

Building Inclusive Tech

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BEER
CITY
CODE

THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS!



Who am I?

- Rebecca Long
- Spokane, Washington
- 15 years in software engineering focused on quality assurance and DevOps
- Lead DevOps Engineer at [RiskLens](#)
- Feminist & diversity advocate
- Vice President of Spokane NOW (National Organization for Women)
- Founded non-profit [Future Ada](#) in 2017
 - Named after Ada Lovelace
 - Support and advocate for women and non-binaries in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, & mathematics)



Contact me

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Game Plan

- Define some terms
- Quick review where we are and one of the problems we have in tech today
- Cover what the solution is
- Cover action items each of us can take to reach our goal solution
- Review some of the beneficial outcomes when our goal is met
- Wrap up with where to go to learn more

Some Baseline Definitions...

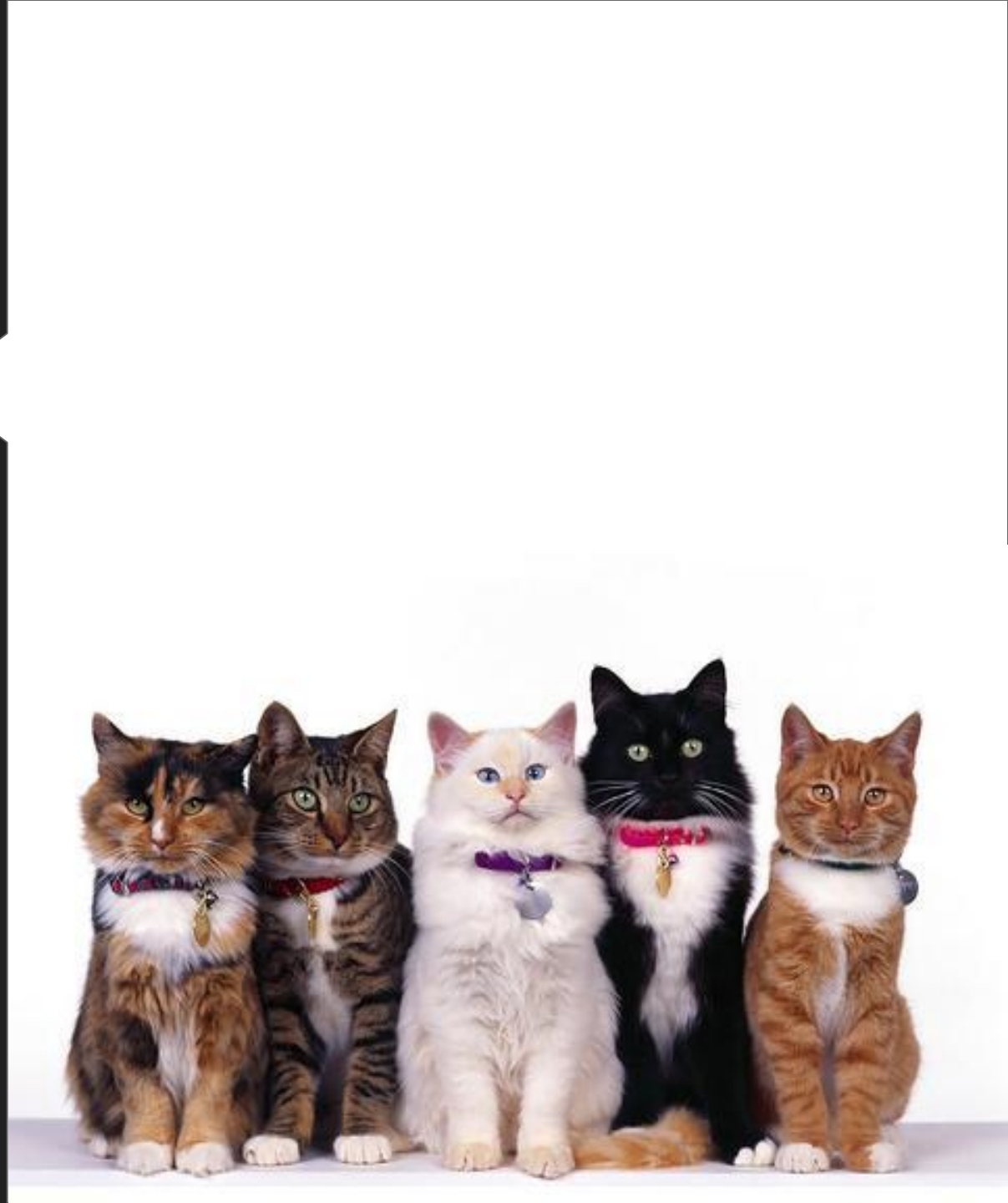
Diversity

plural **diversities**

1: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements : VARIETY; *especially* : the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization programs intended to promote *diversity* in schools

2: an instance of being composed of differing elements or qualities : an instance of being diverse a *diversity* of opinion

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/diversity>



Inclusive



adjective

1. including or encompassing the stated limit or extremes in consideration or account (usually used postpositively):
from 6 to 37 inclusive.
2. including a great deal, or encompassing everything concerned; comprehensive:
an inclusive art form; an inclusive fee.
3. enclosing; embracing:
an inclusive fence.

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/inclusive>

Okay! So, what's the problem?



Lack of Diversity... Lack of Perspectives

- Today's world is full of an ever growing collection of new complex problems to solve
- Tech impacts every person's life in some way...
 - Every age group
 - Every gender
 - Every economic situation
 - Every job
- If the majority of these problems are being solved only by cisgender straight white men, our perspectives... and thus our solutions... are drastically limited



Women in Tech Stats

57 Percent of 2016 bachelor's degree recipients who were women

19 Percent of 2016 Computer and Information Sciences bachelor's degree recipients who were women

18 Percent of 2016 Computer Science bachelor's degree recipients at major research universities who were women

37 Percent of 1985 Computer Science bachelor's degree recipients who were women

26 Percent of computing workforce who were women in 2017

3 Percent of computing workforce who were African-American women in 2017

5 Percent of computing workforce who were Asian women in 2017

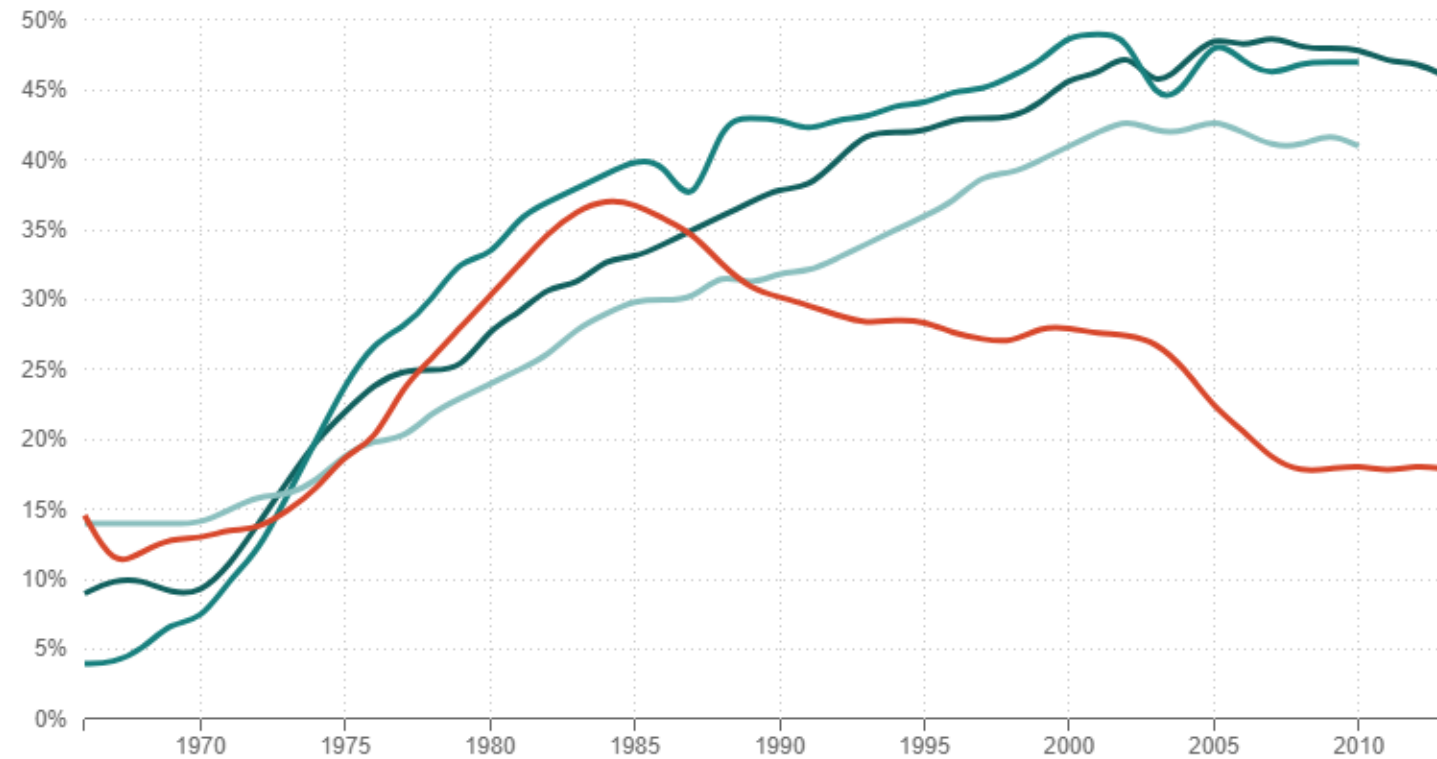
1 Percent of computing workforce who were Hispanic women in 2017

https://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/resources/btn_04042018_web.pdf

What Happened To Women In Computer Science?

% Of Women Majors, By Field

Medical School Law School Physical Sciences Computer science



Source: National Science Foundation, American Bar Association, American Association of Medical Colleges

Credit: Quoc Trung Bui/NPR

<https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2014/10/21/357629765/when-women-stopped-coding>

Women in Tech Stats

41% of women
leave technology
companies after
10 years of experience

(from the Athena Factor)

Level Up!

Better, Faster, Stronger...

- Creating an inclusive culture will naturally attract diversity
- Within inclusive cultures, diverse members feel safe to share their varied perspectives which aid in solving the diverse and complex problems of today's world
- Increase creativity & innovation



Take Action!

But wait!

I'm not a manger, what can I do?



Actions for Everyone

- Leave assumptions at the door
- Treat everyone with equal respect - regardless of role on the team, age, background, experience, gender, etc.
- Be open to different ideas & support others on your team
 - Give others opportunities to participate in problem solving and solutions
 - Help provide safe spaces to share ideas
- Commit to continuous improvement – learn, listen, & accept feedback
- Have empathy
- Speak up if you see or hear of injustices or misbehavior

Use Inclusive Language

noun

1. language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people, esp gender-specific words, such as "man", "mankind", and masculine pronouns, the use of which might be considered to exclude women

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/inclusive-language>

- Respect the language people call themselves
- Recognize different family situations
- Avoid negative or demeaning language around people with disabilities
- Avoid using statements which perpetuate stereotypes
 - E.g. "girls aren't good at math"
- Be thoughtful on what imagery you use
- Avoid idioms, jargons, and acronyms
 - If unavoidable, be open to sharing the meaning or providing a definition to help everyone understand
- Use gender-neutral terms (*hint: "guys" is not one of them*)

Inclusive Language

Affirmative Terms

People with disabilities

Person with a disability

Person who is deaf

Child has autism

Person with intellectual, cognitive,
developmental disability

Person with psychiatric disability; mental
illness

Negative Terms

The handicapped, the disabled

Impaired, invalid, crippled, afflicted

Deaf and dumb

Autistic child

Retarded, slow, idiot, moron

Crazy, insane, nuts, psycho

<https://open.buffer.com/inclusive-language-tech/>

Inclusive Language

Inclusive Terms

Parent, caregiver

Children

Folks, people, y'all

People of all genders

Siblings

Exclusive Terms

Mom, dad

"Boys and girls"

Guys

"Men and women", "ladies and gentlemen"

Brothers and sisters

<https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/ways/200008.shtml>

Be Mindful of Unconscious Bias

- Unconscious biases are deep rooted social stereotypes about certain groups of people which get formed outside a person's conscious awareness.



But wait!

I'm a manager! How can I help?



Actions for Management

- Equal pay and recognition
- Consistent hiring standards
 - Blind resume reviews
 - Standardize interviews
- Remove gender specific language from job postings
- Consistent job expectations
- Encourage a strong work/life balance
- Get comfortable with flexible schedules and remote employees
- Promote a culture of empathy, openness, and vulnerability

But wait!

I run the company! What about me?



Actions for Business Owners

- Hire an experienced HR person
- Hire and empower a diversity & inclusion (D&I) expert
- Implement zero-tolerance policy on sexual misconduct
- Implement strong and clear anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies
- Ensure the policies are posted and understood by all employees
- Create a safe reporting method to address concerns

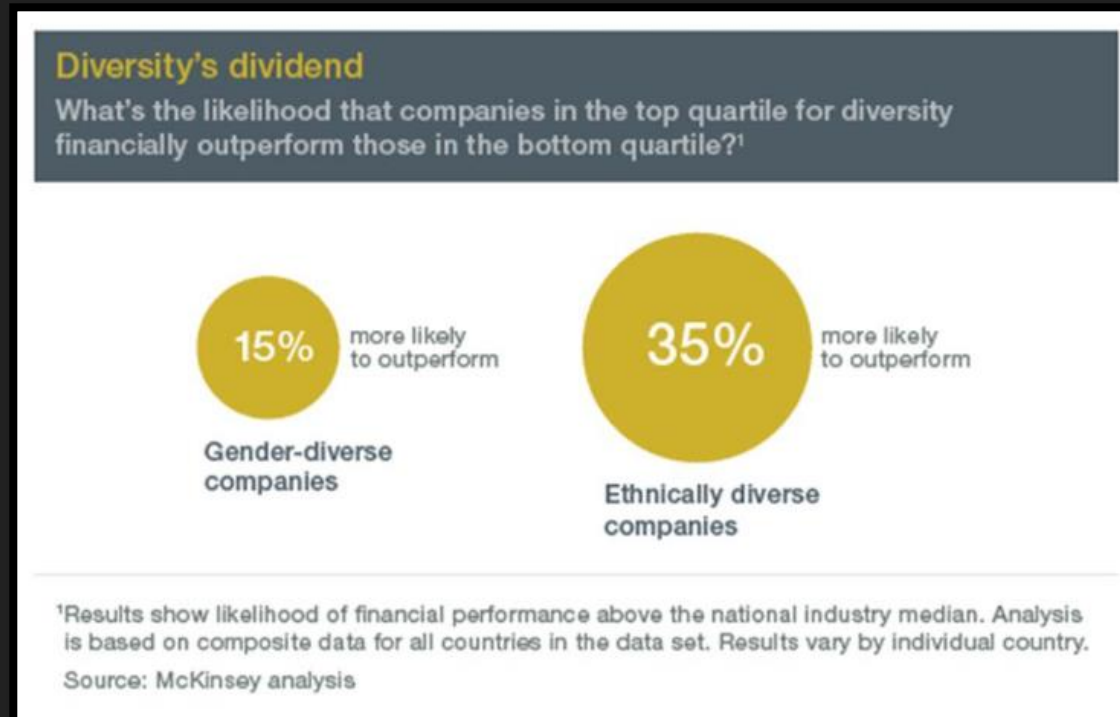
Profit!

Hard Work Pays Off



- It's shown that diverse and inclusive teams leads to better innovation and greater bottom lines for businesses
- Diverse teams are smarter
- Leads to increased creativity on teams
- Companies embracing inclusive cultures attract a wider range of candidates to fill positions
- Happier & more productive employees

Hard Work Pays Off

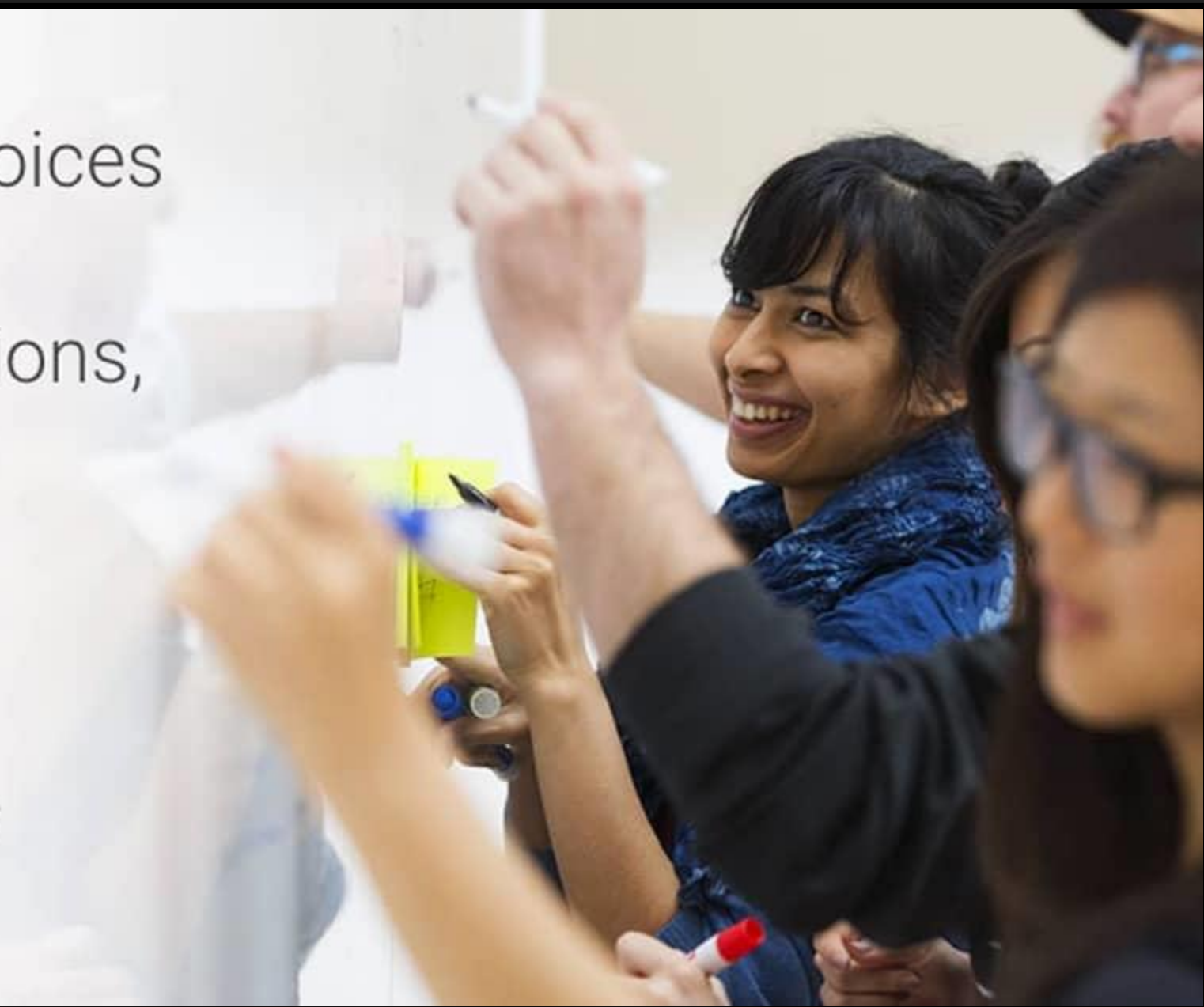


<https://open.buffer.com/diversity-benefits/>

"A diverse mix of voices
leads to better
discussions, decisions,
and outcomes for
everyone."

-Sundar Pichai, CEO, Google

Google Diversity





Diversity is the engine
of invention. It
generates creativity
that enriches
the world

Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada

Wrap Up

Wanna learn more?



- Project Include
<http://projectinclude.org/>
- Compassionate Coding
<https://compassionatecoding.com/>
- Better Allies
<https://medium.com/@betterallies>
- Tech Inclusion
<https://techinclusion.co/>
- Google Diversity
<https://diversity.google/>
- Atlassian Diversity
<https://www.atlassian.com/diversity>

Thanks!



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