INTERNATIONAL TEXTILE AND APPAREL ASSOCIATION
DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER
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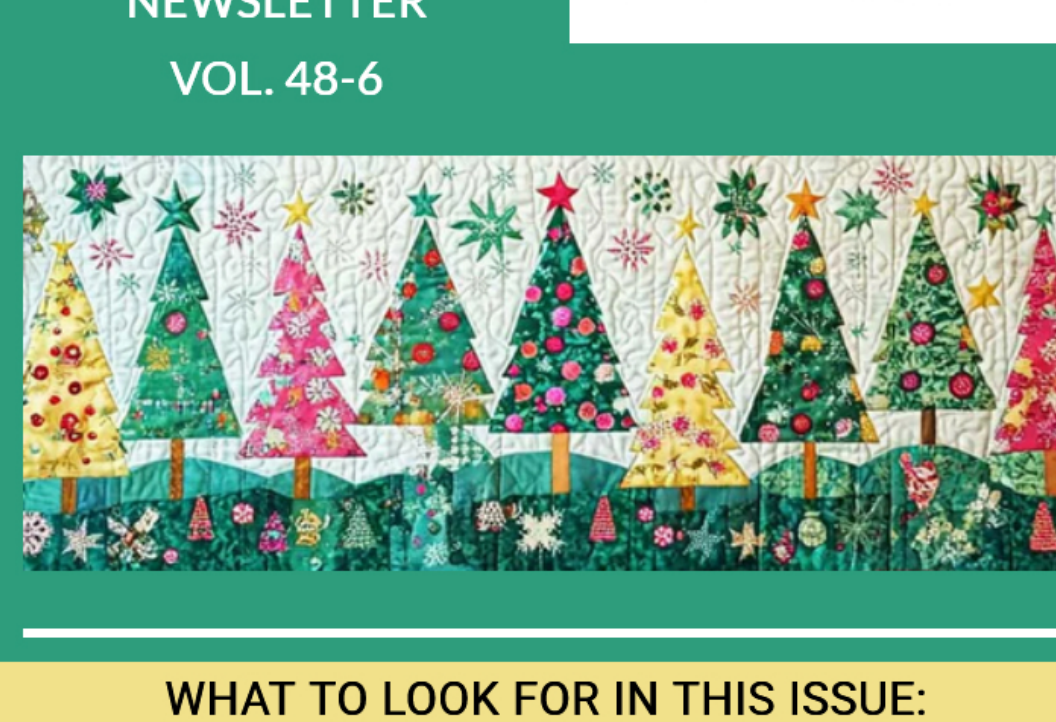


WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THIS ISSUE:

- Introducing ITAA's Giving Monday!
- President's Message
- UAL and Regents Submission Deadline Extended to December 10th
- 2026 New Graduate Student Liaison
- ITAA Accessibility Task Force
- Time to Submit ITAA Conference Proceedings
- AAFCS Apparel, Textile, and Design Showcase
- Conference Support Initiatives a Success
- *Plus-size Patternmaking for Womenswear* - A Book Review
- Thank you for supporting the International Bazaar
- Time to Renew Your ITAA Membership - Coupon Code Included
- Position Postings since last Newsletter

Introducing... ITAA's Giving Monday!

This year, ITAA is putting our own spin on the global generosity movement by celebrating **Giving Monday**—a special opportunity for our members and friends to support the programs and initiatives that make ITAA thrive. While the world gears up for Giving Tuesday, our newsletter arrives one day earlier, so we're inviting you to kick off the spirit of giving **on Monday with us**!

Your contribution—no matter the size—directly supports ITAA's mission to advance textile and apparel scholarship, strengthen our professional community, and invest in the next generation of scholars, designers, and educators. From student scholarships and awards to conference programming and international collaborations, your gifts help ITAA grow, innovate, and serve.

For our **retired members**, Giving Monday can also be a meaningful way to use your **Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)**. For those required to take RMDs from retirement accounts, directing a portion of these funds to ITAA can be both impactful and strategic. A charitable distribution from your RMD may offer tax advantages while helping ITAA maintain financial strength and stability.

What many members don't realize is that gifts can be allocated across several different ITAA accounts, allowing you to support the areas that reflect your passions and values. You may designate your distribution to any of the accounts below (as well as others):

- **Named Scholarships or Awards** – Support students and emerging scholars in areas you care deeply about.
- **ITAA General Operations** – Strengthen the association's capacity to deliver programs, manage conferences, and serve members year-round.
- **Conference Support Initiatives** – Contribute to student and faculty conference support awards that help members attend the conference at a reduced rate.
- **Legacy Group Support** – Provide targeted funding to emerging scholars and professionals, helping them engage more fully in ITAA's annual conference and community—reflecting the Legacy Group's commitment to fostering the next generation of ITAA members.
- **Future-Focused Funds** – Support new educational programs, leadership development, or industry partnerships.

Even small contributions, when pooled across accounts, make a significant impact. You may choose to support a single area or distribute your gift among multiple funds—each option helps ITAA continue the work you helped shape throughout your career.

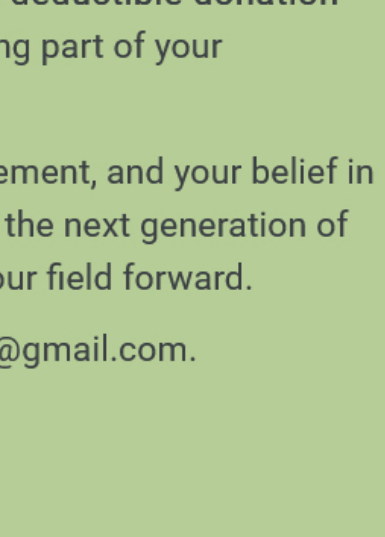
As we close out the year, we hope you'll join us in celebrating **Giving Monday** and consider making a **tax-deductible donation** to one of ITAA's key funds—or by designating part of your **Required Minimum Distribution** to ITAA.

Thank you for your generosity, your engagement, and your belief in ITAA's work—and for continuing to support the next generation of scholars and professionals who will carry our field forward.

Questions? Please reach out to itaasherry@gmail.com.

Donate

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



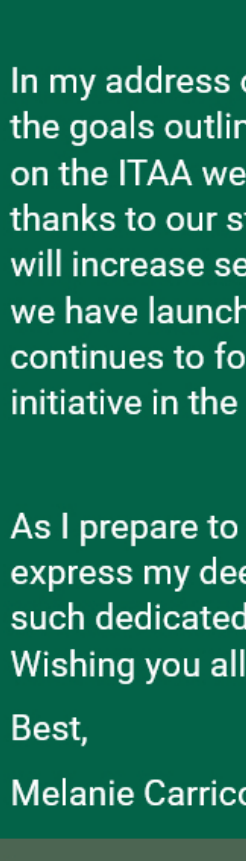
I'm writing this shortly after the conference, still energized from such a fantastic week! Thank you to everyone who helped make our annual conference a success—from the planning team and onsite volunteers to the presenters and attendees. A special thanks to the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles for joining us in St. Louis.

In my address on November 20, I shared how ITAA is advancing the goals outlined in our strategic plan. That update will be posted on the ITAA website soon. I'm also pleased to announce that, thanks to our strong financial endowments and investments, we will increase several annual award amounts in 2026. Additionally, we have launched an Accessibility Task Force to ensure ITAA continues to foster inclusivity. You can learn more about this initiative in the newsletter article below.

As I prepare to transition from President to Counselor, I want to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated council members and our Executive Director. Wishing you all a safe and joyful holiday season!

Best,

Melanie Carrico, mrcarric@uncg.edu



UAL Summer Study Abroad & Regents University London Student Scholarship Awards—Deadline Extended to December 10!

Great news for our ITAA members, both student and faculty alike — **the deadline to apply for the University of the Arts London (UAL) Faculty & Student Summer Study Abroad Awards** and the **Regents University London Undergraduate Student Fashion Design and Merchandising Awards** has been extended to ***December 10th.***

These prestigious opportunities offer more than financial support—they open doors to global visibility, international collaboration, and the advancement of creative practice. Whether you're a student developing an innovative project or a faculty member honing their own skills, these awards are designed to elevate your work on an international stage.

Why You Should Apply—Right Now

With the extended deadline, you have a little more breathing room—but don't wait. These awards are highly competitive, and the application window is closing fast. Submitting before the rush ensures your materials receive full consideration and that any last-minute questions can be addressed before the portal closes.

About the Awards

🔹 **University of the Arts London Faculty & Student Awards**
These awards celebrate innovation, creative excellence, and forward-thinking. They support projects that push boundaries in apparel, textiles, merchandising, sustainability, digital practice, and more. Both students and faculty are encouraged to apply.

🔹 **Regents University London Scholarship**
This scholarship provides an incredible international learning opportunity for emerging designers and merchandisers. Recipients gain access to unique study experiences in London, one of the world's leading fashion capitals, offering exposure to global fashion practices, cultural immersion, and academic enrichment.

Don't Miss Your Chance

If you've been considering applying, **now is the moment.** Outstanding work is happening across our programs—make sure *your* voice is part of this year's submissions.

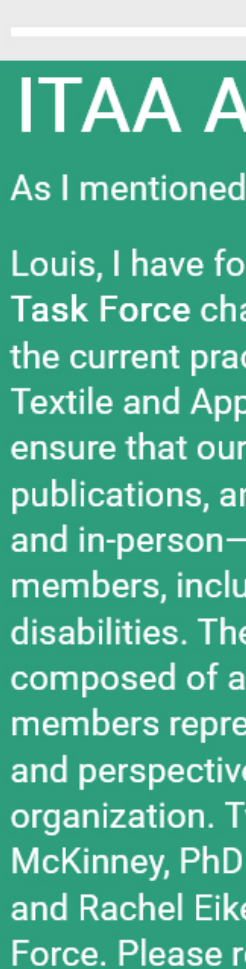
⏰ **Extended Deadline: December 10th**
📥 **Apply today through Oxford Abstracts:**

UAL Submission

Regents Submission

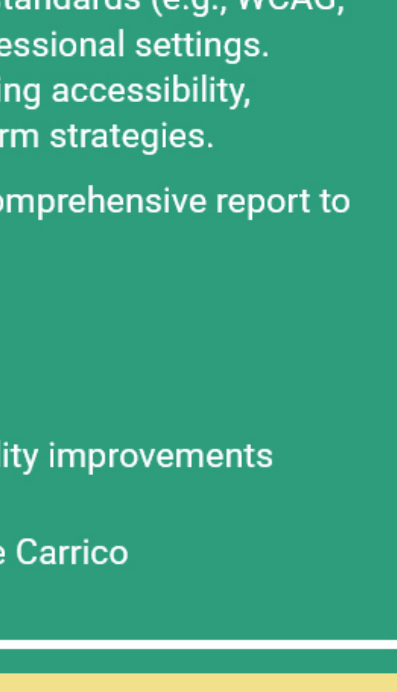
Let's make sure our members and students are well represented in these remarkable international opportunities. Encourage your peers, advise your students, and submit your own work before the window closes!

2026 Graduate Student Liaison



We are pleased to announce that Ragul Senthil will be serving as the new 2026 Graduate Student Liaison. Ragul is a Ph.D.Student at Texas Tech University. A one-year term, the Graduate Student Liaison has a vital role in maintaining and advancing graduate student communications, events, and initiatives while providing perspective and input to the ITAA Council. The pool of nominees for the Graduate Student Liaison position was very strong. Our appreciation to Ragul and everyone for enthusiastically supporting ITAA!

ITAA Accessibility Task Force



As I mentioned in my Presidential Address November 20 in St. Louis, I have formed an **Accessibility Task Force** charged with evaluating the current practices of International Textile and Apparel Association to ensure that our communications, publications, and events—both virtual and in-person—are accessible to all members, including individuals with disabilities. The Task Force will be composed of at least six ITAA members representing varied roles and perspectives within the organization. Two co-chairs, Ellen McKinney, PhD (ecmckinney@ua.edu) and Rachel Eike, PhD (rjeike@iastate.edu), are leading the Task Force. Please reach out to them with questions, suggestions, etc.

Over the course of one year, the Task Force will:

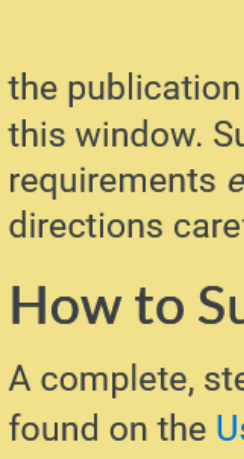
1. **Assess Accessibility** across the organization's:
   1. **Communications** (e.g., website, emails, social media, newsletters)
   2. **Publications** (e.g., journals, catalogs, proceedings)
   3. **Meetings and Events** (e.g., virtual meetings, webinars, in-person conferences)
2. **Identify Barriers** to access and inclusion in these areas.
3. **Research Best Practices** and relevant standards (e.g., WCAG, ADA, Section 508) in academic and professional settings.
4. **Develop Recommendations** for improving accessibility, including short-term actions and long-term strategies.

I am asking the Task Force to submit a comprehensive report to me by November 1, 2026 that includes:

- A summary of findings
- Specific, actionable recommendations
- Suggested implementation strategies
- Resources or tools to support accessibility improvements

- from President Melanie Carrico

Time to Submit Your 2025 ITAA Conference Proceedings!


ITAA
INTERNATIONAL TEXTILE & APPAREL ASSOCIATION
Annual Conference Proceedings

If you presented at the ITAA 2025 Annual Conference, it's now time to submit your work for inclusion in the **2025 ITAA Digital Proceedings**. This is your opportunity to formally share your scholarship, preserve your contribution to the field, and make your work accessible to colleagues worldwide.

Proceedings submissions are open now through *December 15, 2025*. Please note that **no late submissions can be accepted**, as the publication schedule requires all papers to be finalized within this window. Submissions that do not follow the formatting requirements *exactly* will not be published, so please review the directions carefully.

How to Submit Your Proceedings

A complete, step-by-step guide is provided in the **full instructions** found on the Useful Resources page of the website. But here is a brief overview:

1. Log In or Register
Visit the Iowa State University Digital Press submission portal and log in or create an account. Be sure your author information is correct and entered using standard capitalization.

2. Enter Metadata
You will be asked to submit a short **150-word preview abstract**. This is *not* your full proceedings abstract. For accuracy, do not paste directly from Word—either retype it or paste through a plain text editor.

3. Prepare Your Proceedings File

All submissions must use the **2025 Proceedings Template** and follow updated formatting guidelines, including:

- Submitted on 2025 Template
- Arial 12-point font for all text
- Title centered, bold, Title Case, no more than 30 words
- Author names and affiliations included
- Keywords added
- Page limits followed (most papers should be just over 2 pages once metadata is added; references limited to one page; optional 5th page for figures/tables)
- No editing marks
- Saved as a PDF, not a Word document

4. Upload Your PDF
Submit your finished proceedings as a Manuscript File in the Digital Press system.

5. Review and Submit
Verify all information before clicking **Complete Submission**. Revisions will not be requested, so accuracy is essential.

Why Submitting Matters

Proceedings are a key part of ITAA's scholarly legacy. They ensure your research, creative scholarship, teaching innovations, or industry work becomes part of the association's permanent, citable record. (If the Proceedings limits your options for publishing elsewhere, you might want to consider not including your abstract in the Proceedings.) Your contribution strengthens our field and supports future researchers, educators, and students.

If you have any questions as you prepare your file, please reach out to the Executive Director at itaasherry@gmail.com

We look forward to showcasing your excellent work in the 2025 Digital Proceedings!

AAFCS Apparel, Textile, and Design Showcase

Who will lead the development of new designs, innovations, and growth in the textile and apparel sector? With recent changes to the Department of Education and a shift in focus at the state level towards high enrollment degrees and programs that produce high employment numbers, its important to highlight the value and continued demand for new and innovative designs.

The Family and Consumer Sciences is a research based, people-centered discipline, which has offered education to individuals, families, and communities since it was first formed in 1909 as Home Economics. At the time, FCS professionals focused on education, ensuring individuals, students and adults, were taught life skills such as cooking, sewing, pattern making, design, resources management and more. Over time, the discipline has evolved to meet the needs of consumers and many FCS professionals now support manufacturers and retailers in the development of textiles, apparels, and designs to meet the needs of businesses and individual consumers.

Supported by research conducted by fellow FCS professionals, those working in the textile, apparel, and design industry can develop new technologies and design approaches and better meet the needs of customers. Examples include the incorporation of smart fabrics and smart technology, development of new textiles, and the implementation of sustainability concepts.

In a recent study of students participating in career and technical education (CTE) courses at the middle and high school level, it was found that over 2 million students attend at least one Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) course each year and that over a million students go on to take a second or more courses. Of those over 300 thousand are taking courses in Arts and Design. Within Family and Consumer Sciences, Textile, Apparel and Design is the third most popular class pursued by students.

In support of the many FCS professionals pursuing degrees or working in the fashion and design space, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) hosts an annual Juried showcase, inviting individuals to submit designs and, if selected, showcase them at the AAFCS Annual Conference. It is the aim of AAFCS to work with the broader community to bring visibility to the important and innovative work of those in the textile, apparel, and design space to develop resources, share research, and offer collaboration.

Those interested in learning more about the AAFCS Apparel, Textile, and Design Showcase, please visit: https://www.aafcs.org/news-and-events/conferences/ac-26/atd26 or contact Courtney Manno, Staff Liaison for the Community for Apparel, Textile, and Design at annualconf@aafcs.org.

Early-Stage Support & Legacy Group Support Initiatives: A Successful First Year

At the 2025 ITAA Annual Conference, we introduced two new funding programs designed to support members at key points in their professional journeys: the **Early-Stage Support Initiative** and the **Legacy Group Support Initiative**.

Early-Stage Support Initiative

Created to assist emerging scholars and professionals—graduate students, junior faculty, and early-career members—the Early-Stage Support Initiative helped reduce financial barriers enabling 14 members to attend and present at the conference. Awardees reported that the support allowed them to fully participate, connect with peers and mentors, and gain valuable visibility during a pivotal moment in their careers. Their contributions enriched sessions across research, design, and professional development.

Legacy Group Support Initiative

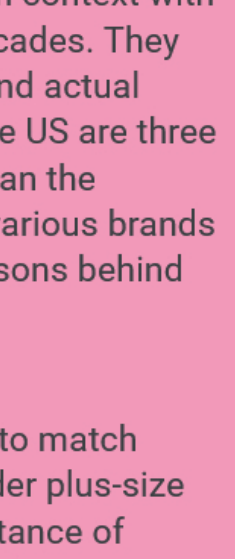
The Legacy Group Support Initiative honors ITAA's long-standing leaders, including Fellows and Past Presidents, by supporting their continued engagement. The 8 recipients of this award expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to remain active in ITAA's conference programming.

Looking Ahead to Jacksonville 2026

The strong positive feedback from both award groups confirmed the value of these new initiatives. Each program successfully broadened participation, supported meaningful community engagement, and reinforced ITAA's commitment to members. Both programs debuted with outstanding success, and we are pleased to share that Council and the Legacy Group have approved continuing each initiative for the **2026 Annual Conference in Jacksonville**. We look forward to welcoming new applicants and continuing to invest in the people who make ITAA thrive.

Plus-size Patternmaking for Womenswear

by Gabby Brown and Leila Kelleher (Book Review by Susan Ashdown)



Plus-size Patternmaking for Womenswear offers a profound transformation from the way we in the industry approach sizing and fit. The authors recognize the need for effective patternmaking methods for the unique body shapes of larger sized bodies. In doing so they expose the contradictions and failures of current sizing systems in the industry.

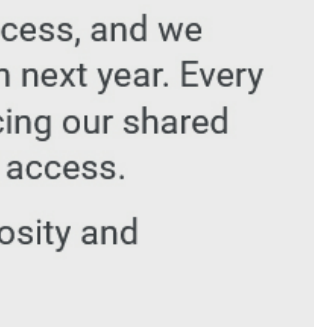
The authors begin by showing how large bodies differ in balance and curvature from straight bodies, resulting in different pattern shapes than standard industry patterns. Their pattern drafting process is simple and direct with the goal of creating a block suitable for fitting on the client, fit model, or dress form. As the authors point out blocks from any patternmaking method require fitting. Elaborate drafting systems with many steps do not necessarily create a more useful prototype for this fitting process.

The authors put patternmaking issues for plus-size in context with issues that have afflicted the apparel industry for decades. They discuss the gap between industry's target markets and actual apparel consumers, pointing out that fit models in the US are three to five inches taller and three to four sizes smaller than the average woman. The authors discuss strategies by various brands to incorporate plus-size offerings, along with the reasons behind the many failures.

Instructions are included on converting dress forms to match actual fit model bodies, along with a warning that older plus-size dress forms are not anatomically correct. The importance of posture and the balance of body features front to back are emphasized. One of the most important lessons for patternmakers in this text is a discussion of how to look at and analyze the body shape (regardless of size) when making decisions on placing fitting features, training the eye to both recognize and appreciate body variation.

This is a book that all fashion students, apparel industry practitioners, custom apparel designers, and home sewists should read. Universal topics are covered – understanding the limited segment of the population that is served by the industry; understanding body variation, posture, movement, and fit; exercises designed to broaden our view on body variation to recognize it as an opportunity instead of a problem; and learning the 'why' of pattern development to fit the body. This book has inspiration for designers, greater understanding for patternmakers, and affirmation of all bodies for those who cannot find good fit in ready-to-wear. Proponents of sustainability will find the answer to creating better fitting clothing that is the antidote to fast fashion. Everyone should own this book.

Thank You for Supporting the International Bazaar!



A heartfelt thank you to all who donated to this year's International Bazaar at ITAA. Your generosity brought together an incredible collection of handcrafted, traditional, and globally inspired items that truly reflected the cultural richness of our membership.

Together, we raised $709, which will support future ITAA international scholars through dedicated scholarship funding. These contributions not only celebrate global artistry and design but also help foster cross-cultural exchange and academic opportunity in our community.

Your support made this event a meaningful success, and we encourage members to consider donating again next year. Every item, big or small, makes a difference in advancing our shared mission of global engagement and educational access.

Thank you once again for your continued generosity and commitment to ITAA!

Time to Renew Your ITAA Membership!

Early-Bird Discount Available December 1 – January 15

It's that time of year again—membership renewal season! We invite all ITAA members to renew for the 2026 membership year and continue being part of our vibrant, collaborative, and forward-moving community.

To make renewal even easier, ITAA is offering an **Early Renewal Discount** from **December 1 through January 15**. Use the coupon code **EarlyRenewal2026** at checkout to receive **10% off your annual membership fee**. This limited-time discount is our way of thanking you for your continued support and commitment to ITAA.

A Note About Membership Fees

You may notice what appears to be an increase in annual membership rates—but rest assured, **membership fees themselves have NOT increased**.

In previous years, the credit card service fee appeared as an optional "donation" during checkout. Many university accounting systems flagged or rejected this line item, creating challenges for members attempting to submit payment. To simplify the process (and avoid the headaches!), ITAA has now **rolled the credit card service fee into the membership cost**. The total you pay remains essentially the same; the fee is simply integrated rather than shown as a separate line.

This change should make renewals smoother and more compliant with institutional requirements.

Renew Today and Stay Connected

Your membership ensures access to ITAA's programming, resources, conference opportunities, scholarships, awards, committees, and our growing professional network. We look forward to an exciting year ahead and are grateful for your continued involvement.

Renew early, save 10%, and stay part of ITAA's ongoing mission to support excellence in textiles and apparel education, research, and practice.

NEW POSITION OPENINGS

- Montclair Assistant Professor in Fashion Design and Merchandising at Montclair State University
- Department Chair, Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors at the University of Georgia
- Lecturer / Assistant Professor, Non-Tenure Track at Kent State University
- Assistant Professor, Tenure Track at Kent State University
- Assistant Professor in the School of Art and Design at the University of Wisconsin-Stout
- Assistant Professor of Fashion Studies, Outreach and Engagement at Central Michigan University
- Assistant or Associate Professor in Fashion Merchandising and Design at Virginia Tech
- Assistant Professor of Practice in the School of Design at Virginia Tech
- Assistant Professor in Bio Design, Department of Design, at University of California Davis
- Assistant Professor / Educator, College of Business, University of Cincinnati
- School Director, College of Health and Human Sciences, Kansas State University
- Assistant Professor of Fashion and Textiles, Department of Human Ecology, SUNY Oneonta

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