

A photograph of a concert hall with a stage, audience, and dramatic lighting. The stage is lit with red light, and the audience is seated in wooden pews. The hall has a high ceiling with blue lighting. The word "triskel" is written in white lowercase letters in the bottom left corner.

triskel

**Statement of Strategy and
Development Priorities**
2025 - 2028

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Acknowledgements

Triskel Arts Centre would like to thank the many arts and community organisations and artists here in Cork and further afield, former and current staff members of Triskel, our Hub Partners, funders and stakeholders, all of whom generously gave their time and insights to us and whose contributions were valuable and are valued. Triskel Arts Centre would like to thank Cork City Council for its contribution towards funding the Plan. This Plan was made possible through the expertise of Consultant Dermot McLaughlin of Creative Strategic Solutions.



Statement

Chairperson

This is a time of great opportunity for Cork and for Triskel. Our city is expanding and growing, Cork is home to an abundance of diverse cultures and languages and to people and communities who are hungry for access to high quality experiences in culture and the arts. The Board, management, and staff of Triskel embrace the powerful sense of transformation and possibility that is so palpable in Cork right now. Triskel belongs at the heart of Cork's cultural life, and our ambition with this new strategy is to build ever stronger connections with artists and audiences in Cork and further afield.

At Triskel, part of our job is to make sure that people in Cork have opportunities to access high quality arts and culture experiences throughout the year. Our strategy for 2025-2028 builds on our strengths in high quality programming and on our experience in developing productive partnerships with artists and organisations. During consultation for this strategy, we heard many ideas and suggestions for strengthening Triskel's position as part of Cork's essential arts infrastructure.

We also heard many views about Cork's arts scene, the gaps in infrastructure and programming, and the evolving needs of artists and audiences. We want to rise to the challenges that we can address, and we will test and try new approaches to using and animating Triskel as Cork's centre for artists and the arts.

We will invest in our building, infrastructure, and facilities to ensure that Triskel is accessible and connected, and we will be ambitious in how we engage with artists and audiences. One element of this will involve upgrading our digital capacity and readiness so that we can better serve artists and audiences in more ways, and another element will involve enhancing the visitor experience at Triskel through better facilities.

As a Board we are aware of the challenging funding environment for the arts, and we are committed to exploring creatively all angles and avenues to help us attain our goal of an additional €100k for our annual artistic programming budget.

We are proud to be a part of the ambitious redevelopment of Bishop Lucey Park and the surrounding area which is being led by Cork City Council who are one of our main stakeholders and funders. This major public investment in civic and cultural infrastructure underlines the importance of culture in civic life and it creates a sense of ambitious momentum. We welcome the opportunities this will create for Triskel to add to the quality of cultural life in Cork.

We are also proud of the part that Triskel plays in Ireland's national infrastructure of professionally managed arts venues, and we look forward to sustained support from, and engagement with, An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council as we implement this strategy between now and 2028.

Paula Cogan

Chairperson

Triskel Board Members:

Colette Kelleher

Philip King

Raluca Saceanu

Dr Rob Worrall



Statement

Artistic Director

As we stand on the cusp of Triskel's 50th anniversary in 2028, this Statement of Strategy and Development Priorities for 2025-2028 marks not just a plan for the future, but a celebration of our enduring commitment to the arts in Cork. This is an exciting time for Triskel. Cork City Council are investing in the area around us, and there's a great buzz in the city's culture right now. This strategy is about making the most of these opportunities.

For almost half a century, Triskel has been a place for artists and audiences to connect, to challenge, and to be inspired. In this next chapter, we reaffirm our dedication to providing a platform for innovative, high-quality work, particularly in contemporary music, jazz, and experimental film, areas often under-served in our region.

Our focus extends beyond our walls, as we seek to deepen our partnerships with artists, organisations, and the wider community. By working together, we can create a more vibrant and inclusive arts scene in Cork, one that nurtures talent and fosters a sense of belonging.

This strategy also addresses the practicalities of ensuring Triskel's continued success. We are committed to enhancing our facilities, embracing digital technologies, and pursuing a sustainable funding model that allows us to thrive in an ever-changing environment. We want to make sure Triskel is ready for the future, with enhanced digital capacity, greater energy efficiency, and a more resilient organisation across every strand of our operations and work.

As we look ahead, we are guided by our core values of quality, respect, freedom of expression, curiosity, and accessibility. These principles will inform every decision we make, ensuring that Triskel remains a welcoming and inspiring space for all who seek to experience the power of art. This plan is about quality, working with others, making Triskel a great place to be, looking after our building, and making sure we have enough money to do everything we want to do.

In essence, the strategy aims to solidify Triskel's position as a vital cultural hub, enhance its artistic offerings, improve its infrastructure, strengthen its partnerships, and ensure its long-term sustainability.

Tony Sheehan

Artistic Director

At a glance:

Triskel Strategy 2025-2028

Strategic Priorities:

The Plan identifies four key strategic development priorities:

- 1. Quality:**
Increasing the amount and scope of high-quality programming.
- 2. Our Partnerships:**
Strengthening connections with artists and organisations in Cork.
- 3. The Experience:**
Promoting human connection and improving the digital footprint.
- 4. Our Infrastructure:**
Upgrading buildings for digital capacity, energy efficiency, and improved accessibility.

Artistic Policy:

Highlights a commitment to presenting high-quality Irish and international work, particularly in underserved genres like contemporary music, jazz, and experimental film. Emphasis on commissioning and presenting new work through partnerships. Target annual programming budget to increase by €100k in new funding to artists and arts workers.

Funding Model:

Focuses on developing a stable and robust funding model through earned income, public funding, and a capital investment programme.

Capital Investment Programme:

This €1.261m capital expenditure programme includes investments in energy efficiency, digital capability, improved accessibility, enhanced audience facilities, musical instruments and backline, cinema upgrades, compliance-related works, and improvements to our building works.

Organisational Development:

Prioritises investment in staff, volunteers, and the Board to ensure effective governance and capacity.

Success Metrics:

Envisions Triskel as a sustainable, digitally-advanced arts centre, recognised for high artistic standards, diverse partnerships, and community engagement.

Values:

Underpinned by core values of quality, respect, freedom of expression, curiosity, accessibility, and affordability.

Vision for 2028 (50th Anniversary):

The strategy focuses on Triskel's future, aiming to enhance its role in Cork's cultural landscape while acknowledging past achievements. It positions Triskel as a leading arts centre, known nationally and internationally.

Core Purpose:

Reinforces Triskel's mission as a space connecting artists, audiences, and art.



Introduction and Context 2025–2028

This statement of strategy and development priorities (2025-2028) sets out Triskel's path towards 2028, which will mark our 50th year in business as a multi-disciplinary arts centre.

One of our roles is to be a place and a catalyst for creating encounters, connections, and interconnections involving artists and the public, where people can experience and explore the many ways and directions in which the contemporary arts and creativity happen in all their forms. In doing this, Triskel aims to enhance the quality of life and the breadth of opportunities for people in Cork to experience arts, culture, and creativity in ways that will inspire, challenge, and engage. We are energised by the myriad ways that artists make work, by the chances and risks that they take, and by the questions that they ask of themselves and of us.

We are excited at the possibilities of opening our doors in new ways to artists and audiences in the years ahead, as part of Cork's professionally managed arts scene and at the heart of our rapidly changing city.

Triskel's campus of buildings is located in Cork's historic Grand Parade/South Main Street area, which is currently undergoing a €46 million redevelopment by Cork City Council. The improved public realm

surrounding Triskel will include accessible, open-air spaces and performance infrastructure, all of which present great opportunity for Triskel.

While our 50th anniversary in 2028 is an opportunity to look back and reflect on our story and our progress since 1978, our focus is on the next version of Triskel and what this will mean for Cork, as well as nationally and internationally. Our approach to the milestone of 2028 creates a sense of momentum and propulsion for us right now as we map out pathways ahead for the next phase in our evolution – that's why our focus is on what's coming next.

As we do so, we are conscious of the impacts and aftershocks of global events that impact directly on us in Ireland – the climate emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic, the current geopolitical instability, increasing levels of inequality and intolerance, threats to democratic structures and freedom of thought and expression; we also recognise the many positive opportunities that we have, including an increasingly diverse, young, and mobile population, strong links with Europe, easy access to technology, and



a socially progressive, open society that values artists, creativity, and freedom of thought and expression. The arts allow us to express our shared humanity as well as our different ways of viewing and making sense of the world; Triskel has an enduring commitment to making it possible for people to get close to the power of the arts.

We are also conscious of the opportunities that the digital world can offer artists and audiences, and this perspective shapes our thinking for 2025-2028. We're taking a strategic, modular approach to digital



transformation, investing in high-impact tools that enable creative innovation, hybrid programming, and new audience experiences, while laying the groundwork for long-term growth. This requires an investment in digital infrastructure alongside building our organisational capacity.

Recent research published by An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council indicates that audiences for live, in-person events and encounters are returning to levels close to pre-pandemic levels, and that there is a level of fatigue with online

and virtual events. We know from research into the Night Time Economy led by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media that there is increasing demand for more opportunities for people, particularly young people, to engage in cultural and social activity in pro-social settings that are not alcohol focused.

Triskel is committed to creating opportunities for people to come together to explore and celebrate different versions of the world through the arts in settings that are welcoming and inclusive as well as challenging and surprising.

Cork, Ireland's second city, continues to grow and develop in different ways and directions, and we want to be at the heart of that. Cork City Council's administrative area expanded following the 2019 boundary extension that added urban villages and new neighbourhoods to the city's official footprint. Alongside this geographic expansion, over the coming years the city's population is set to grow by over 120,000 to 335,000 people by 2040 and to continue to diversify: currently, one in eight people in Cork City was born outside of Ireland. Cork City Council's Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026 reminds us that:

"as Cork city grows our population and our culture is evolving. The potential of arts and culture for accessibility, interpretation and understanding of different cultures is vital for a resilient, inclusive society. The arts and culture can serve to connect us with our humanity and help us to see each other with fresh and empathetic eyes."

That is the broader context in which we are making our plans to bring us to 2028.

Our Purpose

Triskel's purpose is to be a space where artists, audiences, and art connect.

Our Vision

Our vision is for Triskel to be the go-to creative space and a haven for all to experience art in all its forms.

Our Mission

To achieve our Vision, our work is guided by our Mission Statement.

Our Mission is for Triskel to be at the heart of Cork's cultural life and arts scene, and to make this happen:

- **We Partner:** with organisations across the community to create the widest possible access
- **We Programme:** a dynamic and diverse programme across art forms
- **We Platform:** the work of artists, festivals and other organisations that share our vision

Our Values

Our work is underpinned by our commitment to uphold a set of values that guide how Triskel operates:

- **Quality** in every aspect of our work
- **Respect** for artists, audiences, and for all who contribute to Triskel's work
- **Freedom of expression**
- **Curiosity** about, and **openness** to, the many diverse and hybrid ways that artists create and present their work, and the different ways that people choose to experience the arts
- **Accessibility** and **affordability** to minimise barriers to people's opportunities and choices to get closer to the arts

Artistic policy

Triskel's artistic policy is to present high-quality work by Irish and international artists to audiences in Cork. To this end, we present high-quality work by artists from Ireland and elsewhere in a diversified and international programming context.

Our artistic policy focuses on our core programming in genres that tend to be under-served in Cork and the region, or nationally – particularly in contemporary music, jazz, and experimental film – and our visual arts programming policy is devised and implemented in partnership with Sample-Studios.

Our artistic ambitions in 2025-2028 include augmenting our core programme in different ways. One approach will focus on commissioning and presenting new work, where possible through collaboration or partnership with other organisations in order to extend and maximise the reach and impact of the work. Another avenue that we intend to explore is digital arts. We are committed to developing Triskel's footprint in this area and one of our implementation goals will focus on developing a new festival of digital arts rooted in Cork but global in reach.

We will develop new streams of activity built around the idea of animating all of Triskel's spaces and facilities in different ways, to augment our core programme. This will include new approaches to programming on a seasonal or thematic basis, as well as testing new ideas and approaches for festivals and other events. We will introduce a new scheme or programme to encourage and develop new additional approaches to how Triskel devises and supports new approaches to programming.

To make this happen, we estimate that we will need access to additional new programme funding annually of circa €100k which will be expended exclusively on artists and arts workers.



Statement of Strategy 2025-2028

Our Statement of Strategy 2025-2028 comes at an opportune moment for Cork, in light of the significant investment in the public realm around Triskel, and in the context of the dynamic and diverse cultural energy that is now reflected in Cork's population.



Triskel is a critically important part of Ireland's national infrastructure of professionally managed, publicly funded arts centres and venues.

Triskel maintains a professional core staff engaged in curating and presenting contemporary and new work, managing and developing a business and funding model that has the flexibility to adapt to uncertain funding environments, and developing and serving an audience for this work.

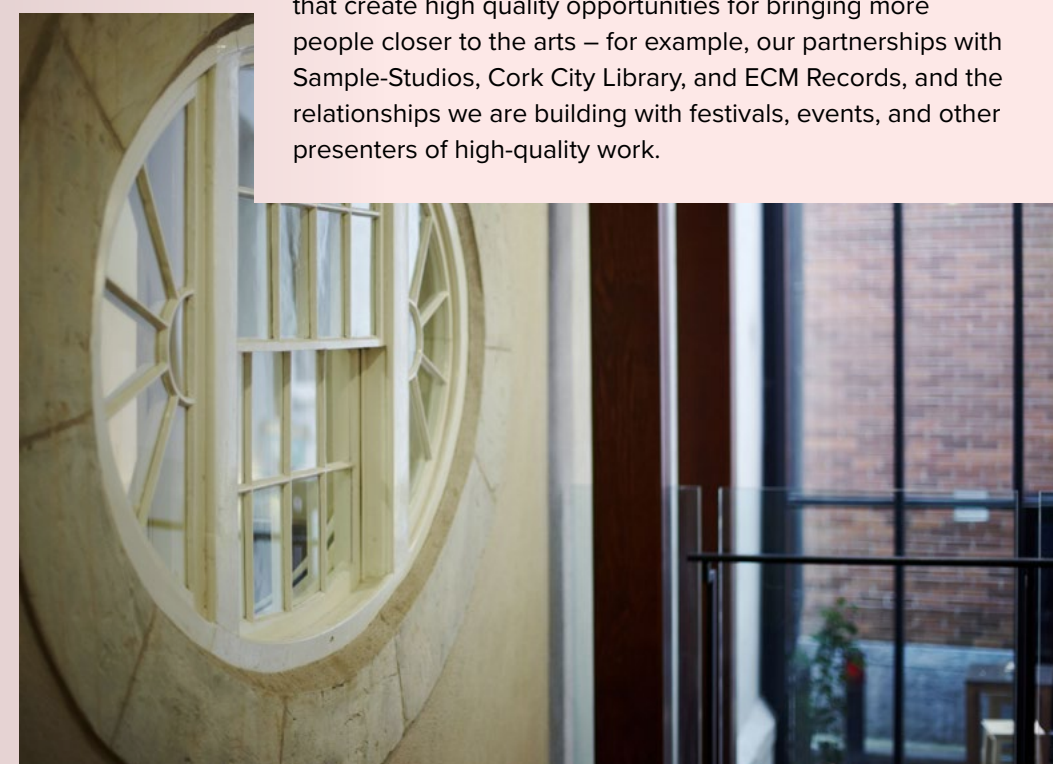
Triskel's campus comprises a modern building which is owned by Triskel, conjoined to a significant heritage building – Christchurch – which is owned by Cork City Council. Taken together, these buildings provide performance and gallery space, other multi-use indoor and outdoor spaces, a café, and offices and workspace for Triskel staff.



Along with the enhanced public realm facilities around Triskel, including new outdoor performance infrastructure, Triskel sits at the heart of a new civic campus of creative possibilities, right in the heart of Cork City.

Triskel is a signature element of Cork's arts and culture scene and infrastructure, and it is recognised as playing an effective and formative role in the development of many significant artists and arts professionals in the last 50 years.

Triskel is also skilled in developing strategic partnerships that create high quality opportunities for bringing more people closer to the arts – for example, our partnerships with Sample-Studios, Cork City Library, and ECM Records, and the relationships we are building with festivals, events, and other presenters of high-quality work.



In 2025-2028 and beyond:

- we will continue to play to these strengths and to find new ways to support artists and arts professionals at various career stages.
- we will explore and initiate new partnerships in different and creative ways, using ideas and principles of Action Research alongside output-driven opportunities.
- we will initiate discussions with Cork City Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council, and others, to identify the parameters of a more stable and sustainable funding model for Triskel.
- we will work with existing and new partners in embracing the rich possibilities of open-minded experimentation and testing of ideas as a way of working, and this includes approaches to using and sharing Triskel's buildings, spaces, facilities, and expertise. We have heard many good ideas and suggestions about how we can create new ways to 'open up' Triskel, and these ideas are in tune with how we ourselves want to position Triskel up to and beyond 2028.
- we will invest in improving our building and facilities, including our seating, our accessibility, and our digital infrastructure to support artists and audiences both within Triskel and globally, through our Capital Investment Programme.
- we will focus on developing our organisation – staff, volunteers, Board – so that we maintain and grow our capacity to contribute and make a distinct difference to the arts in Cork.



In summary, our strategy is designed to achieve several things:

1. First, we aim to broaden our footprint and our connections – physical, virtual, symbolic – in Cork's arts scene and be a high-quality platform or conduit for artists to present their work in Cork and to a broader audience worldwide.
2. Second, we aim to bring Triskel closer to people in Cork through well-designed and developed partnerships and programmes that identify and fill gaps in provision, as well as opportunities to make new things happen with new people and communities.
3. Third, we aim to deliver a Capital Investment Programme to bring Triskel to the highest feasible level of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, mindful of the challenges posed by working with a precious heritage building. This strand of work will also include cinema upgrades, and musical instruments and backline upgrades to support our artists.
4. Fourth, we will ensure that Triskel has the digital capacity and capability to enable us to support artists and engage with audiences worldwide at the highest standards.
5. Fifth, we are ambitious to establish an agreed, stable funding model that provides the clarity and certainty that we, and all arts organisations need, to plan effectively and to operate as efficiently as possible.
6. Finally, we will invest in our organisation as a good employer, as a responsible recipient of funding from public and private sources, and as a well governed, trustworthy, professionally managed organisation that honours its commitments to artists, audiences, funders, and other stakeholders.

Implicit in this Statement of Strategy are the themes and priorities that form the framework for our work and planning up to 2028 and beyond: quality, partnerships, the Triskel experience, infrastructure, and funding model. These are the priorities that will guide Triskel, and that will drive the change that we want to see happening.

Strategic Development Priorities 2025-2028

Our strategic development priorities for Triskel are:

1. Quality

- To increase the amount and scope of Triskel’s high-quality programming in contemporary arts, particularly in music, cinema, and the visual arts so that people in Cork have access to excellent work that is not otherwise available.
- To explore new strands of programming, particularly through relationships and partnerships with other organisations within Ireland and internationally.

2. Our Partnerships

- To multiply and strengthen Triskel’s connections and partnerships with contemporary artists and organisations in Cork to help sustain a diverse and dynamic arts scene in our city and region. This will help Triskel to be positioned and perceived more centrally within Cork’s rapidly changing culture scene, so that Triskel continues to play a part in the career formation of artists and arts professionals.
- To develop new ways of working in partnership with others, so that Triskel is more widely used, and seen, as one of Cork’s signature cultural spaces. Doing this means actively creating pathways and links into different and new communities of practice and interest.

3. The Experience

- To promote opportunities for human connection and congregation, and to promote the value and benefits that these bring to individuals and communities. This will shape how we devise and present our own programmes and how we work with others.
- To rethink and redesign our digital footprint and how we use technology in the service of artists and audiences. To do this we will invest, in a planned and measured way, in technology to create a durable digital infrastructure that has the capability to enhance the experience for artists and audiences within Triskel and elsewhere. In real terms, this means sensitively reimagining the configuration and use of the main performance space in Christchurch, including investment in high quality, accessible seating and improved exhibition infrastructure.

4. Our Infrastructure

- To invest in our buildings to create the digital capacity, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability that we need; our goals here are to achieve the maximum possible energy efficiency ratings for a heritage building, and to have in place the digital infrastructure, capacity, and capability to gain the greatest benefits for artists and audiences (in Cork and globally), and for our staff at Triskel.
- To invest in our organisational development, including supports for our staff, volunteers, and Board; to ensure that we maintain effective governance across all areas of our work; to ensure that Board development, continuity, and succession are planned and managed effectively.

5. Funding Model

To develop and manage an effective, stable, and robust funding model that allows us to continue to focus on our mission to make a positive impact on people’s lives in Cork through our work with artists and arts organisations. To meet our ambitions, and to see the beginnings of the impacts of the change that we want to make by 2028, we will need a more sustainable and robust funding model built on the following sources:

- **Earned income** – we will increase our earned income through our programming and our arrangements with our partners and with other programmers and presenters 2025-2028 in pursuit of our aim of achieving an additional €100k for programming budgets.
- **Public funding** – we will engage directly with Cork City Council and with An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council, beginning in 2025, to seek a more effective model for agreeing and allocating revenue funding on an annual or, ideally a multi-annual, basis up to and beyond 2028, and to establish parameters within which Triskel can secure capital funding as a contribution to a Capital Investment Programme 2026-2028.
- **Other income** – We will also invest in developing a dedicated corporate sponsorship programme to attract new sources of revenue and build long-term relationships with value-aligned businesses. Our approach will blend sensitivity with pragmatism by pursuing carefully chosen opportunities for brand collaboration, and by leveraging our unique heritage-digital positioning to offer meaningful visibility and engagement opportunities for partners. We will develop and implement during 2025-2028 a strong sponsorship strategy that will help diversify our funding base, enhance organisational resilience, and unlock new possibilities for programming and innovation.



- **Capital Funding** – during 2025 we will present a Capital Investment Programme and Funding Requirement to our primary funders and others, focused on ensuring compliance and access, bringing Triskel to an advanced level of digital readiness, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability.

The estimated costs involved are €1.261 million including contingency and comprising:

Item	Cost
Essential Works (Access Compliance)	€160,000
Building Upgrades and Enhancement	€87,000
Energy efficiency measures	€353,000
Digital capacity investment	€65,000
Musical Instruments & Backline	€162,000
Cinema Upgrades	€55,000
Audience experience and facilities	€145,000
Compliance related investment	€15,000
Contractors & Professional Fees (allow 10%)	€104,000
Contingency (allow 10%)	€115,000
Total	€1,261,000

Success for us will mean...

This statement of strategy and development priorities for 2025-2028 envisions different types of change happening throughout Triskel in its diverse identities and roles as an organisation, as a building, as a place, and as an embodiment of the power of the arts to bring people together.

Looking to 2028 and beyond, here are some of the things we expect to see happening as indicators of success, change, and growth happening at Triskel:

- being a sustainable, energy-efficient, digitally-capable arts centre, and a leading example of a high-efficiency heritage building that houses contemporary art in all its forms
- being positioned among Europe's leading contemporary arts centres by investing in our building and spaces, and in digital technology
- being a home and a destination for experimentation and hybridity
- being acknowledged as a leader in setting high artistic standards and promoting ambitious high-quality programming that attracts leading artists to perform and present their work in Cork
- being seen and experienced as the place in Cork where exceptional creative things are happening because we invest in existing, new, and different kinds of creative and mutually supportive partnerships with artists, organisations, and others in Cork and beyond

- Triskel presenting itself in different ways that broaden and enrich what Triskel can contribute to life in Cork, and achieving this through experiment and collaboration with others in Cork and elsewhere
- Triskel engaging actively and inclusively with Cork's diverse and evolving communities of interest, communities of practice, and communities of geography



- Having a broader funding base that blends earned income, public funding, sponsorship and similar funding, and capital funding
- Having the organisational capacity, resilience, and structures to deliver this strategy and to lay the groundwork for Triskel's pathway beyond 2028.





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Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council
Arts Ealaíona



**funding
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An Roinn Cultúir,
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Department of Culture,
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