

The Irish Environmental Network

Annual Report
2020

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Environmental (Ecological) NGOs
Core Funding CLG

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SOME WORDS FROM OUR CHAIR



Kate Ruddock

The decade from 2020 to 2030 may be one of the most important this century. It will certainly be a turning point, from which we will see how successful the global community can be at tackling the global climate and biodiversity crises.

For our members, protecting Ireland's environment is our every day. At the IEN, we are proud to play our part in supporting this essential work. The importance of protecting and conserving our natural environment has never been so clear. As the Covid-19 pandemic hit early this year, many sought out natural spaces for peace and solace, and rediscovered the joy of the sounds of nature, without the hum drum of traffic.

Against this context, through 2020 at the Irish Environmental Network we maintained our mission to facilitate our members in working individually and jointly to protect and enhance our environment, and to promote the interlinked principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability.

There is no doubt that the arrival of this pandemic has cast light on the need to build resilience into our economic, societal and environmental systems to cope and adapt and the tools we will need to ensure global climates stabilise and ecosystems thrive.

The move to online interactions cast doubt over how many of our regular activities could take place. This had profound impacts on many groups who specialise in educational activities, tours, trainings and awareness events, and for many groups the opportunities to fundraise at events was taken away suddenly. IEN supported this shift with emergency grant support for the purchase of technology to move work online, and with sanitising equipment, and personal protective gear.

Support for fundraising activities was also provided in an attempt to reduce the impact of fewer 'on the ground' opportunities. Notable examples where our members thrived include the new suite of online educational resources now offered by Cultivate, reaching people who were not in a position to travel for events before, and the 600% increase in demand for seeds which the Irish Seedsavers Association were able to meet, as people realised the importance of growing high quality organic food. →

“I would like to thank the Directors of 2020 for supporting me and our work through the year. In 2020, we secured an increase of 66% in annual funding from the Government to support our network in 2021.”

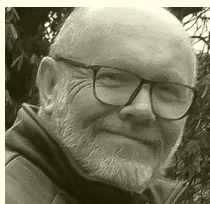


Other notable success from our member groups in 2020 includes the landmark supreme court decision on Climate Case Ireland which held the Irish Government accountable for failing to provide a credible plan for addressing climate change, taken by Friends of the Irish Environment and the subsequent advocacy for stronger climate legislation in Ireland. Advocacy for stronger climate action led to the online mass lobby event hosted by Stop Climate Chaos with our members Friends of the Earth, An Taisce, Birdwatch Ireland, Feasta, Good Energies Alliance and Friends of the Irish Environment, which hosted over 1,000 participants to meet and talk climate action with their TDs.

Co-ordinated advocacy work on the Forestry Act 2020, the campaign against CETA - the highly controversial Canadian Trade Deal, with the Circular Economy working group, Brexit and the joint work on agriculture and marine protection.

The core projects of the IEN continued, including The Environmental Pillar, The Environmental Law Implementation Group, and support for the Public Participation Network. We continued to host the secretariat of Coalition 2030. The Development Education Awareness Project came to an end. The Board of Directors are grateful to the core team for their ongoing dedication and hard work led by Karen Ciesielski, with Justin Byrne and Attracta Uí Bhroin. 2020 saw a number of staff changes as we welcomed Aoife Ní Lochlainn, Kayle Crosson, Jerry MacEvilly and Catherine O'Toole and we said goodbye to Niall Sargent, Caitríona Rogerson and Sarah Franklyn. I would like to thank the Directors of 2020 for supporting me and our work through the year. In 2020, we secured an increase of 66% in annual funding from the Government to support our network in 2021. The IEN are committed to ensuring capacity is built across our member groups to allow a strong network of environmental NGO's to thrive.

OUR BOARD



Gary Freemantle



David Healy



Nikki Keeling



Linda Lawlor



Caroline Lewis



Oliver Moore



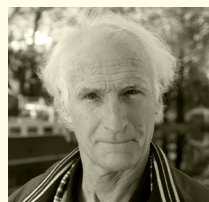
Eoin Ó Broin Vice Chair



Kate Ruddock Chair



Clowie Russell



Duncan Stewart



Caroline Whyte



The board of the IEN consists of nine directors, each of which has a three-year term. Together, the board elect a Chair and Vice-Chair to serve for the duration of one year, the former of which leads board meetings, conducts the annual appraisal of the CEO, is the official spokesperson for the organisation, and ensures adequate attendance is upheld at board meetings.

The Board of Directors has a key role in ensuring the IEN is adhering to principles of good governance and, during 2020 provided oversight and guidance with regard to the adoption of the Governance Code. A schedule of meetings for the board was set at the start of the year and they were held entirely remotely once the Covid-19 lockdown came into place.

IEN Directors 2020 Gary Freemantle (Joined in November 2020), David Healy (Stepped down in November 2020), Nikki Keeling (Stepped down in November 2020), Linda Lawlor, Caroline Lewis (Joined in November 2020), Oliver Moore, Eoin Ó Broin (Vice Chair), Kate Ruddock (Chair), Clowie Russell, Duncan Stewart (Stepped down in November 2020), Caroline Whyte.

How the Board Makes Decisions

When making decisions, the board will try to reach them by consensus and will vote on proposals if necessary.

Sub-Committees

The Irish Environmental Network has four active sub-committees which each individually cover membership, human resources, finance, and governance. The work of each Sub-Committee is set out in its Terms of Reference. Sub-committees carry out vital pieces of work on the IEN's internal policies and processes and regularly report on their progress to the Board.

Click [here](#) to learn more about our Board of Directors

OUR STAFF



So much of the work of the Irish Environmental Network depends on the hard work of our team who work both independently and in collaboration to protect our natural environment.

In total, we have a complement of six members of staff →

Karen Ciesielski

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)



Our CEO Karen Ciesielski joined our team in 2019 and has worked for over 20 years in non-profit management, fundraising, communications, advocacy and campaigning. As the head of our organisation, Karen promotes the intersectional principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability by supporting our members. She is also the Coordinator of the Environmental Pillar, the advocacy arm of the IEN.

Justin Byrne

Chief Operating Officer (COO)



With extensive experience in planning issues, our COO Justin Byrne has been a part of the IEN for over ten years. Previously he worked for KPMG as the IT Operations Manager, and prior to that in management for a division of Unigate PLC in London. He also serves as the Administrator for the Environmental Pillar.

Attracta Uí Bhroin

Environmental Law Officer



As so many matters pertaining to the environment require legal expertise, our Environmental Law Officer Attracta Uí Bhroin helps develop both the IEN and our members' capacity to leverage the law to support core missions. She is also the facilitator for the Environmental Law Implementation Group (ELIG), which is a joint initiative with the Irish Government to support the proper transposition and implementation of environmental law.

Aoife Ní Lochlainn

Policy Officer



With over thirteen years of experience in economic, social, and environmental policy, Aoife Ní Lochlainn is a public policy analyst and researcher who joined our team in 2020. Her work covers the UK Withdrawal agreement as it relates to the environment, as well as broader environmental policy and advocacy work to advance sustainable policy in Ireland on behalf of the NGO sector for both the Irish Environmental Network and the Environmental Pillar.

Kayle Crosson

Communications Officer



Having worked in communications for a number of NGOs both in Ireland and abroad, Kayle Crosson heads communications for both the Irish Environmental Network and the Environmental Pillar. She is also a multimedia journalist and editor of the Green News, a climate and biodiversity news outlet supported by the IEN.

Catherine O'Toole

Policy Officer



As our Local Environmental Development Officer, Catherine is working to increase engagement in the Environmental College of the Public Participation Networks (PPNs). Working with those on the ground for the Irish environmental movement, Catherine works to educate and inspire people in their local communities by providing complimentary training opportunities to environmental representatives.

OUR WORK



Our work on the ground

Catherine O'Toole heads our effort to increase environmental engagement with the Public Participation Networks (PPNs) and to assist local environmental networks in building their capacity to operate locally and take part in their PPN.

Work in 2020 has involved strengthening connections between environmental representatives nationally, with each month hosting a meet up to train and discuss topics of interest with representatives across the country. A monthly newsletter shares announcements from both local and national groups. Expanding the Environmental College of the PPN has focused on the delivery of information sessions to PPNs regarding the new criteria, and encouraging environmentally focused groups to switch to the Environmental College.

How we engaged with environmental law

2020 started with our Environmental Law Officer Attracta Uí Bhroin preparing the Environmental Pillar's consultation response to Heads of a Bill proposing draconian changes to Irish rules on Judicial Review/access to justice in environmental matters. In between, she engaged with the Oireachtas and our groups in an unprecedented amount of changes in environment legislation including on Covid-19 measures, forestry, climate, marine, water and planning, all with very compromised Oireachtas scrutiny, and of course the call to postpone the attempted vote to ratify CETA after just a 55 minute debate; and additionally at EU level and UNECE level on multiple issues.

The DEAR Project

The IEN, in partnership with World Vision Ireland, led the Irish part of a pan-European project: Make (Ireland) Sustainable for All, worked on the three-year DEAR-funded Project, which concluded in August 2020. Its aim was to convert the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to actions and was overseen by Caitríona Rogerson.

We worked with Government, county councils, young people, and civil society to raise awareness of the SDGs create a coalition of groups and communities focused on integrating the SDGs into national and local plans and actions.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR

Working for a Sustainable Future



Established in 2009, the Environmental Pillar is the advocacy arm of the Irish Environmental Network and it represents 32 national independent environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) all of whom are members of the IEN. It is a National Social Partner and has its own line of funding to support its policy, advocacy and campaigning work. Karen Ciesielski serves as the Coordinator of the Environmental Pillar.

Overseeing its activities is a Steering Committee, made up of eight members who are elected by the Pillar and serve one-year terms.

The work of its members cover a broad range of areas, which includes wildlife protection, environmental education, forestry, marine, waste and energy issues.

The Pillar soon adapted to remote working in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, and continued to both meet with and put pressure on elected representatives on all matters related to the climate and biodiversity crisis and the protection of nature.

Throughout the year, the advocacy group engaged on a number of different issues when it came to the climate and biodiversity crisis, which included:

- **Pushing the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action to address key weaknesses in the original iteration of the Climate Bill as it went through its pre-legislative scrutiny**
- **Advocating for a more community-centred solution to our broken forestry model**
- **Highlighting the vast shortcomings of AgClimatise, which was presented as a roadmap for the industry at the time of its publication in late 2020**

With the recent addition of Aoife Ní Lochlainn as the Pillar's policy officer, our ability to engage on consultations has been enhanced and we will continue to engage on consultations and advocacy on any and all relevant areas to our twin climate and biodiversity crises. The Pillar looks forward to working alongside its members every step of the way.

MEMBER TESTIMONIALS



The Irish Environmental Network exists because of, and for, its members, who despite the many restrictions and limitations 2020 presented, managed to make huge strides in the work they do.



Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland spent years trying to locate a suitable site on which to build a Wildlife Rehabilitation and Teaching Hospital. This project took mammoth effort and met many obstacles but in December 2020 we finally secured a site at Garlow Cross in Navan where we are now operating the WRI Wildlife Hospital, the first of its kind in Ireland. This important ecological work is putting the health and wellbeing of Ireland's native wildlife to the forefront.

www.wri.ie

Crann

The Easy Treesie – Crann Trees for Ireland project reached a milestone in 2020 when our team presented our Patron, President Michael D. Higgins with our 100,000th sapling; a native Scots Pine. Planting with schoolchildren and their communities presented quite the challenge last year, but we were able to distribute saplings safely with a massive logistical feat by our many collaborators including the Tree Council and chief sponsors Coillte and Trees on the Land and we made how-to films for our many volunteer planters.

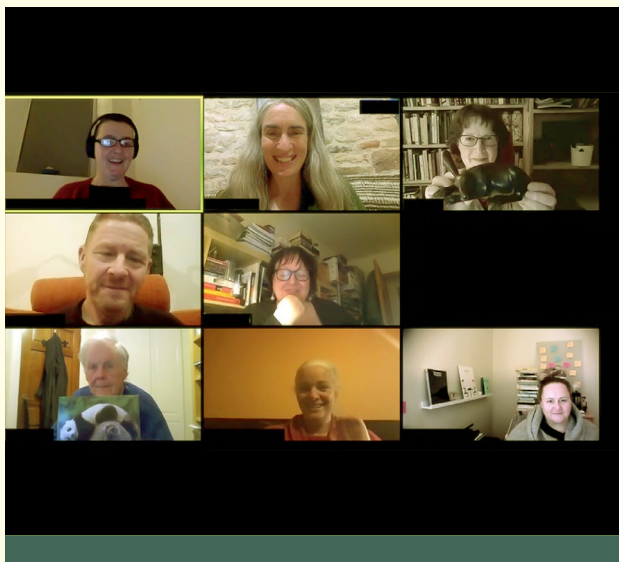
www.crann.ie



Irish Peatland Conservation Council

Despite the challenges from Covid-19 restrictions, the Irish Peatland Conservation Council prepared a new draft Peatlands and Climate Change Action Plan 2030. A peatlands and carbon research project at Girley bog provided scientific evidence of the value of peatlands as carbon stores. Supporting peatland custodians, a new Peatland Habitat Assessment Guide was published and the IPCC adapted by designing online resources for raising the profile of the value of Irish peatlands.

www.ipcc.ie



Feasta

2020's events reinforced Feasta members' conviction that the systemic forces underlying the Covid-19 pandemic - and also the climate and biodiversity crises - can only be overcome if we reorient the economy away from productivity expansion as an end in itself, and towards societal wellbeing. So Feasta is engaging vigorously in the Irish government's nascent process for developing a Wellbeing Economy Framework for Ireland, with support from other Irish NGOs and the global Wellbeing Economy Alliance.

www.feasta.org

Bat Conservation Ireland

Our yearly citizen science bat monitoring surveys continued in 2020. With no in-person training, our capacity to recruit and train new volunteers was much reduced. Despite this, we quickly moved our activities online and by carrying out training via zoom we still managed to reach our target number of surveys for each scheme. We also vastly increased engagement via social media in 2020, and successfully applied for Community Foundation for Ireland funding for a new project in collaboration with UCD and NBDC to take place in 2021.

www.batconservationireland.org





A STATEMENT FROM JUSTIN BYRNE



A message on our finances from our Chief Operating Officer

In 2020, the Irish Environmental Network had a total income of €1,133,345. This is slightly lower than our 2019 income, which was €1,168,308 – with the reduction due to the completion of several projects we were running in addition to the lockdown as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In real terms, our funding was the same last year as it was for 2019.

Our main source of funding is the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment (DCCAE), now known as the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) and we received the same funding in 2020 as we did in 2019 (€1,060,000). For 2021, we were delighted to see our funding increase significantly to €1,764,000, which will help enable both our and our members' work.

We were also grateful to receive 57,035 from the EU DEVCO DEAR Programme for the final year of our 3-year "Make Europe Sustainable for All" project. In the year our outgoings were €1,057,555, of which 76% went to our members. €490,000 of this was Core Funding for our members. This is distributed according to scoring of an application form by a panel of independent assessors who decide on all large funding decisions for the IEN.

We finished the year with a surplus of €202,249, leaving the IEN in a healthy position going into 2021.

Full financial details can be found in Section 5 of this report.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown changed the way that we worked and certainly had an effect on the funding that we received and how our members worked. We were unable to run National Biodiversity Week – our annual celebration of nature and biodiversity, which is funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. However, we ran some very successful virtual events to Mark International Day of Biodiversity.

As physical meetings and travel were almost completely absent last year, our members had to find new ways to meet and to work. Funding earmarked for travel and physical events was re-allocated to assist members in adapting to remote and online ways of working and connecting.

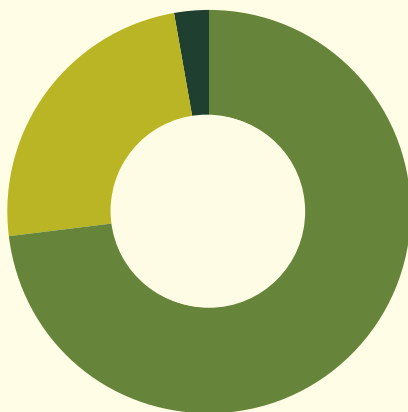
The IEN is always looking for new and diverse sources of funding for our work. Attracting funding requires a lot of time from our staff and it can take several months between finding and applying for funding and actually starting a project. We put in a lot of work in preparing bids for funding in 2020, which were ultimately successful in 2021.

In late 2020, we started work on a bid for funding from a number of American philanthropic organisations for a significant 3-year project on Ireland's Marine Protected Areas. The project will be run between our marine-focused members and the Sustainable Water Action Network (SWAN). The project started in mid-2021, and we look forward to seeing the great work it will accomplish. →

Our Main Outgoings

| | |
|---|----------|
| Core Funding to Members | €514,969 |
| Wages and Salaries..... | €297,360 |
| Member support for participation on government bodies | €82,528 |
| Make Ireland Sustainable for All project | €33,071 |
| Covid-19 Adaptation Fund..... | €23,913 |
| Rent, Rates, Office Costs..... | €20,718 |
| Support for Policy Submissions | €15,000 |
| Support for International Meetings | €8,436 |

Expenditure



■ Funding to Groups ■ Wages & Salaries ■ Establishment Costs

“For 2021, we were delighted to see our funding increase significantly to €1,764,000”

FINANCE, INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

To see our full audited accounts, please check
our [website](#).

Environmental (Ecological) NGOS Core Funding CLG

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

| | 2020 € | 2019 € |
|--|--------------------|-------------|
| Income | 1,276,533 | 1,098,288 |
| Expenditure | (1,024,050) | (1,057,555) |
| Surplus before interest | 252,483 | 40,733 |
| Interest receivable and similar income | 13 | 27 |
| Interest payable and similar expenses | — | (735) |
| Surplus before tax | 252,496 | 40,025 |
| Tax on surplus | — | — |
| Surplus for the financial year | 252,496 | 40,025 |
| Total comprehensive income | 252,496 | 40,025 |

Environmental (Ecological) NGOS Core Funding CLG

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

| | 2020 € | 2019 € |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Cash flows from operating activities | | |
| Surplus for the financial year | 252,496 | 40,025 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Interest receivable and similar income | (13) | (27) |
| Interest payable and similar expenses | — | 735 |
| Depreciation | 2,701 | 2,600 |
| | 255,184 | 43,333 |
| Movements in working capital: | | |
| Movement in debtors | (4,815) | 26,417 |
| Movement in creditors | (160,558) | 53,558 |
| Cash generated from operations | 89,811 | 123,308 |
| Interest paid | — | (735) |
| Net cash generated from operating activities | 89,811 | 122,573 |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | |
| Interest received | 13 | 27 |
| Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets | (1,239) | (1,314) |
| Net cash used in investment activities | (1,226) | (1,287) |
| Net increase in cash and cash equivalents | 88,585 | 121,286 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year | 700,821 | 579,535 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year | 789,406 | 700,821 |

Environmental (Ecological) NGOS Core Funding CLG

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

11. Grants Awarded

| | Deferred income at 1 January 2020 € | Received in year € | Recognised in year € | Deferred at 31 December 2020 € |
|--|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | 430,594 | 1,076,310 | 1,213,786 | 293,118 |
| Environmental Protection Agency | 56,293 | — | — | 56,293 |
| Development Education and Awareness Raising ("DEAR") Project Grant | 31,460 | 57,035 | 60,347 | 28,148 |
| National Parks and Wildlife Services | 2,096 | — | 2,400 | (304) |
| | 520,443 | 1,133,345 | 1,276,533 | 377,255 |

Environmental (Ecological) NGOS Core Funding CLG

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

12. Grant Income

| Grantor | Grant | Purpose of Grant | € |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | Core Funding | Groups funding issued to member groups upon approval of application forms submitted. | 490,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | Environmental Pillar | To assist with costs associated with Environmental Pillar. | 155,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | IEN Secretariat | For costs of running IEN Office, Secretariat and staff wages. | 146,025 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | Environmental Law Implementation Group | To assist with costs associated with ELIG. | 90,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | IEN Costs | To assist with other costs & such as admin, research and training. | 100,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | Sustainable Development | Specifically, for work on the Sustainable Development Goals. | 50,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | Brexit | Work related to the Brexit process. | 30,000 |
| Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment | HLPF | Funding support for attending the High Level Political Forum. | 15,000 |
| E.U. Dev. Co. | DEAR Project Grant | Funding from EU (DG DEVCO) for DEAR Project. | 57,035 |
| Miscellaneous Grant | Grant | Various miscellaneous grants. | 285 |
| Total income received during the year | | | 1,133,345 |

Environmental (Ecological) NGOS Core Funding CLG

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT — for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

| | 2020 € | 2019 € |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Income | | |
| Dept. of Environment Community and Local Government | 1,213,786 | 1,002,476 |
| National Parks and Wildlife Services | 2,400 | 22,904 |
| EPA Grant | — | 600 |
| DEAR Project (DG DEVCO) | 60,347 | 72,308 |
| | 1,276,533 | 1,098,288 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Wages and salaries | 259,362 | 298,813 |
| Social welfare costs | 28,086 | 32,230 |
| Staff defined contribution pension costs | 9,912 | 13,005 |
| IEN: Training | 4,497 | 300 |
| IEN: International NGO meetings | 8,436 | 3,271 |
| IEN: Policy submissions | 15,000 | 9,500 |
| IEN: Inter Governmental Conferences | — | 1,189 |
| IEN: PPN Project | 3,668 | 10,586 |
| IEN: Participation Government Bodies | 82,528 | 58,705 |
| DEAR Project | 33,701 | 35,566 |
| Ploughing Championships | — | 1,000 |
| IEN: Office expenses | 2,012 | 4,425 |
| IEN: Covid Adaption fund | 23,913 | — |
| IEN & Pillar Travel and sub | — | 1,280 |
| Recruitment costs | — | 1,665 |
| Biodiversity awareness projects | 2,400 | 22,904 |
| ELIG | 4,477 | 26,869 |
| Core funding | 514,969 | 478,171 |
| Hustings project | 1,022 | 5,008 |
| CFI SDG Project | 2,250 | 3,506 |
| Rent payable | 7,026 | 7,026 |
| Rates | 1,062 | 2,091 |
| Insurance | 585 | 1,552 |
| Telecoms costs | 5,945 | 8,229 |
| Computer costs | — | 5,006 |
| Directors expenses | 299 | 1,603 |
| Legal and professional | 3,359 | 10,950 |
| Bank charges | 306 | 445 |
| General expenses | 484 | 3,910 |
| Auditor's remuneration | 6,050 | 6,150 |
| Depreciation | 2,701 | 2,600 |
| | 1,024,050 | 1,057,555 |
| Finance | | |
| Interest paid on overdue taxation | — | 735 |
| Miscellaneous income | | |
| Bank interest | 13 | 27 |
| Net surplus | 252,496 | 40,025 |

The supplementary information does not form part of the audited financial statements.

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