**European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (2025)**
1090-Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising 4. Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

VnNAKqAL

# All Together Festival: a meeting place for heritage professionals and public audiences to learn and exchange

## Entry details

## General information

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| Main country of application | Ukraine |

Brief description of the project

> Once a year, the “All Together” Festival brings various heritage professionals from different regions in Ukraine to Kyiv to share their program activities with children and teenagers, as well as best practices of audience engagement between fellow colleagues. The project includes a pre-festival, professional capacity-building program for heritage actors, networking and mentoring opportunities, and grant support to participants (local museums) for travel, project development, and implementation. The festival is cross-sectoral in its programming and serves as an interactive and creative space for children to discover and engage with the cultural heritage in its cultural, natural, and historical diversity.

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| Start date of the project | 2023-09-21 |
| Completion date of the project/initiative | ongoing |
| Website(s) of the project/nominee | https://artarsenal.in.ua/en/alltogether/ |
| Facebook page of the project, if any | https://www.facebook.com/Mystetskyi.Arsenal |
| Instagram page of the project, if any | @MystetskyiArsenal |
| Any other relevant social media | www.youtube.com/@mystetskyi |

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| Does the site or heritage in question have national/regional/local cultural heritage designation or protection status in its country? | Yes |

If yes, please specify:

> The architectural center of Mystetskyi Arsenal is a monument of history and architecture of national importance—the Old Arsenal, built in the 18th century. It was designed by architect Karl Johann Speckle as the first Kyiv building in the Classicism style. It is one of the most massive Kyiv buildings of the period, reaching over 60,000 sq. meters. The exhibitions and festivals take place in the Old Arsenal building. The restoration process is not finished yet, and the program activities are held only on the first floor of the four-story building.

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| Is the site or heritage in question included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, either as a single World Heritage Site or as part of one larger site? | No |
| If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to the public? | Yes |

If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to people with disabilities?

> The building’s ground floor, used for festival activities, is fully adapted for people in wheelchairs and parents with children in strollers. Baby-changing is available in the women's and men's restrooms.

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## Contact details

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| Name of the entrant | Anna Pohribna |
| Entrant's position | Deputy Director for Programs |
| Organisation of the entrant | Public Enterprise “National Art and Culture Museum Complex Mystetskyi Arsenal” (PE NACMC Mystetskyi Arsenal) |
| Address of the entrant | Ukraine, 01010 Kyiv, 10-12 Lavrska Str |
| Email address of the entrant | pohribna@artarsenal.gov.ua |
| Please confirm entrant's email | pohribna@artarsenal.gov.ua |

Additional email addresses

> bilan@artarsenal.gov.ua

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| Telephone of the entrant (fixed line) | +380442885225 |
| Telephone of the entrant (mobile number) | +380957384766 |

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| Website of the entrant | https://artarsenal.in.ua/en/ |
| Organisation of the owner | PE NACMC Mystetskyi Arsenal is a public, partly state-funded institution responsible for maintaining the Old Arsenal (as a heritage site in which the nominated project (festival) is organized) and all its activities, including programming and restoration—on the legal basis of the asset holder. The Old Arsenal is owned by the state of Ukraine, represented by the State Management of Affairs. |
| Name of the project leader | Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta |
| Project leader's position | Director General |
| Organisation of the project leader | Public Enterprise “National Art and Culture Museum Complex Mystetskyi Arsenal” |
| Email of the project leader | ostrovska@artarsenal.gov.ua |
| Telephone of the project leader | +380679420628 |

## Concise summary

Concise summary


The festival “All Together” is an annual project of Mystetskyi Arsenal—a space where visitors (kids and teenagers) and participants (museums, STEM schools, social initiatives, creative studios, and schools) can collaborate, explore and play, discover the new, choose, and not be afraid of making mistakes. Every year, the festival presents at least 40 stands with ongoing activities of participants; about 70 events take place in workshop areas, while site-specific art projects and performative events emphasize the festival's interdisciplinary nature. Over the past two years, 9000 people have attended the festival.

Since the festival's foundation in 2015 (as “Arsenal of Ideas”), it has been strengthening the museum education. Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine brought devastating consequences for cultural heritage—1169 cultural heritage sites have suffered loss and destruction (as of October 2024). Additionally, losing the opportunity to work with the collection and permanent exposition due to the safety situation, every museum in Ukraine faces the challenges of reformating its work. Museum education has become one of the available work formats in new realities, a response to the problem of social isolation caused by the war. The festival enables heritage institutions to learn how to reformat their activities and work with children and teenagers during wartime.

For children and teenagers who continue to live under the significant stress of the ongoing war, the festival aims to create a unique, safe, and inclusive space where they can exchange their experiences, help each other adapt to life changes, learn about today's Ukrainian society, its heritage, and imagine their own future with it. The festival presents Ukraine's cultural, natural, and historical diversity as part of the European cluster. In today's political realities, this is a matter of survival for the Ukrainian society.

During the full-scale war, the festival strengthened the capacity of heritage professionals by organizing training and professional networking for “All Together” participants. Also, some participants received grants and mentoring support: in 2023, the festival provided travel grants for ten heritage institutions from formerly occupied and frontline communities and financially supported the implementation of five educational projects by local museums. In 2024, 20 heritage institutions from all over Ukraine received travel grants to visit the festival in Kyiv, which is a relatively safe city for those communities.

The average festival budget is 45,000 EUR. It has been supported by the European Union within the House of Europe program and the Partnership Fund for Resilient Ukraine.

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## Objectives and work undertaken

Aims and objectives of the project/initiative

The festival aims to create a safe and inspiring space for the interaction and development of heritage professionals, educators from other fields on the one hand, and visitors on the other, contributing to the resilience of Ukrainian society and the sustainability of cultural and educational institutions. The festival's objectives are:

- creating a meeting place for (1) the representatives/stakeholders of the local heritage (that can be lost for future generations) from different Ukrainian regions and (2) children, teenagers, and adults accompanying them, who otherwise have little chance to visit it or learn about it because of the ongoing war and danger;
- raising awareness of the unity and diversity of Ukrainian cultural heritage for enabling visitors to draw a mental map of Ukrainian heritage and realize their self-identification with it and within the larger European context; at the same time, visitors become aware of its diversity and regional peculiarities;
- promoting new approaches to the development programs for children and teenagers and the role of culture and education, especially informal, in this process;
- encouraging children and adult visitors to discover, acknowledge, and accept new social norms of inclusion and diversity and sharing social cohesion narratives through edutainment;
- fostering interdisciplinary exchange and creating conditions for various stakeholders—heritage institutions, social and charitable foundations, and STEM educational organizations—to interact and connect;
- strengthening the capacity of museum professionals affected by the full-scale war (museums from the liberated or close to the frontline regions, the displaced organisations) to continue their programming during the war.

Any historical and technical research undertaken for the project/initiative

Over the years, the festival team conducted participant surveys, analysed visitor feedback, and tailored the project's formats accordingly.

In 2022, the festival did not take place due to safety reasons, but the team organized a series of online meetings. Each event gathered up to 100 participants who shared difficult experiences, discussed the devastating effects of the war on heritage and education, and tried to find new solutions. This experience, along with the team's ongoing monitoring of the professional community's needs, has changed the approach to organizing the festival in 2023. The focus shifted to the participation of museum professionals from the regions most affected by the war.

The sociological research "Cultural practices and needs for population recovery in deoccupied and frontline communities" (Rating Group, December 2023) highlighted the need for communication, engagement, and the creation of new connections—not only interpersonal ones but also connections with cultural institutions that contribute to the sense of identity and belonging, confirming the focus on heritage. Also, for the 2024 festival, Mystetskyi Arsenal relied on its experience as a consortium partner in the "Room for Heritage" program (focused on support of the local heritage institutions), seven participants from which joined the "All Together" festival too.

Activities carried out and stages of implementation of the project/initiative

The festival's implementation consists of three main stages:

1. Selection of festival participants by the curatorial team: via an open call with a webinar and by direct invitations; in formats of (a) participants with stands and activities, (b) event/workshop organizers, (c) performative participants, and (d) site-specific art projects; with an overarching focus theme of the festival. In 2023, this stage also included mentoring support for five museums in developing educational projects (to test on the festival and use in their communities).

2. Preparation for the festival includes (a) creating a program of events, workshops, and performances; (b) designing and setting up the 6,000 sq.m. of the Old Arsenal for the festival and its participants, which includes a minimum of 40 participants' stands, 3 workshop areas, a stage for a performative program, a play space for 0-4 y.o. children, a lecture hall, art projects, lounge zones, and other amenities; (c) holding training program for staff, participants, and volunteers on principles of inclusivity in communicating with visitors, safety measures in case of air raids, etc.; (d) holding a professional capacity-building program for participants on methods of museum education, work with cultural heritage, gamification, audience engagement, etc.; (e) communication campaign and printouts with the festival's visual identity. The team works on ensuring that the festival space is attractive and safe, meets accessibility standards, and encourages creativity and research (i.e. creating convenient navigation (especially to the shelter), a sensory load map, a guidebook, quests for children of all ages, and souvenirs).
3. Implementation of the festival: (a) pre-festival professional day on the eve of the festival opening, designed for networking and experience exchange between participants, and becoming an inspiration and source of mutual support for each other; (b) three days of the festival program activities; (c) summarising results and post-festival evaluation.

Challenges or problems encountered and solutions found to overcome them

All challenges are war-related:

1. A risk of air raid attacks during pre-festival and festival activities was always the festival team's focus; to prevent any casualties, the protocols with clear procedures of escorting people to the bomb shelter in the historical basement of the Old Arsenal were developed and made known to security guards and volunteers; the bomb shelter is equipped with water, portable toilets, and setting for 700 persons;
2. A risk of blackouts due to the shellings was mitigated by setting up the generators and the electricity network, which can be used in such a situation;
3. A lack of financial and human resources in the museum sector prevents many potential participants (local museums), especially from near frontline regions, from traveling to Kyiv and participating in the festival; for such participants, grants for travel (in 2023-2024), development of educational pilot projects (in 2023), and mentoring were offered.

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## Results and impact

Summary of the main results achieved and knowledge that has been gained. List the ways that the project/initiative contributes to the preservation and/or enhancement of the historical, cultural, environmental, educational and/or social values of the heritage in question. Mention the project's impact on conservation policy and practice, if any.

The importance of this project is doubled because of the full-scale Russian invasion that destroyed many local museums or caused their relocation. The last festival prioritised participants from the close to the frontline and displaced organisations that actively work with children and families affected by war, themes of inclusion, and equal opportunities.

For visitors, it's a unique opportunity to see endangered heritage from different regions of Ukraine (in 2023, 10 regions of Ukraine were represented, and in 2024—12), learn about history and culture. For example, visitors could learn playfully about the Cossacks' past and unique natural heritage—the Dnipro (river) rapids, destroyed in 1932—from the Dnipro (city) museums. The Kherson Regional Children's Library shared about the Kherson region's natural heritage and the devastating impacts of the Russian occupation. The destroyed memorial museum of Nemyrovych-Danchenko and Korf from the Donetsk region offered children a VR immersion in its historical atmosphere. The Okhtyrka City Local History Museum's building was destroyed in March 2022, but the team presented interactive games about the past of the Slobozhanshchyna region. For IDPs, many of whom evacuated to Kyiv, the festival becomes a meeting place with the institutions from their hometowns.

The festival has created a community of professionals interested in museum education who see value in interacting with the audience and professional development. Networking creates perspectives for joint projects (e.g., the Mykolaiv Regional Museum of Local History and the Okhtyrka Youth Center (the distance between them is more than 500 km) organized a telecast about the heritage of the South and the East of Ukraine for each other's audiences).

The pre-festival professional program offers participants topics and formats as cross-cutting priorities (e.g., inclusion, psychological support, teenage audience engagement) and the opportunity to see how these are used in colleagues' work while testing them for themselves.

Aspects of the project that can be considered innovative within its area or field.

The festival's format is unique in both Ukrainian and European perspectives, uniting the diverse visions, experiences, and approaches of museums and organizations. It places a special focus on the varying, coexisting, and blurred dimensions of Ukraine's heritage, rich with the tangible and intangible heritage of various national communities (Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks, etc.).

The festival's cross-sectoral nature reflects the interdisciplinary nature of Mystetskyi Arsenal itself, which integrates visual arts, museum practices, literature, and performing arts. This cross-cutting approach allows different areas to develop, enrich each other, and professional communities find points of intersection and mutual reinforcement.

It's a space to discuss and compare personal and civic traumatic experiences of the past and present and their impact on nature and society (e.g., the technological, environmental, and social disaster of Chornobyl, the destruction of Khakhovka dam). The festival experience raises the participants' adaptability to the challenges of wartime, developing innovation and agility.

Measures to ensure the sustainability/future viability of the project (in terms of future plans and funding).

Throughout the festival's history, the team has been in constant contact with project participants and visitors, who, according to feedback and surveys, especially favor the festival's unique format. The festival also evolves, reflecting the needs of the audiences and the topics of importance, with cultural heritage as its main focal point. The Museum Reflections series and the work with the MA Teen Council help maintain connections with the festival audiences. In 2025, the plan is to continue supporting the participants from the regions, engage more school groups, and involve teenagers in the festival's programming as authors and curators via a separate open call.

The fundraising is planned, as the state budget doesn't cover Mystetskyi Arsenal's program activities. The past two years have shown donors' interest in supporting the festival and its separate components (such as the professional capacity-building and networking component). The fundraising for the 2025 festival is already underway.

Environmental sustainability of the project and contribution to climate action (in terms of results, techniques, materials employed, methodologies etc.), if relevant.

In Ukraine, global environmental problems are compounded by the devastating impact of the ongoing war on the environment. For this reason, the principles of environmental sustainability are essential for the festival team at the stage of its preparation and programming:

1. the same furniture set is reused for each festival;
2. banners that are no longer needed after the festival is over are used to make souvenirs;
3. Dasha Podoltseva's art project "Reverse Landscape" at the 2024 festival involved visitors in exploring the beauty made of the remains from the exhibition installation and dismantling—all the materials usually considered garbage;
4. several festival participants focus on environmental practices in their projects (Green Waste Kharkiv, BUR—Building Ukraine Together, Plast) or human impact on nature resources (museums in the Dnipro, Kherson, and Kyiv regions).

Dissemination of the project's results and knowledge gained and any outreach or educational activities.

> Prior to the festival, the team organises an educational, capacity-building programme for the participants. Moreover, each participant receives individual consultations on how to present their activities most effectively. In 2023, the festival team helped five museums develop new projects and provided financial support for their implementation. Knowledge gained at the festival regarding modern methods of interaction with audiences, one's own presentation, or approaches to work significantly enhances the participants' professional experience, skills, and abilities. The opportunity to share and exchange experiences with colleagues who are geographically located in different regions is invaluable for the development and strength of the museum community. The projects developed for the festival with the support of the festival's team are tested on many visitors and later continue to be implemented successfully in the participants' communities. The "Museum Reflections" series connects the festival team with the participants' community of heritage professionals throughout the year.

Participation in the initiative (number of participants/audience/users per year and/or, in the case of websites and digital platforms, information regarding visitor numbers and online interaction).

> Every year, the festival prepares a program of nearly 40 organisations (participants) presenting their educational activities and about 70 events in workshop areas, a lecture hall, and a performance stage. The selection of participants through the open call brought 89 applicants in 2023 and 135 applicants in 2024 for participation with stands, organising events, workshops, etc.
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> Nearly 9000 people have attended the three-day festival in two years. In 2023, the festival welcomed 5000 visitors, and in 2024, there were 4000 visitors. Twenty-five percent of visitors were people with disabilities, military personnel, war veterans and their families, older people, internally displaced persons, and children under five (these audiences have free admission).
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> The festival is also covered in the Ukrainian media (with 43 publications in 2024). Mystetskyi Arsenal actively uses its social media, and the coverage of the posts on Facebook and Instagram in 2024 was a minimum of 260,000 readers.

Involvement of youth, community, non-traditional audiences and/or people with disabilities.

> All festival components are designed to focus on social accessibility:
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> 1. The program dimension. Among the festivals' permanent participants are: Museum in the Dark "Three after midnight" / 03:00, which aims to destroy stereotyped attitudes towards blind people; the social initiative Dyvys Yak Chutno (Look How It Sounds), which aims to adapt content for people with hearing and visual impairments. Among the art projects at the 2024 festival was the exhibition "Seven Fears," which presented the works of neurodivergent artists—those with Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorder—and neurotypical artists. Members of the MA Teen Council contributed to developing events for teenagers and moderated all discussions.
> 2. The financial dimension. Free admission is offered for the groups listed above.
> 3. The physical dimension. The festival space is designed to be accessible for people with limited mobility, sign language translation is provided for some events, and a guidebook is also printed in Braille).

Contribution to intercultural dialogue and to the protection of cultural diversity.

> The festival always includes participants representing national communities (minorities) or those working with their heritage. In 2023, the Treasury of the National Museum of the History of Ukraine and the NGO "ALEM" invited children and teenagers to learn about Crimean Tatar costumes and dances, discover the symbolism of the ornaments, and create postcards. In 2024, among the participants was the Culture and Leisure Centre from Bolgrad, a city in the Odesa region, one of Ukraine's most multi-ethnic regions. Representatives of the Bulgarian minority are active participants in the Centre. They came to the festival for training and networking, improving their ability to work with diverse audiences and planning the new programme for the next year.

Transferability of the initiative to other contexts and its scalability potential.

Based on the festival's principles and values, its format can be adapted to any scale. Currently, it takes place in Ukraine's capital, but it can easily be organized/hosted by a local museum in another city in Ukraine or abroad. Anyone can initiate their own festival, engaging participants who work with heritage, education, and activities for children/teenagers. When the safety situation allows, participants from abroad will be welcomed. Previously, we engaged international artists and educators (Brendan Jamison and Mark Revels in 2018, Hanoch Piven in 2021) and see the potential to continue this practice, involving not only individual artists but also institutions, particularly museums.

Any related work that still needs to be completed, if applicable.

The festival always focuses on constant work with a professional audience, strengthening partnerships with previous years' participants, and engaging new ones. Next year, Mystetskyi Arsenal plans to work more with teachers and schools as part of the public program for the exhibitions to establish better connections and ensure that more school groups know about the festival. Also, teenagers will be involved as co-organizers/co-creators of the program for teenagers within the festival. Overall, this festival's format will always have room to grow: expanding the geography and exploring the multidisciplinarity of the participants, engaging new types of organizations, and discovering new approaches, instruments, and topics of discussion.

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## European and international dimension

European significance of the project/initiative/nominee.

The ongoing war started societal discussions about what would happen to Ukraine after the victory, who would rebuild damaged cities and infrastructure, what is valuable to be rebuilt, and how this process would develop. Modern Ukrainian teenagers feel this public demand and pressure and might become future actors in it. The festival's program helps them understand their role, realise their own impact, responsibility, and importance to the community. Learning about Ukraine's cultural heritage, especially in the European context, helps connect different regions of a large and diverse country that has been divided for many years on social, political, and historical grounds into one coherent image and refine one's own self-identification as a citizen of a democratic world. On the other hand, heritage professionals receive the opportunity to share their experiences of working with different European partners and donors, as well as sharing best practices from attending international conferences and workshops.

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## Costs of the project/initiative

Costs of the project (in euro), financial and management arrangements, funding partners and/or the type of funding.

The average festival's budget is 45,000 EUR. Usually, three to four funding sources need to be secured to implement all components of the project. Mystetskyi Arsenal, as founder and organizer of the festival, invests earned funds, time, and expertise of its staff (the festival team). Also, in the last two years, the partnership with the Art Arsenal Community NGO, founded in 2022 by the employees of Mystetskyi Arsenal, helped secure funding from different donors who otherwise may not be able to provide grants technically. This partnership was very beneficial since Mystetskyi Arsenal already has developed a good reputation in the cultural field among partners and donors as a reliable partner with clear procedures and high standards for project administration.

In 2024, the festival was supported by two donors: the European Union within the House of Europe program; and the Partnership Fund for Resilient Ukraine, financed by the governments of the United Kingdom, Estonia, Canada, the Netherlands, the United States of America, Finland, Switzerland, and Sweden (also in 2023).

Funding provided by the European Union or the EEA/Norway Grants (including programme, year and amount of the Grant), if any.

> In 2024, the project was supported by the European Union within the House of Europe program (11 199,00 EUR). Mystetskyi Arsenal also received other grants provided by the European Union but for other projects.

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## Additional information

How would winning the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award benefit you, your project and/or your organisation?

> Being among the winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards is a unique opportunity for networking with other museum professionals at the international level. This opens up the possibility of engaging experts in the professional program, new participants in the festival program, and more funding opportunities. We will be happy to share our experience and disseminate the event format if there is interest in organizing a similar event in other European countries.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, what will the monetary award be used for?

> The monetary award will be used to fund travel and production costs of the educational projects for participants from the regions (local museums) for the festival in September 2026.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, who will be the recipient of the monetary award?

> Depending on the funding requirements, it can be the Public Enterprise “National Art and Culture Museum Complex Mystetskyi Arsenal” or the NGO “Art Arsenal Community.”

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| How did you find out about the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards? | Word of mouth |
| Is this the first time that this entry has been submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards? | Yes |
| On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with this online submission form? | ✓ 10 |
| By submitting your data, photographs and other material to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards you agree to the processing and sharing of your data in accordance with Europa Nostra’s Privacy Policy. Please check the box to indicate you agree with the Privacy Policy. | ✓ |

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Log in to european-heritage.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.



1. School group... 3.7 MiB



2. Kherson libra... 4.7 MiB



3. Chornomors... 4.3 MiB



4. Folk studio Pr... 4.5 MiB



5. Kids learning.... 4.3 MiB



6. Learning mor... 3.6 MiB



7. Plast scouts ... 4.6 MiB



8. Playing with t... 3.2 MiB



9. Textile artwo... 4.8 MiB



10 Art installati... 4.1 MiB



11. Print and m... 3.8 MiB



12. VR glasses a... 3.9 MiB







13. Creative art ... 3.9 MiB

14. Activities by ... 3.6 MiB

15. Performanc... 3.5 MiB



16. Atmosphere... 3.8 MiB



17. Learning m... 4.1 MiB



18. Kids playing... 4.3 MiB



19. Participative... 3.7 MiB



20. Practicing m... 3.5 MiB



21. Puppet thea... 4.6 MiB



22. Learning ab... 3.5 MiB



23. Professional... 3.6 MiB

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All Together Fes... 9 KiB

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Entrant Declara... 353 KiB

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