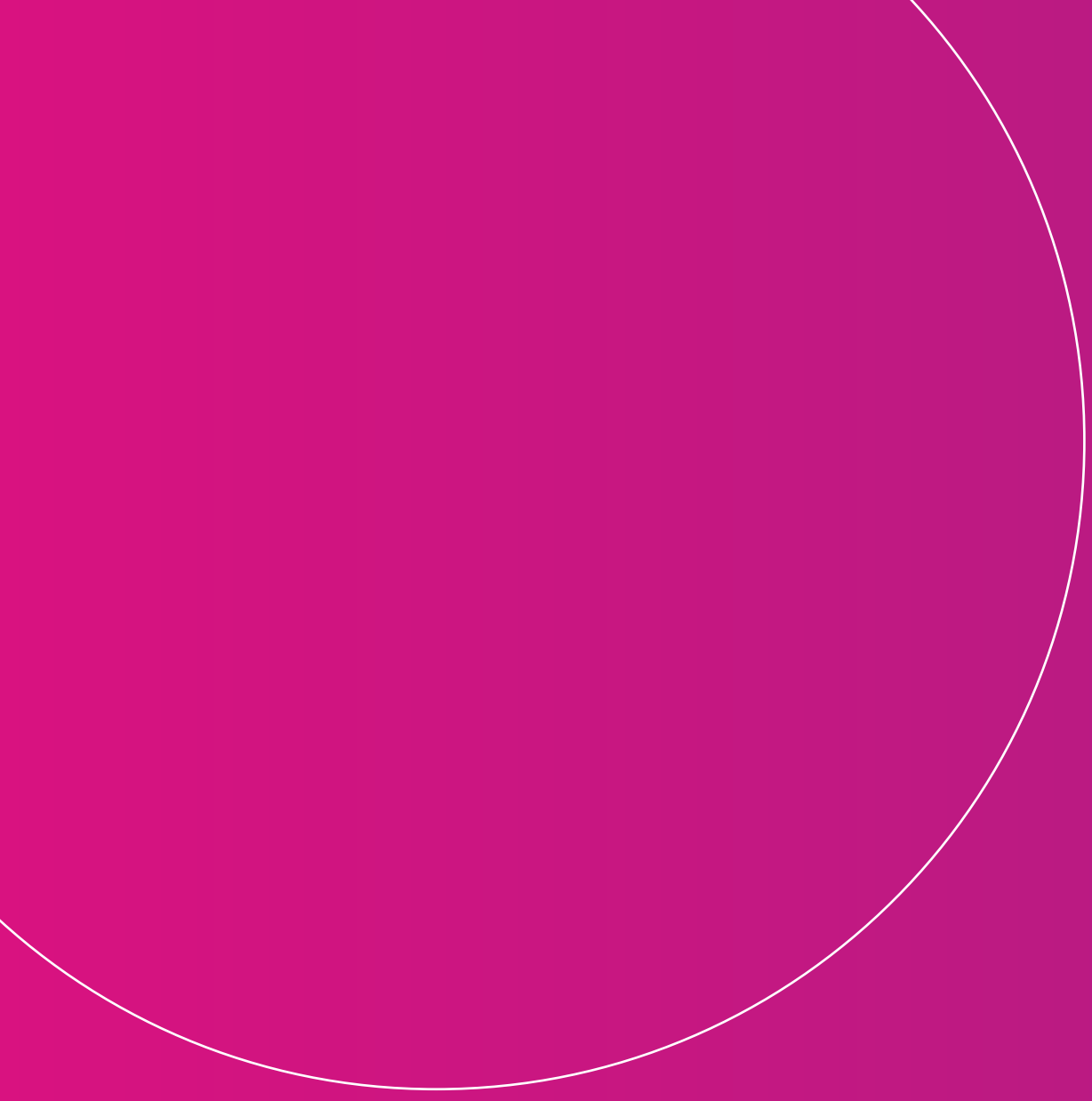


Promoting the UK-India opportunity to the UK design sector

July 2026

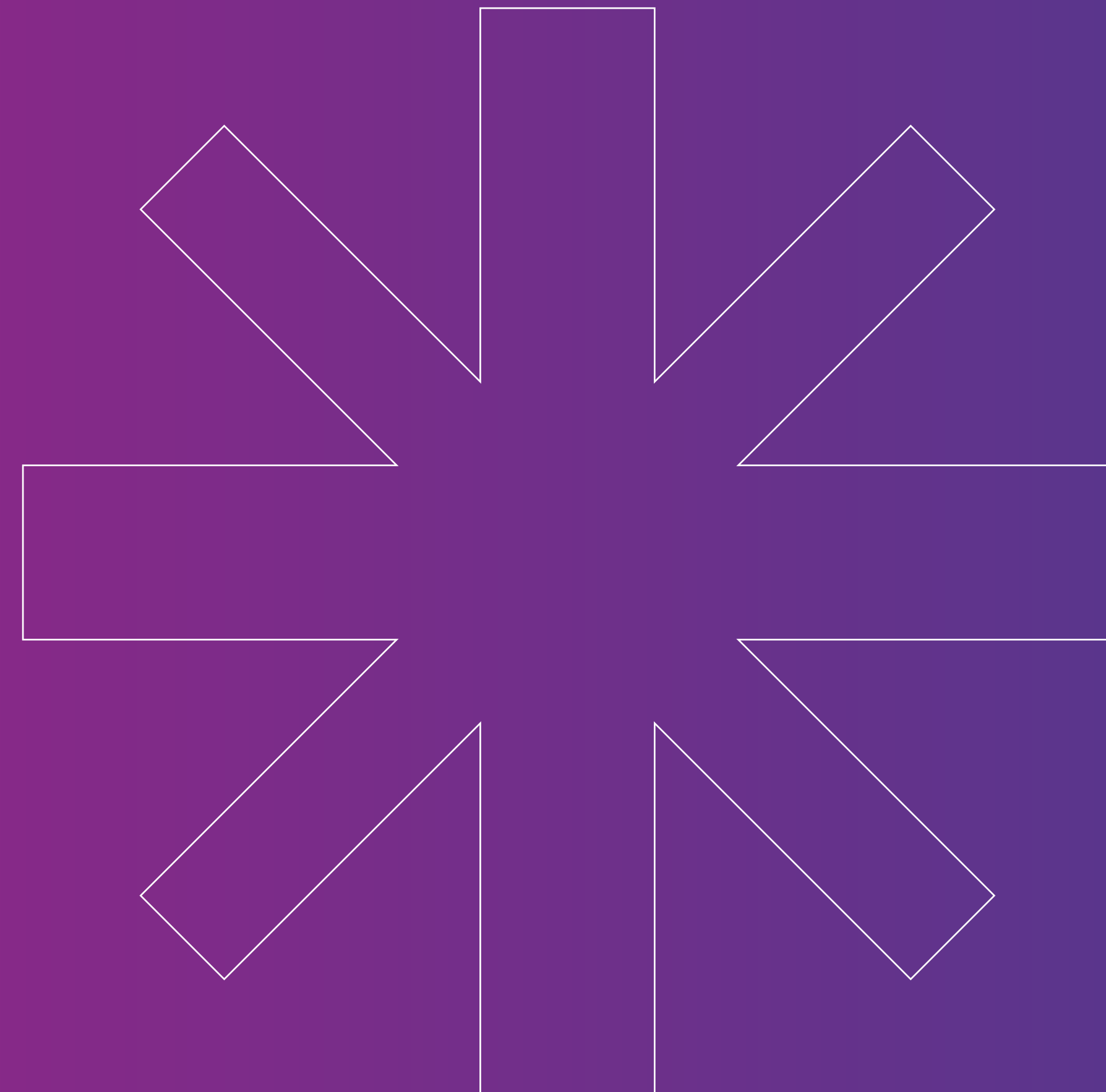
dba
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business
association

indigo | creative process
outsourcing



The long-awaited UK-India free trade agreement (FTA) comes into effect on 15 July 2026.

This creates a B2B opportunity for the UK design sector because every business that participates in the UK-India corridor has requirements for creative services.



Aspiration nation

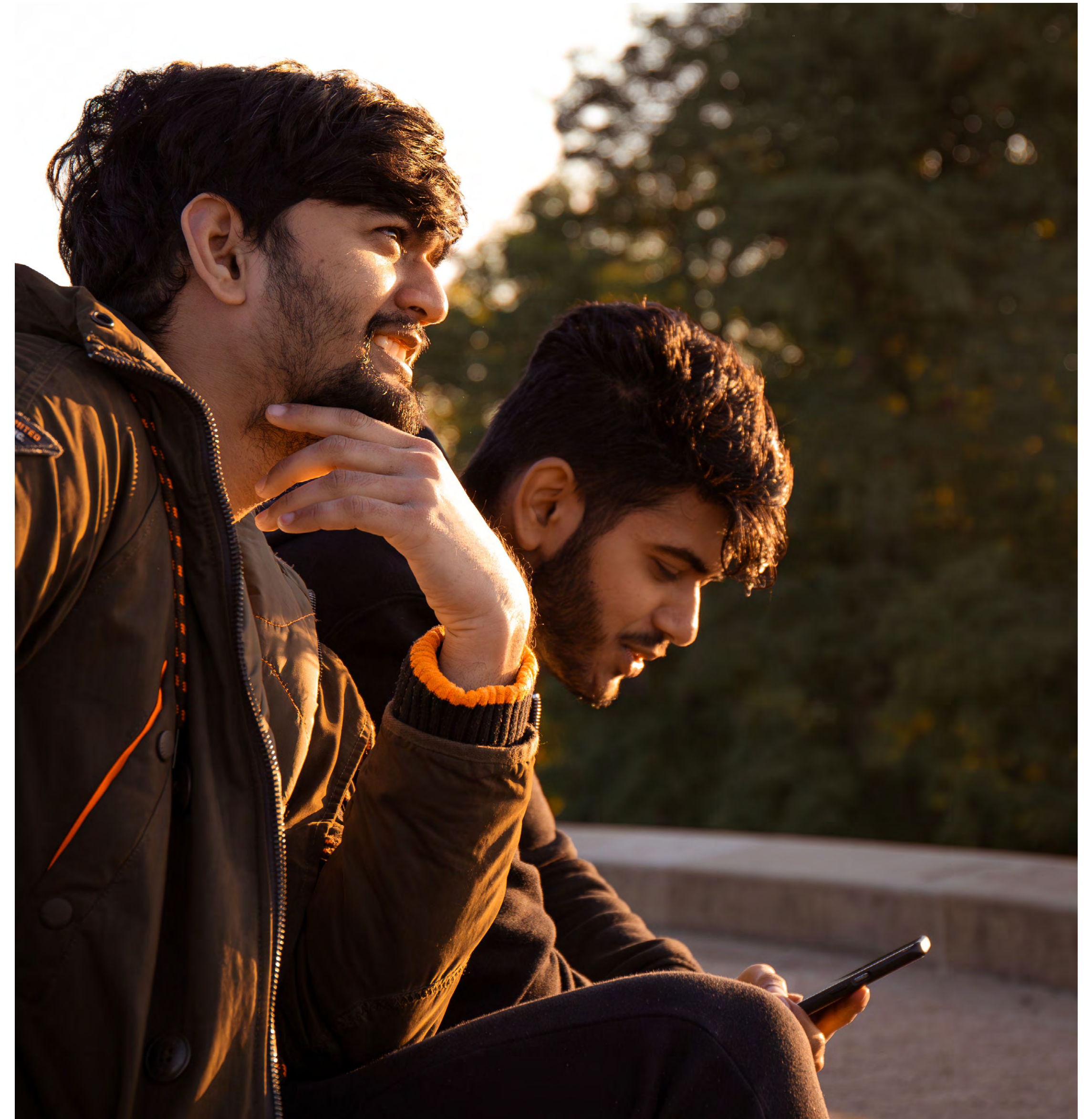
India is a huge country of 1.4 billion people, growing economically (>7% in Q1 2026) and experiencing seismic change as tens of millions join the middle class and enjoy new spending power. It's an exhilarating but complex place and far from a single market. Consumer behaviours differ widely between regions, communities, and age demographics.

Cultural context

To succeed, companies must be 'culturally fluent'. They need regional consumer insights, relevant go-to-market strategies, and culturally appropriate content and design. This cultural fluency works both ways. It is required by UK companies that invest in India and by Indian companies entering the UK. And it's needed in every industry.

Creative industries

The UK is renowned for its creative industries which contribute soft power and hard cash - around [£126bn](#) to UK GDP. The sector already has some stellar export success stories but lacks a strategic framework by which to approach India.



Scoping mission 20-24 July 2026

The Design Business Association (DBA) is the trade body for the UK design industry. It has been asked by the Department for Business and Trade to advise on the opportunity the FTA creates for UK design companies. It is preparing a report in partnership with Indigo, a creative services company with more than 15 years' experience in the corridor and operations in London and Mumbai.

DBA CEO Deborah Dawton and Indigo CPO co-founder Mark Hannant will be fact finding and networking in Mumbai and Ahmedabad.



Deborah Dawton



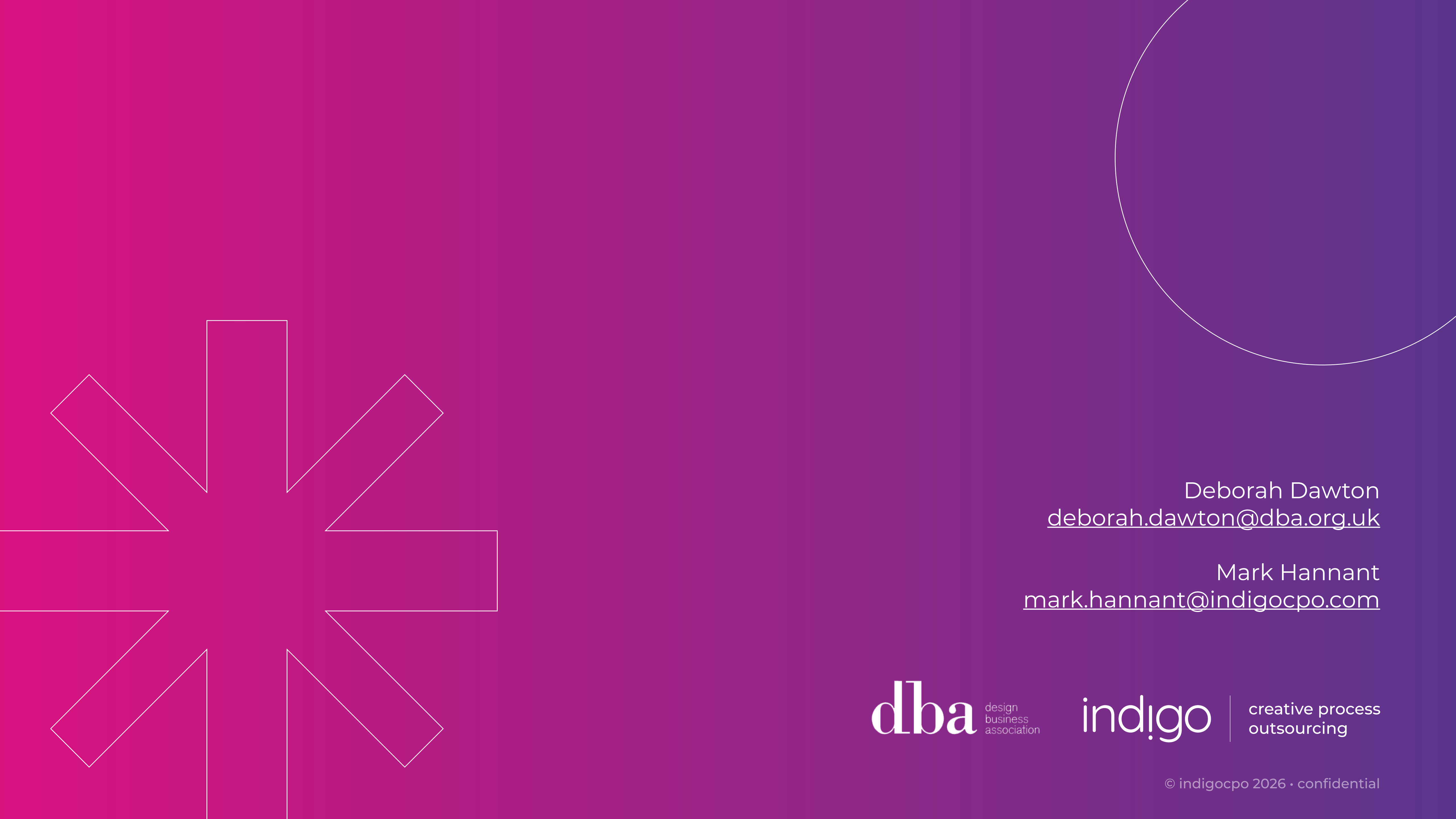
Mark Hannant

They will meet folks representing the following categories:

- UK companies already active in India
- Indian companies with international footprints
- Indian institutions that advocate design skills
- Design and communications businesses operating in India.

The report to be published in September 2026 will:

1. Highlight the opportunities of India as both a market and a source of talent
2. Show how design effectiveness contributes to cultural fluency
3. Gather existing export and cross-border success stories
4. Identify opportunities worthy of immediate attention
5. Encourage cross-cultural exchange through networks and bi-lateral relationships.



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