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Intangible Cultural Heritage

Representative List

ICH-02 – Form

Reçu CLT/LHE	
Le	22 SEP. 2023
N°	0492

REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

**Deadline: 31 March 2023
for possible inscription in 2024**

*Instructions for completing the form are available at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>*

A. State Party or States Parties

Lao People's Democratic Republic

B. Name of the element

B.1. Name of the element in the languages and scripts of the community(ies) concerned

ພ້ອນລຳວົງລາວ (ພ້ອນລຳວົງ)

B.2. Name of the element in English

Fonelamvonglao (lamvonglao)

C. Name of the communities, groups or individuals concerned

1. Lao Culture Preservation and Promotion Association;
2. The Lao Artist Association;
3. Elderly Association of Vientiane Capital;
4. Lao Ethnic Cultures and Traditions Association;

5. Lao Dance Sport Federation.

1. General information about the element

For Criterion R.1, States shall demonstrate that ‘the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention’.

1.1. *Provide a brief description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.*

Not to exceed 200 words

The “Fonelamvonglao” is a long-standing national dance that has been practiced widely by Lao communities. The “Fonelamvonglao” is divided into eight popular diverse rhythms by each locale.

The rules observed on commencing the dance include the man acknowledging respect – in the Lao language it is called the ‘Nop’ – inviting the woman to dance with him. On special Government occasions, the woman may invite the guest (man) to dance with her.

The man stands to the left of the woman, then moving forward the men perform in an inner circle and the women perform in an outer circle, both dance in a counterclockwise direction, keeping an appropriate distance.

The “Fonelamvonglao” consists of eight movements in one cycle. The cycles are repeated according to the length of the music. The dancers count from one to eight in each cycle, the number dictates the position of the feet and hands. (See attached photos and files.) Further details are in the attached VDO.

Due to its rhythm and significant gestures, this dance is prevalent in all parts of Lao PDR.

The “Fonelamvonglao” represents the nation's soul, symbolizing both ancient and modern culture; those dancing become actors rather than spectators through participating in the dance.

1.2. *Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element? If so, who are they and what are their responsibilities?*

Not to exceed 100 words

Cultural associations including the Lao women’s association actively promote the fonelamvonglao. The national college performing Arts, schools, and private Arts Education colleges pass down the traditional “fonelamvong” to younger apprentices and play an essential role in transmitting this art form through melodies taught to younger children starting at age eighth.

Representatives of the communities such as the Lao Culture Preservation and Promotion Association, the Lao Artist Association, the Elderly Association, the Lao Ethnic Cultures and Traditions Association, the Lao Dance Sport Federation, and the Children’s Cultural Center and Master Performers strive to preserve and maintain dance traditions for the people.

1.3. *How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?*

Not to exceed 100 words

Traditionally, the “Fonelamvonglao”, was confined to participants from villages; it is now more widely practiced. Accordingly, its values encompass knowledge and skills which are broadly passed down through the practice of the dance. The “Fonelamvonglao” is also taught in many national and private colleges of performance arts entrenching a tradition of spiritual significance.

Presentations of the “fonelamvonglao” are commonly held at conferences, events, and weddings enhancing widespread knowledge of local customs. Efforts are made to renew the knowledge and adapt it to the changing society. It is critical that the dance continues symbolizing identity and strengthening living heritage in Laos.

1.4. What social functions and cultural meanings does the element have nowadays for the communities concerned?

Not to exceed 100 words

The “fonelamvonglao” dance, an integral part of Lao community life, provides an opportunity for artistic and cultural expression symbolizing traditional culture, associated with celebration and transmitting diversified, cultural, political, and social messages. Promoting social cohesion by fostering awareness of unity at both the local community and national levels; associated with communal meals and meetings that bring together families and communities developing social solidarity through connecting heritage and ancestors. Festivals promoting the “fonelamvonglao” are characterized by quality foods, based on agricultural, and economic development as a means of preventing obesity and therefore linked to a healthy lifestyle, peace, unity, and well-being.

1.5. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments?

Not to exceed 50 words

The “fonelamvonglao” traditional dance is aligned to fundamental human rights, being based on mutual respect, respect for basic human rights, and respect between communities, groups, and individuals despite differences in origin or ability. Access to dancing attracts people from different communities without any distinction regarding nationality, age, sex, ethnicity, or religion.

1.6. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals?

Not to exceed 50 words

The “fonelamvonglao” dance includes all ages and origins, people from all over can attend or participate in the dance celebrating in an environment of social cohesion, understanding, respect, and conviviality. Accordingly, the element could be perceived as compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups, and individuals.

1.7. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of sustainable development?

Not to exceed 50 words

The “fonelamvonglao” is entwined with sustainable development, through expressing people’s way of life, accumulated local knowledge, unity, sharing, and supporting aspirations for development; Associated festivals are characterized by a tradition of quality food, based on natural agriculture considered a means of environmental and economic sustainability preventing promoting peace and social cohesion.

1.8. Are there customary practices governing access to the element? If yes, describe any specific measures that are in place to ensure their respect.

Not to exceed 100 words

Although there are no official regulations to enforce its respect, this element is deeply ingrained in Lao society. It serves as a means to convey a diverse cultural, political, and artistic message, fostering collaboration, and honoring diverse cultures. Moreover, it serves as a means of announcing and utilizing great events in significant ceremonies, promoting social unity and inclusiveness, and preserving a sense of belonging within the community and the nation. It is also an essential customary practice associated with communal meals and gatherings, bringing communities together and promoting social solidarity as people reconnect with their living heritage and ancestral ties.

1.9. Audio-visual materials about the element

- 10 recent photographs in high definition are submitted
- Form ICH-07-photo is attached to grant rights for the 10 photos submitted
- A video is submitted
- Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the video submitted

2. Contribution to visibility, awareness, dialogue, and sustainable development

For Criterion R.2, the States shall demonstrate that 'Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity'. In addition, States are encouraged, with reference to Chapter VI of the Operational Directives, to recognize the interdependence between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Given its extensive nature, criterion R.2 will be assessed based on the information provided in the nomination file as a whole including the answers provided in this section.

Do communities concerned consider that the element contributes to the following?

- Food security (indirect)
- Health care
- Quality education
- Gender equality
- Inclusive economic development (indirect)
- Environmental sustainability including climate change
- Peace and social cohesion
- Others (please specify): Social practices, rituals, and festive events.

Provide explanations in support of the statement(s) made above, as appropriate.

Not to exceed 200 words

The "fonelamvonglao", a dance celebrating the harvest and other agricultural activities belongs to all Lao people despite different regional characteristics, reflecting cultural diversity.

Including the fonelamvong on the representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity would encourage dialogue, and unity and promote cultural diversity worldwide and living heritage.

Traditional links that support agricultural development and a sustainable environment would demonstrate the intangible heritage as an intrinsic element in creating a positive environment and economic development.

By promoting a holistic healthy lifestyle, it encourages the transmission of values, traditions, beliefs, customary law, and ethical rules that govern Lao society.

The integration of the dance with songs, traditional or modern, encourages new generations to create rhythms and movements that are subsequently shared with others for its sustainable future.

It is a means of including young people in the local community, who want to learn dance. Local communities would be further motivated to take an interest in the traditional dance and folklore music, that is their own; powerfully affirming and vitalizing cultural diversity more broadly and making the rest of the world aware of Lao traditional dance.

Lao dance is constantly being reinvigorated benefitting from developments in communications

and audio-visual technology.

States are encouraged to submit audiovisual materials that convey the communities' voices in support of the statements made above.

Materials (written, audio-visual, video, and any other way) are submitted

3. Safeguarding measures

For **Criterion R.3**, States **shall demonstrate that 'safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element'**.

What safeguarding measures are put in place to protect and promote the element? Include in your answer the communities' role in the planning and implementation of the measures described.

Not to exceed 500 words

The fonelamvonglao in its various forms of rhythm and movement is an element of intangible cultural heritage belonging to each region's community. As such, any safeguarding measures must have their consent.

Sustainability is ensured by the Government, and community through performance programs being actively supported.

The Government has developed a national action plan for preserving the dance. Research into the fonelamvonglao has been overseen by the Ministry of Information and Culture (MICT). This work has led to the publication of textbooks and general references.

By supporting both public and private cultural operators to ensure coordination and communication between dancers and players; The organization of competitions at different levels and publication in different forms through the Government providing necessary targeted funding.

This is through funding the projects listed by the organizers and approved by Government officials, in the field of culture:

- Creating communication and promoting community-focused centers at prominent sanctuaries within each Province;
- Instilling awareness within various dancers and players so they may communicate the inherent heritage of the dance;
- Employing the public website to cover all aspects of the dance and Lao culture;
- Encouraging various partners in the promotion of sending dancing groups to official ceremonies and festivals held inside and outside the country;

These efforts will ensure the dance is more widely known by enabling artists from Lao to perform more widely. These opportunities abroad also assist economic development based on tourism.

- Supporting the implementation of safeguarding measures, the Lao Government will:
- Provide real and effective support through National and Local policies along with the involvement of all communities;
- Develop traditional dance roles in the Performing Arts School, through formal and non formal education of young people;
- Implement cultural policy, and strategy to be in place in 2025, especially concerning Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- Support a formal Association of Practitioners through a decree of the MICT;
- Update the decree of the National Committee for Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage as well as the Secretary;
- Support the National Library, bearers, and practitioners by putting in place promotions and enhancement actions, such as decorations and rewards;
- Support all traditional dancing by revitalizing activities such as performances, contests, and public and popular sessions. Provide subsidies to present these events in order that the element is continuously practiced;
- Support the local and national initiatives for showcasing the element by producing festivals, events, and dance contests;
- Create festivals dedicated to traditional dance from each Province of Laos;

- Publish scientific works on traditional dance including the fonelamvonglao that records each independent region's style, rhythms, and movements;
- Organize traveling exhibitions;
- Support and encourage scientific research on Intangible cultural heritage with financial and logistical support to researchers;
- Support artistic and cinematic production on traditional dance including fonelamvonglao;
- Provide institutional and technical support from the MICT and Ministry of Education and Sports;
- Monitor and evaluate the activities.

Through actively encouraging the groups and associations involved, the situation will be enhanced by granting them facilities and funding for equipment, costumes, and decoration.

4. Community participation in the nomination process and consent

For Criterion R.4, States shall demonstrate that 'the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.

- 4.1. Describe how the communities, groups or individuals concerned have actively participated in all stages of the preparation of the nomination.

Not to exceed 300 words

The fonelamvonglao is an intangible cultural heritage of the Nation, each Lao people recognizes the region of the dance immediately by tune, rhythm, and movement. All level communities that are bearers and practitioners of fonelamvong have been fully involved with the development of this nomination as written, audio-visual, and video as attached and through the traditional custodians, the musicians, dancers, and singers, as well as private sector representatives.

The communities have constant contact with the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism which has played a key role in informing the preparation of the inscription file, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the Operational Directives and raising awareness in the communities and has facilitated the process, its appropriateness, and the development of the submission.

After the inscription music of "Khean" was placed on the Representative List of the ICH, communities better understood the methods of establishing inventories and requests for inscription on lists of the ICH; as a result, several open meetings as well as all associations concerned (researchers, masters, teachers, performing Artists, journalists, NGOs, etc.). In accordance with consultation on the matter, an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by the Minister of Information, Culture, and Tourism was held regarding intangible cultural heritage submissions during the meetings with a representative of all communities and all associations concerned, and the last was on 27 January 2023.

Today, more than ever, thanks to the work of involved communities, in the nomination process, they are mobilized to ensure the safeguarding of fonelamvong because they have a better understanding of the stakes and risks involved in not safeguarding the cultural heritage.

The Lao communities use it as a special educational tool, passing on the social, moral, and oral traditions and as an instrument of information, awareness, and mobilization for social cohesion and development.

- Consent (written, audio-visual, video, and any other way) to the nomination of the element from the communities, groups, and individuals concerned is attached in support of the description above

4.2. community organizations or representatives concerned

Contact person for the communities:

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Hansana

Family name: SISANE

Institution/position: President of

Address: 151, Nongtha tai Village, Chanthabouly District, P.O Box 9821, Vientiane Capital Lao PDR

Telephone number: 030 9803839, Cell phone: +856 20 59985985

Email address: laocultureppa@hotmail.com

Family name: Ms. KHAMFONG Soukthanva

Institution/position: Secretary of associations

Email address: soukthanvaning@gmail.com

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Bouangeun

Family name: XAPHOUVONG

Institution/position: President of the Lao artists association (former vice Minister of MICT)

Address: Xiengyeun Village, Chathabouly District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Telephone number: +856 20 5550 7155

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Ounla

Family name: PHAODOM

Institution/position: General Secretary of Laos dance sport federation

Address: Vientiane centre 4 floor, nongchanh village, sisattanark district, Lao PDR

Telephone number: +856 20 5226 3111

E-mail: Ounla.phaoudom@gmail.com

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Bounmany

Family name: PHOMMASANE

Institution/position: Committee member of the Lao ethnic cultures and traditions associations

Address: Nongsanokham Village, Sikhottabong District Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Telephone number: +856 20 23997829

E-mail: Bounmany.pex@gmail.com

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Somphong

Family name: MONGKHONVILAY (former vice Minister of the cabinet of the Prime Minister)

Institution/position: President of the elderly association of Vientiane capital.

Address: Sisattanak village, chanthavouly district, Vientiane capital, Lao PDR

Telephone number: +856 20 5552 7814

E-mail: Somphongmk@gmail.com



Contact information for main community organizations or representatives, non-governmental organizations, or other bodies concerned with the element is attached, and their details can be published on the website of the Convention as part of the nomination

5. Inventory

For **Criterion R.5**, States shall demonstrate that the element is identified and included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) in conformity with Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.

5.1. Name of the inventory(ies) in which the element is included

There are numerous publications available on the subject of fonelamvonglao and other dances in the Lao language. However, there is a lack of published information that provides clear definitions of the various rhythms, movements, styles, and protocols associated with these dances. Throughout the centuries, the fonelamvonglao has been passed down through oral tradition and practical instruction from one generation to the next.

In order to preserve and protect this cultural heritage, a comprehensive inventory was necessary. As a result, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism conducted further research on Lao culture. This research led to the identification of fonelamvong "Seunsouan," which translates to "invitation to dance." However, the specific order of rhythm, style, and movement across different regions is yet to be classified. In 2011, the Arts Education College under the Ministry of Education and Sports initiated the Fonelamvonglao project, which received funding from UNESCO. Subsequently, the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism required documentation as a response to the Minister's call for legal protection as listed below:

Dances, Paragraph (I) Arts du spectacle; of the decision on intangible cultural heritage, (Décision sur le patrimoine culturel immatérialise) as below :

- 1) date: 02/10/2014, No 143 / MICT ; the first one
- 2) date: 25/09/2017, No 936 / MICT, the updated decision on intangible cultural heritage (Décision sur le patrimoine culturel immatérialise mise a jour)
- 3) date: 22/03/2018, No 289/ MICT; the updated decision regarding intangible cultural heritage during a meeting on 09 March 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to gather all concerned organizations and mobilize directives.
- 4) No 630/MICT, le 16/09/2020;
- 5) No 600/MICT, le 29/09/2022;
- 6) No 167/MICT, le 24/02/2023; the updated inventory (Décision sur le patrimoine culturel immatérialise No 167/MICT, le 24/02/2023 mise a jour) was required for rhythm, movement, and style.

During a meeting on February 27, 2023, a decision was made to update the intangible cultural heritage. The meeting aimed to gather and create guidelines in collaboration with various communities and organizations, focusing on the rhythm, style, and movement of fonelamvonglao and the consensus on dances. It was emphasized that there are only 8 (eight) distinct styles of fonelamvonglao;

5.2. Name of the office(s), agency(ies), organization(s) or body(ies) responsible for maintaining and updating that (those) inventory(ies), both in the original language and in translation when the original language is not English or French

All entities involved in culture and performing arts, such as cultural associations, NGOs,

researchers, masters, performing teachers, arts education colleges, national college of arts, communities, and associations concerned, as well as cultural departments under the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism, are actively participating in these fields.

The performing arts and culture department has taken on the important role of informing and overseeing the preparation of the inscription file, and they are responsible for maintaining and updating the inventory of intangible cultural heritage in its original language and translating it into French or English. Additionally, the Lao national secretary for UNESCO, under the Ministry of Education and Sports, has been designated as a member of the National Committee for Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage, along with the Lao Women's Union, the Association of Lao Journalists, the Lao Front for National Development, and others who are involved in updating the inventory of performing arts items.

5.3. *Reference number(s) and name(s) of the element in the relevant inventory(ies)*

Arts du spectacle, Paragraph (I) of the decision on intangible cultural heritage (Decision sur le patrimoine culturel immatérialise) updating No 167 / MICT, le 24/02/2023, was translated to the French language:

See the documents attached below:

The number 1. Dances in the first column correspond to numbered Paragraphs 1. (I) of the decision on intangible cultural heritage, and the number 1.1 corresponds to the Fonelamvonglao with short descriptions to show as an example.

I. Arts du spectacle

1. Dances

- 1.1 Fonelamvonglao identitaire, rythme et mouvement Seunsouane (welcome to dance bienvenu ou invite à danser) ;
- 1.2 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Siphandone (ou quatre milles iles dans province Champasack, sud du Laos) ;
- 1.3 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Tangway (province Savannakhet, centre du Laos) ;
- 1.4 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Louangprabang (province Louangprabang, nord du Laos) ;
- 1.5 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Salavane (province Salavane, sud du Laos) ;
- 1.6 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Slapfanpa (Vientiane, Capital du Laos) ;
- 1.7 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Khonesavanh (province Savanakhet, centre du Laos) ;
- 1.8 Fonelamvonglao rythme et mouvement Mahaxay (province Khammouane, centre du Laos)

For instance, (in terms of rhythm, music, movement, and style) the fonelamvong Salavane or Bird Dance of Salavane province (South of Laos) and the fonelamvong Siphandone from the province of Four Thousand Islands (Champasak Province) in the south as for example.

5.4. *Date of the element's inclusion in the inventory(ies)*

The element was added to the inventories that were approved in 2014, with the most recent update on January 27, 2023. On March 24, 2023, decisions were made about intangible cultural heritage in a meeting that involved various cultural organizations, communities, NGOs, researchers, experts, educators, and all cultural departments under the Ministry of Information,

Culture, and Tourism.

Is the information concerning the updating and periodicity of the inventory(ies), as well as the participation of communities, groups and NGOs concerned to the inventorying process, included in the periodic report on the implementation of the Convention?

- Yes, the information is included in the periodic report. Specify in the box below the year in which that report will be submitted
- No, the information is not included in the periodic report. Provide information in the box below

Not to exceed 200 words

The Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism has the duty of regularly updating the inventory and facilitating the participation of different individuals and organizations involved in cultural preservation. These may include cultural departments, researchers, experts, teachers, communities, associations, groups, and NGOs. These stakeholders will also play a role in preparing the periodic report on the implementation of Convention 2003.

- The attached file provides a comprehensive list of elements in the inventory, specifically in the French version. The details of these elements are still updated and translated into English including the names of the relevant communities, their geographical locations, and the specific cultural practices unique to each local community. The file also highlights the diverse range of styles found in different places.

See all documents attached below:

- Video of the eight movements have been captured and documented in both English and Lao languages. Additionally, sixteen photos have been included, showcasing various tempos and movements, accompanied by brief descriptions summarizing each.

You can find videos of "Fonelamvonglao" Seunsouane or "Welcome to Dance" and "Fonelamvong Salavane" on www.youtube.com. These videos showcase the traditional Lao dance known as Fonelamvong, which is performed during various occasions such as official government ceremonies, Lao weddings, and others.

- An extract of inventory(ies) in English and in French and in the original language is submitted

6. Correspondence and signature

6.1. designated contact person

Provide the contact details of a single person responsible for all correspondence concerning the nomination. For multinational nominations, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the nomination.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mme.

Family name: THOUMMABOUTH

Given name: Manivone

Institution/position: Advisor of ICH,
Responsible for Culture, Law, and International Legislation,

Address: Ministry of Information, culture, and tourism

Telephone number: +856 20 5959 61595

Email address: mthoummabout@gmail.com

Other relevant information: Mr. SINGBANDITH Saysamone
Assistant to the Advisor of ICH,
Responsible for ICH Video Production project and international cooperation,
E-mail: Singbandith34@gmail.com

+856 21 212 898 +856 20 2307 8128

Mrs. SIPHONESAY Manivanh

E-mail: d.artsandculture@gmail.com

Tel: +856 20 2824 3311

Assistant of the nomination file “fonelamvonglao”

Mr. RASHBOUTH Phanith

Assistant to the nomination form,

Secretariat and Co-point for Memory of the World Programme (MoW)

Responsible for Literature and International Legislation,

Tel : +856 20 55559149. + 856 21 212425

Mrs. Dr. PHENPHACHANH Bouakhay, Director General of the Performance art and cultural department

E-mail: d.artsandculture@gmail.com

Mobile phone: +856 (0) 21 217 537

Mrs. PHENGMOUANG Phengchanh, Director of the Planning & International Cooperation Department,

Telephone & Fax number: +856 (0) 21 212 401 – 212 408

Mr. SYKHANXAY Phakhansay, Director of the Fine Arts & Heritage Department,

Telephone & Fax number: +856 (0) 21 31 54 53 – 31 54 52

Mrs. KHAMFONG Chanphet, Director of Literature and Publishing department

Telephone & Fax number: +856 (0) 21 212 425

Mr. Dr. Viengphone, Director of the national college of performing arts

Telephone & Fax number: +856 (0) 21 312 172

Mr. XAYAVONG Somsemg, Director of the Institute for Cultural Research

Telephone number: +856 (0) 20 99839739

Arts Education college

Ms.PATAHMMAVONG Ahak

Telephone number: +856 (0) 20 55 015 009

6.2. *Other contact persons (for multinational nomination only)*

Provide below complete contact information for one person in each submitting State, other than the primary contact person identified above.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):
Family name:
Given name:
Institution/position:
Address:
Telephone number:
Email address:
Other relevant information:

6.3. *Signature on behalf of the State Party or States Parties*

Name:	Mr. Boualay PHANOUVONG
Title:	Permanent Secretary of MICT
Date:	12 September 2023
Signature:	<signed>

Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (for multinational nominations only).

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