



National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters

Reconciliation Action Plan Reflect

July 2021 – December 2022

Acknowledgement of Country

NAATI acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of this land and speakers of its first languages. In the spirit of reconciliation, NAATI acknowledges the richness that Indigenous, signed and all other languages bring to Australia and the role interpreters and translators play in connecting us all.

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A Message from our Chair



It gives me great pleasure to present NAATI's first Reconciliation Action Plan as our first step in our reconciliation journey.

NAATI's vision is for a connected community without language barriers through certifying practitioners who wish to work as translators and interpreters in Australia. In doing so, we are maximising all people's ability to engage and participate in Australian society.

We recognise the strong connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, culture and identity. Through our Certification System we have engaged with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to increase the number of certified interpreters and translators in our community. We are proud to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages as a rich part of our history and culture.

However, we realise there is more to be done. This RAP will enable us to build cultural awareness across our business and to seek authentic opportunities to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as our valued stakeholders.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the RAP Working Group, Reconciliation Australia and Dr Curtis Roman, in developing our first RAP.

This Reflect RAP prepares us in building the foundations for progressing our reconciliation activities and the development of future RAPs.

I encourage all of you to embrace this plan and look forward to strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

Voula Messimeri
Chair

A Message from our CEO



At NAATI, we pride ourselves on being a workplace that embraces cultural differences and celebrates our nation's rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.

Our values of respect, integrity and professionalism underpins everything we do. This Reflect RAP will guide us to support reconciliation through building stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on trust and respect.

NAATI has worked with the Australian and Northern Territory Governments to increase the number of certified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters in a wider range of these languages. At 30 June 2021, there were 160 interpreters and translators certified in 38 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. NAATI is committed to building a better understanding and recognition of the importance of maintaining and strengthening these languages to support reconciliation.

This is our first step – our individual and collective efforts are key in implementing this plan.

I look forward to working with the Board and our staff to deliver this plan and remain deeply committed to engaging with key stakeholders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on our reconciliation journey.

Mark Painting
CEO



A Message from Reconciliation Australia



Reconciliation Australia welcomes the NAATI to the RAP program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

NAATI joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with over 2.3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables NAATI to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations NAATI, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

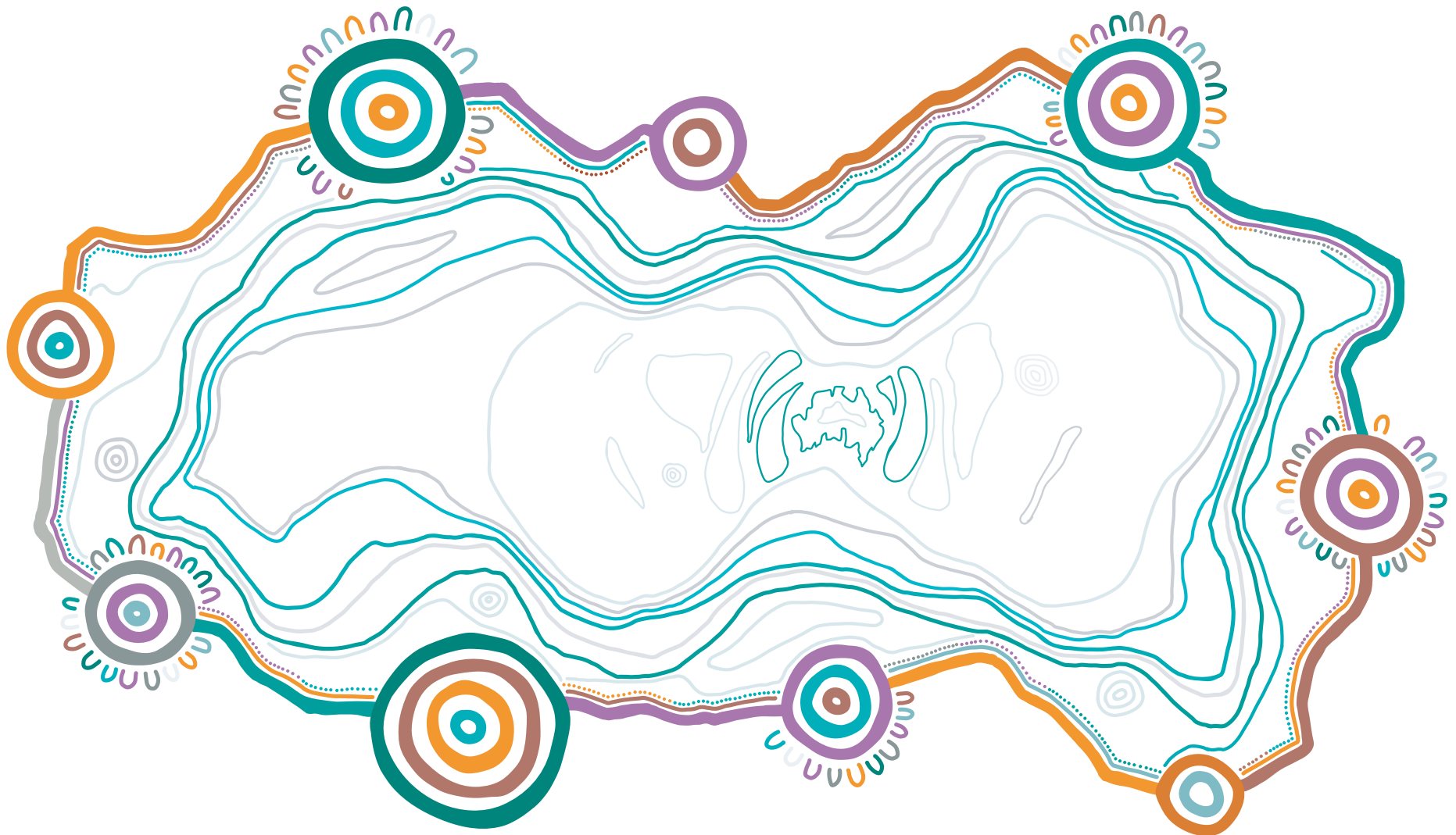
Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

‘Shared Journeys’

Our individualism creates stories for us to tell and Kaartdijin (Knowledge) for us to pass on. At the centre of this design is an interpretation of the NAATI logo, surrounded by country. Around this is the Bidee (Path) we travel down, the Kaleep (Meeting Places), and the success we have together Baardanginy (Along) the journey.

Noongar words, translated by Uncle Robert Eggington

Designer: Kevin Wilson - Maduwongga, Wongatha
nani.com.au



Our Business

Our vision:
a connected community
without language barriers

NAATI is the national standards and certifying authority for translators and interpreters in Australia. It is the only organisation to issue certification to practitioners who wish to work in these professions in Australia.



NAATI's mission is to set and maintain high national standards for the translating and interpreting sector and enable an adequate supply of skilled translating and interpreting professionals, responsive to the changing needs and demography of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse society. At 30 June 2021, there were over 13,000 individuals holding NAATI certifications in 185 languages. This comprises 139 non-Indigenous languages, eight signed languages, including Auslan, and 38 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

The importance of the work of interpreters and translators is increasingly being acknowledged globally and NAATI is seen as an international leader in the certification of community-based interpreters and translators.

At 30 June 2021, NAATI employed 70 people on a full time and part time basis, including one Aboriginal staff member, across seven locations in Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Hobart and Adelaide. Four staff are dedicated to working specifically with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters and translators.

As well as people employed directly with NAATI, NAATI engages the expertise of language professionals (including language speakers, interpreters, translators and linguists) to deliver training and testing, provide advice and assess test results. In the last financial year, despite the challenges COVID-19 presented, NAATI engaged 46 specialists to support the certification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters and translators, 30 of whom were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

In striving for our vision for a connected community without language barriers, we acknowledge that reconciliation must be a core part of our business. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the first people and custodians of the country that Australians now call home. We cannot be truly connected as a community without reconciling the past and creating a future that is inclusive.

“I think everyone who lives or spends time in Australia should engage with reconciliation in one way or another. I also think NAATI’s national reach puts us in a unique position to influence reconciliation in many different communities.”

- NAATI staff member

This is NAATI’s first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the development and implementation of which marks the beginning of NAATI’s reconciliation journey. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages have been included since 1981 in NAATI’s accreditation (now certification) system. Through our Certification System we have continued to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to increase the number of qualified interpreters and translators in these communities.

NAATI’s identity as a diverse and inclusive organisation is reflected in our staffing profile and our external stakeholder communities. This RAP provides an opportunity for NAATI to leverage its national reach to engage with our internal and external stakeholders around reconciliation. This will create a foundation for future work that mobilises our stakeholders to take substantive action toward reconciliation, in allyship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We will start by engaging deeply with our vision for reconciliation, developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and exploring our potential to create meaningful change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“I love languages, and it is one of the reasons why I work for NAATI. But I also love learning about different cultures. I am very keen to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and cultures, but also about the past.”

- NAATI staff member

To implement our RAP, we have assembled a RAP Working Group made up of members from across the organisation that have volunteered to be part of the group. Membership currently includes:

- Hannah Bryant – Project Manager, Indigenous Interpreting Project (Chair)
- Lauren Campbell – Special Projects Officer, Indigenous Interpreting Project
- Donna Brown – Human Resources Manager
- Susan Robinson – Role Player Trainer & Assessor
- Pascale Johnstone – Operations & Testing Supervisor
- Kym McDowell – Regional Operations Manager
- Lee Yacoumis – Strategic Engagement Manager

We also welcome the contribution and expertise of our external working group member, Dr Curtis Roman, a Larrakia man and Director of the Aboriginal Interpreting Service, Northern Territory.

Our RAP is championed internally by Michael Nemarich, Manager, National Operations, and sponsored by the CEO with the NAATI Board’s full support.

Our Partnerships and Current Activities

The United Nations recognises the right to speak one's own language as a human right. In multicultural societies, interpreters and translators are integral to people's linguistic rights being upheld. For this reason, NAATI has worked with stakeholders since 1977 to establish interpreting and translation as a profession in Australia.



Alyawarr interpreters Janella Woodman and Bonita Thompson preparing for certification tests with NAATI staff

NAATI was established to enable Australians from diverse language backgrounds to access and participate in social and political life at a time that Australia adopted a multicultural national policy. However, Australia's history of cultural and linguistic diversity stretches back many tens of thousands of years, and to many, to the beginning of time. In the late 18th century, when Australia was colonised by Britain, there were hundreds of languages spoken across the continent of Australia and a rich culture of multilingualism. Tragically, because of colonisation, the majority of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are no longer spoken or are in stages of 'revival'. There are, however, still many traditional languages and some new languages (creoles and mixed languages) considered 'strong' (being acquired by children as a first language) with vibrant communities of speakers – particularly in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia, northern Queensland and the Torres Strait that require and have produced highly skilled interpreters.

Interpreting services for these languages were built up through the tireless work of passionate and talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interpreters, training organisations, advocates in related industries and government. This country's First Nations peoples have worked hard for the right to be heard in their own languages. NAATI has participated in this work by certifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters since 1981.

NAATI continues to highlight the need to increase the supply of certified professionals for these languages. In 2012, NAATI partnered with Australian governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to make certification testing more widely available in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. While the need always existed, heightened awareness of that need and better language policies are resulting in an increase in demand for quality interpreting services. The main objective of this partnership is to increase the number of certified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters, and the number of languages that have certified practitioners.

Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies feature rich oral traditions. Reading and writing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages began after colonisation. Translation work between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other languages has historically centred on bible translation and areas where bilingual education has been supported. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language services, communication policies and channels of communication evolve and adapt, NAATI has undertaken to consult with stakeholders on the application of the NAATI system to certify individual translators.

At 30 June 2021, there were 160 interpreters and translators holding credentials in 38 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

NAATI continues to view the work of Aboriginal and Strait Islander language interpreters and translators as central to upholding the cultural and linguistic rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through language maintenance, social and economic inclusion, and self-determination. We remain committed to growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interpreting and translating sector by supporting individuals to achieve certification and advocating for the use of trained and certified language professionals.



NAATI certified interpreters Harry Wilson and Jennifer Armstrong



Senior AIWA interpreters and NAATI staff on Miriwoong country, Kununurra, WA

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	December 2021	Manager, National Operations
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and share with all NAATI staff.	March 2022	Project Manager, Indigenous Interpreting Project
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2022	Chair, RAP WG
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June, 2022	Chair, RAP WG
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 June, 2022	Chair, RAP WG
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Continue to use NAATI's influence as the certification authority for translators and interpreters (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages) to communicate with its stakeholders on the elements of this Plan.	June 2022	Chair, RAP WG
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff by developing a RAP communications plan.	September 2021	Strategic Engagement Manager
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2021	Strategic Engagement Manager
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey and invite to shared events.	December 2021	Strategic Engagement Manager
	Share information about reconciliation and NAATI's RAP through the NAATI website, NAATI newsletters, and other possible external sources such as AUSIT and ASLIA.	March 2022	Strategic Engagement Manager
Promote positive race relations through anti discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	March 2022	HR Manager
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	June 2022	HR Manager
	Explore how NAATI's processes and policies contribute to enacting our vision of a connected community without language barriers.	June 2022	Manager, National Operations
Build relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters and translators, and migrant language interpreters and translators.	Explore opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreters to connect with the migrant language workforce for mutual learning and sharing of experiences.	September 2022	Project Manager, Indigenous Interpreting Project

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for activities that increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	September 2021	HR Manager
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	December 2021	HR Manager
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	September 2021	Manager, National Operations
	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2021	Strategic Engagement Manager
	Develop an Acknowledgement of Country for NAATI staff signature blocks.	September 2021	Manager, National Operations
	Celebrate International Mother Language Day (21 February) by highlighting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreting and other languages serviced by NAATI.	March 2022	Project Manager, Indigenous Interpreting Project
	Scope appropriateness of Acknowledgement of Country signage for each office.	March 2022	Manager, National Operations
	Develop guidelines or policies for Acknowledgements and Welcomes to Country at NAATI.	March 2022	Manager, National Operations
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	Strategic Engagement Manager
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	July 2022	Manager, National Operations
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2022	Chair, RAP WG

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities within our organisation.	December 2021	HR Manager
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	December 2021	HR Manager
	Understand barriers to the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and develop strategies to reduce or remove these barriers.	September 2022	HR Manager
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop guidelines to support procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	June 2022	Manager, Corporate Services and Governance
	Investigate Supply Nation membership and explore opportunities associated with Supply Nation to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement.	December 2021	Finance Manager
	Understand and implement effective internal tracking of procurement outcomes.	March 2022	Finance Manager
	Ensure all goods and services procured for National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events are sourced from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	September 2022	Project Manager, Indigenous Interpreting Project
	Monitor procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses as per new procurement guidelines (once developed).	September 2022	Finance Manager

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	September 2021	CEO
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	December 2021	Chair, RAP WG
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2021	Chair, RAP WG
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2021	Chair, RAP WG
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2021	Chair, RAP WG
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	December 2021	Chair, RAP WG
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2021, September 2022	Chair, RAP WG
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	September 2022	Chair, RAP WG





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