



Students for
Sensible
Drug Policy.

Annual Report 2023



POLICY WEEK 2023



Table Of Content.



Letter from the Executive Director

About SSDP International

Meet Our Team

Our Board

Vision And Mission

Global overview

2022-2023 Highlights

Programmatic achievements

Financial Overview

Governance and leadership

Looking ahead

Acknowledgments

Contact Us

Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends and Supporters,

The past two years have been transformative for SSDP International. Our commitment to sensible drug policies and youth empowerment has driven us to new heights, despite the global challenges we've faced. Together, we've made significant strides in advocacy, education, and network expansion.

This annual report highlights our accomplishments, financial situation, and strategic direction as we look towards a future where drug policies are informed by science, compassion, and human rights, and young people are at the centre of drug policy discussions.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Sincerely,

Charity Monareng
Executive Director,
SSDP International



ABOUT SSDP INTERNATIONAL



SSDP International is a grassroots network of students and young people advocating for sensible drug policies. With chapters in various countries, we work to empower young leaders, engage in advocacy, and promote harm reduction strategies. This strategic plan serves as a roadmap to guide our efforts over the next four years, outlining our priorities, objectives, and strategies for achieving our mission.



MEET OUR TEAM



CHARITY MONARENG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Charity Monareng is a South African based policy reform and harm reduction activist, and has been working in the field of drug policy since 2018, her work involved high level advocacy work for drug policy reform nationally, regionally and internationally, harm reduction trainings and stakeholder engagements. She serves on the boards of the South African Network of People Who Use Drugs (SANPUD), Digital Girl Africa and is the chairperson of the Stand Action board. She is passionate about issues relating to women and young people. She has a Bachelor's degree in Criminology and International Studies, an Honour's degree in Social Development and currently a PhD Candidate in the Department of Public Law at the University of Cape Town.



IULIA VATAU UN GLOBAL FELLOW

Iulia holds a first class BA degree in History and Politics of the Americas from University College London and an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Oxford where she graduated with distinction. In line with her research interests, she advocates in favour of active youth participation in the making of drug policy at the United Nations. As a civil society representative, she serves as the UN Global Fellow for Students for Sensible Drug Policy and as an Executive Member of the New York NGO Committee on Drugs. In these positions, she has represented youth in civil society interventions at the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. She also worked with key stakeholders, including diplomatic delegations, UNODC officers and fellow advocates.

ARAVIND KUMAR PROJECT MANAGER

Arvy has been involved with SSDP international since 2019. They pursue projects in nightlife harm reduction, specifically focusing on club cultures as indigenous cultures. Having built and organized several youth led drug movements, they currently serve as an experience designer at Entheoscope: a psychedelic media organization. Arvy speaks a combination of neuroscience, philosophy of mind, and ethnomusicology. In the winters, you can find them working awareness/writing about senseless hedonism in nightlife and the summers usually brings them out to festivals & burns where they build future designs of welfare and peer to peer psychedelic care.

MEET THE BOARD



**JACOB CHAGNON:
BOARD CHAIR**



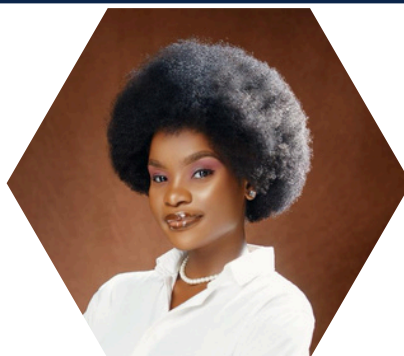
UCHENNA IMO



EWELLE WILLIAMS



MOLLY OGBODUM



**MMESOMACHI OJI:
WEST AFRICA REPRESENTATIVE**



**MARVELINE ATIENO:
EAST AFRICA REPRESENTATIVE**



**SAM LASHAM:
OCENIA REPRESENTATIVE**



**HONEY ANDRES:
ASIA REPRESENTATIVE**



**CHICHI CHEWE:
SOUTHERN AFRICA REPRESENTATIVE**

VISION AND MISSION



Vision

A world where youth are empowered to drive meaningful change in drug policy and combat the harms caused by the war on drugs. We neither condone nor condemn drug use, but instead, we promote youth civic engagement as a powerful tool for reform. Our vision is rooted in respect for the diverse experiences and identities of our constituents. We stand against the stigmatisation of people who use drugs and advocate for policies based on justice, respect, compassion, evidence, and human rights. Through leadership development and advocacy, we strive to create a future where young leaders advocate for policy changes that prioritise the well-being of all individuals and communities.

Mission

To promote youth civic engagement and develop leaders who advocate for change based on justice, liberty, and compassion. At SSDP, we believe that young people have a critical role to play in shaping drug policy at the local, national, continental, and global levels. Through mobilisation and empowerment, we empower our members to participate in political processes and reduce the harms of counterproductive policies.

GLOBAL OVERVIEW



EUROPE

AUSTRIA
GERMANY
IRELAND
UNITED
KINGDOM

OCEANIA

NEW ZEALAND

MIDDLE EAST

LEBANON

ASIA

PHILIPPINES

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

AFRICA

BURUNDI
CHAD
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
THE CONGO
GAMBIA
GHANA
KENYA
LIBERIA
NIGERIA
RWANDA
SIERRA LEONE
UGANDA
ZIMBABWE
ZAMBIA
MALAWI
SOUTH AFRICA



2023 SUMMARY



In 2023, SSDP International continued to make significant strides in the drug policy and harm reduction movement while emphasizing youth involvement and empowerment. Our activities throughout the year reflect our unwavering commitment to these causes, and we are proud to highlight several key initiatives and achievements.

Youth in Power Project with Youth RISE

One of the standout initiatives of the year was the Youth in Power project, a collaborative effort with Youth RISE. This project aimed to amplify the voices of young people in drug policy advocacy and harm reduction. By providing training, resources, and a platform for youth leaders, we successfully promoted youth-led initiatives and fostered greater engagement in policy discussions.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) Attendance and Strategy Development

SSDP International participated in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in Vienna, where we joined forces with Paradigma to develop a comprehensive strategy for the movement. A key outcome of this meeting was the mentorship programme established in collaboration with adult organisations like the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) and Release. Through this programme, our Executive Director, along with the ED of Youth RISE, were paired with the Executive Directors of IDPC and Release, respectively. This mentorship has been instrumental in enhancing our strategic capabilities and fostering stronger ties within the drug policy community.

Leadership Transition

May 2023 marked a significant transition in SSDP International's leadership. Charity Monareng took over as Executive Director from Roisin Downes. Charity's passion for drug policy reform and her extensive experience in advocacy have already had a positive impact on our organisation, steering us towards new heights and greater achievements.

Drug Policy Alliance Conference in Arizona

In November, SSDP International attended the Drug Policy Alliance conference in Arizona. Our participation included presenting on multiple panels, such as "Legal Markets in the Global South" and "Drug Policy in Africa." These discussions provided valuable insights into the evolving drug policy landscape and highlighted the unique challenges and opportunities faced by countries in the Global South.

High-Level Meeting of the East and Southern Africa Commission on Drugs

SSDP International was honoured to be invited to a high-level meeting of the East and Southern Africa Commission on Drugs. This meeting was a

critical platform for discussing regional drug policy issues and advocating for harm reduction strategies. Our involvement underscored our commitment to addressing drug-related challenges in East and Southern Africa through collaborative efforts and evidence-based approaches.

Africa Drug Policy Week in Cape Town

Our presence at the Africa Drug Policy Week in Cape Town was another significant highlight. SSDP International, along with several of our members, actively participated in this event. Additionally, members from Zimbabwe and Nigeria were selected to participate in a media training session on the sidelines of the conference. This training equipped our members with the skills to effectively communicate and advocate for drug policy reform.

Expansion of Membership and New Chapters

In 2023, SSDP International expanded its global footprint by establishing three new chapters in South Africa, the Philippines, and Brazil. This growth reflects our commitment to building a robust network of youth advocates worldwide, working towards sensible drug policies and harm reduction.

Continued Advocacy and Impact

Throughout the year, SSDP International remained dedicated to our core mission of promoting sensible drug policies and harm reduction. Our advocacy efforts included engaging with policymakers and developing the [Youth Response to the 2023 UNODC World Drug Report](#), organising educational events, and supporting grassroots initiatives. By empowering young people and fostering collaboration with established organisations, we continued to drive meaningful change in drug policy.

2023 was a year of growth, collaboration, and impactful advocacy for SSDP International. From our successful Youth in Power project to our strategic partnerships and active participation in key conferences, we made significant progress in advancing drug policy reform and harm reduction. With new leadership and an expanded global network, we are poised to continue our efforts and achieve even greater success in the coming years. Thank you to all our supporters, partners, and members for their unwavering commitment to our mission. Together, we are making a difference and shaping a better future for drug policy worldwide.

PROGRAMMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS



OUTREACH &
GRASSROOTS SUPPORT



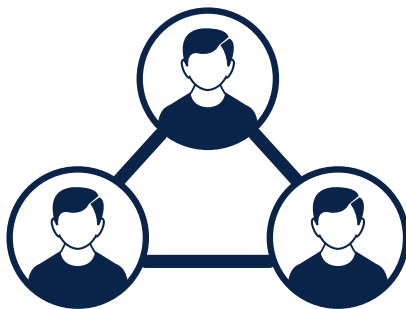
AFRICAN ADVOCACY
& INITIATIVES



UN ADVOCACY



EU & EUROPEAN
ADVOCACY



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



CAPACITY BUILDING
& TRAINING

2023 PROJECTS



- 1 Youth in Power
- 2 UN Training Series & CND
- 3 Support. Don't Punish Initiative
- 4 Meetings
- 5 Key chapter activities

YOUTH IN POWER



This project aimed to improve leadership transitions, institutional memory, and long-term strategy in the participating organisations through the development and implementation of a youth-work Sustainability Framework designed with best practices from both the youth-work sector and the drug policy/harm reduction sector. The key results include The Development of the Framework, The Implementation of the Framework, and the increased stability of the participating organisations in the European Union (EU).

“Youth In Power” (YIP) was and is intended to continually improve the overall sustainability and stability of three participating youth-led organisations, SSDP International, Young Wave, and Youth RISE, by addressing three key areas: 1. Leadership transitions, 2. Institutional knowledge/memory, and 3. Long-term strategy. The goal was to incorporate tools and best practices from both the youth work sector and the

drug policy/harm reduction sector to develop and implement a Sustainability Framework that addresses these issues. To achieve our goal of improving organisational stability through its implementation, we organised a 3-day strategy meeting. This Framework will also be shared and utilised across the sector to allow for the benefits of this Framework to be applied on a wider scale and ensure a sustained and robust youth drug policy sector.

The project had three key objectives:

1. To implement new processes to improve leadership transitions in the participating organisations
2. To implement new processes to improve institutional knowledge and memory in the participating organisations
3. To implement new processes to improve the development and implementation of the long-term strategy



ALL 3 OUTCOME DOCUMENTS CAN BE FOUND ON [OUR WEBSITES](#)

YOUTH IN
POWER
ORGANISATIONAL
ASSESSMENT TOOL



YOUTH IN
POWER
IMPLEMENTATION HANDBOOK



YOUTH IN
POWER
REPORT



UN TRAINING AND CND: EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR ADVOCACY



In 2023, SSDP International launched an innovative and impactful UN Training program aimed at empowering young advocates to effectively engage in international drug policy discussions and influence decision-making at the highest levels. This program was designed to provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and networks necessary to navigate the complex landscape of the United Nations and other global policy arenas.

Training Overview

The UN Training program included a series of intensive webinars, and mentorship/networking sessions led by experienced professionals from within SSDP International and our partner organisations. The curriculum was tailored to address the unique needs and challenges faced by young advocates, with a focus on the following key areas:

1. Understanding the UN System:

Participants received comprehensive training on the structure and functions of the United Nations, including the roles of key bodies such as the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the World Health Organization (WHO). This foundational knowledge enabled them to better understand how international drug policies are developed and implemented.

2. Advocacy and Negotiation Skills (Public speaking)

The program emphasized practical skills for effective advocacy and negotiation. Participants learned how to craft compelling policy briefs, engage with diplomats and policymakers, and navigate complex negotiations. Role-playing exercises and simulations helped them apply these skills in realistic scenarios.

3. Policy Analysis and Research (Resolutions):

Training session covered methods for conducting policy analysis and research, equipping participants with the tools to critically evaluate existing drug policies and propose evidence-based alternatives. They were also introduced to key data sources and research methodologies relevant to drug policy.

4. Building Coalitions and Networks (Networking):

Recognising the importance of collaboration, the program included sessions on building and maintaining coalitions with other advocacy groups, NGOs, and international organizations. Participants had opportunities to network with peers and mentors, fostering connections that would support their future advocacy efforts.

5. Media and Communication:

Effective communication is crucial for advocacy. The program provided training on media engagement, public speaking, and digital advocacy strategies. Participants learned how to effectively use social media, blogs, and other platforms to amplify their messages and reach a broader audience.

Key Achievements

The UN Training program was marked by several significant achievements:

- **Enhanced Participant Skills:** Participants reported substantial improvements in their understanding of international drug policy and their ability to advocate for change. Many expressed increased confidence in engaging with UN processes and stakeholders.

- Successful Advocacy Efforts:

Several participants utilized their new skills to actively participate in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and other international forums. They contributed to discussions, presented policy recommendations, and built alliances with other youth and advocacy groups.

- Expanded Networks:

The programme facilitated the creation of a strong network of young advocates who continue to support each other's efforts and collaborate on joint initiatives. This network has become a valuable resource for SSDP International's ongoing advocacy work.

- Ongoing Mentorship:

The mentorship component of the programme has continued beyond the formal training sessions, providing participants with ongoing support and guidance from experienced advocates and professionals.



SUPPORT. DON'T PUNISH INITIATIVE: ADVOCACY OUTREACH TO YPWUD IN WEST AFRICA



As part of the Support. Don't Punish Initiatives Grant, we have developed this project aimed at addressing two of the challenges faced by Young People who Use Drugs in low-income areas in Liberia, Ghana & Nigeria. 1. YPWUD in these regions have little, if not no, access to drug-related services, let alone youth-accessible drug services, and 2. YPWUD in this region faces extremely high barriers to accessing advocacy spaces. The project consists of direct harm reduction outreach activities and focus group discussions to collect information on the needs of this population. Furthermore, the project aims to link participants with local actors involved in drug policy reform advocacy and harm reduction services.



MEETINGS: MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



SSDP International at the High-level meeting of the East and Southern Africa Commission on Drugs in Mauritius 2023

SSDP International participated at the Africa Drug Policy Week in Cape Town 2023



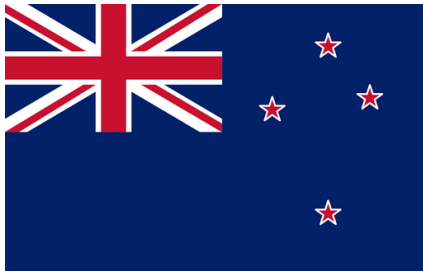
SSDP Zimbabwe and SSDP International participated in a panel at Africa Drug Policy week in Cape Town 2023

SSDP International attended and participated on panels at the Reform Conference in Phoenix, Arizona 2023



Isaac Ogunkola Olushola '20 speaking at the Reform Conference 2023, Arizona

KEY CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



SSDP Aotearoa (NZ) provided a submission to Parliament about New Zealand's alcohol reform promises.

ssdpaotearoa

Students call on Government to keep alcohol reform promises and Pass the Community Participation Bill

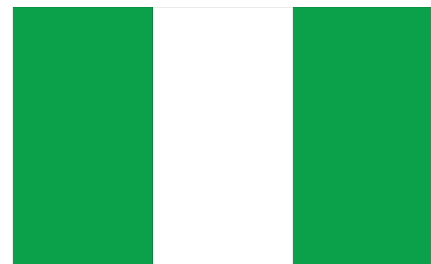
The people of Aotearoa, including our highly vulnerable student and youth community, have waited long enough for alcohol reform and to have our voices heard about the alcohol fuelled harm we experience. Alcohol harms causes tremendous suffering to individuals, families, communities, and society – to the amount of \$7.85 billion (about \$1500 for every person in New Zealand) per year. Reducing barriers to community participation in alcohol licensing processes will reduce alcohol-related harm.

There are only nine sitting days left before this Government rises for the election. There is a high risk that time will run out to pass the Community Participation Bill into law if we do not make our voices heard now.

There is no excuse to delay the Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Community Participation) Amendment Bill any longer.

We demand that the Government:

1. Pass the Second Reading of the Community Participation Bill with all amendments recommended by the majority of the Select Committee, on the next Parliamentary sitting day - Tuesday 15th of August 2023.
2. Pass the Third Reading of the Community Participation Bill as quickly as possible, before Parliament rises for the Election.



SSDP UniCal delivered a drug education programme to adolescents in Nigeria 2023



SSDP Zimbabwe hosted a capacity building , with university chapter leaders towards the implementation of the “My health my freedom campaign”



UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2024



UN Training Series 2024

We will commence our UN training series on the 1st of February 2024 which will include introductory sessions, civil society best practices, public speaking and networking sessions.



ssdp Students for Sensible Drug Policy.

SSDP United Nations Training.

Introductory Session: 1st February 2024
Best Practices & Public Speaking: 22nd February 2024
Resolutions: (TBC)
General Networking Session: 5th March 2024
Africa Networking Session: 7th March 2024

REGISTRATION

SSDP INTERNATIONAL

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

We will be hosting two side events during the regular segment of the CND. One will be on the disproportionate impact of drug policies on specific groups and another on cannabis and young people. We have submitted applications to speak during the main session and the Mid-term review session. We will also be participating in the informal dialogues and developing a strategic plan on how to engage with relevant country and CSO delegates.

Youth Advocacy

We have drafted a youth common position which will guide our advocacy at the UN and working towards formalising a youth working group as part of the VNGOC.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP



SSDP International's governance structure is built on three core elements:

Youth-Led Board of Directors

At the heart of SSDP International's governance structure is a dynamic and diverse youth-led Board of Directors who provide financial and legal oversight to the organisation. This board is composed of two types of seats to ensure a broad range of perspectives and expertise:

- **General Board Seats:** These seats are occupied by members who bring various skills, knowledge, and experiences to the table, representing the interests of the organisation and its mission.
- **Regional Representative Seats:** To ensure global representation and address regional specificities, the board includes seats for representatives from key regions: Asia, Africa, Europe, and Oceania. These representatives bring invaluable insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by young people in their respective regions, ensuring that SSDP International's strategies are globally inclusive and locally relevant.

Advisory Board of SSDP Alumni

The Advisory Board is comprised of SSDP alumni who have graduated from the youth-led Board of Directors or have previously been involved in SSDP chapters. This board serves as a vital resource, providing mentorship, strategic advice, and continuity. The alumni bring a wealth of experience, institutional memory, and professional networks, helping to guide the organisation's long-term vision and growth while supporting the development of current board members.

SSDP International Team

The SSDP International team is made up of dedicated staff and volunteers who manage the day-to-day operations and implement the strategic directives set forth by the Board of Directors. This team includes professionals in various fields such as programme management, communications, finance, and advocacy. Their role is to ensure the effective execution of SSDP International's initiatives, support the activities of regional chapters, and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders and partners worldwide.

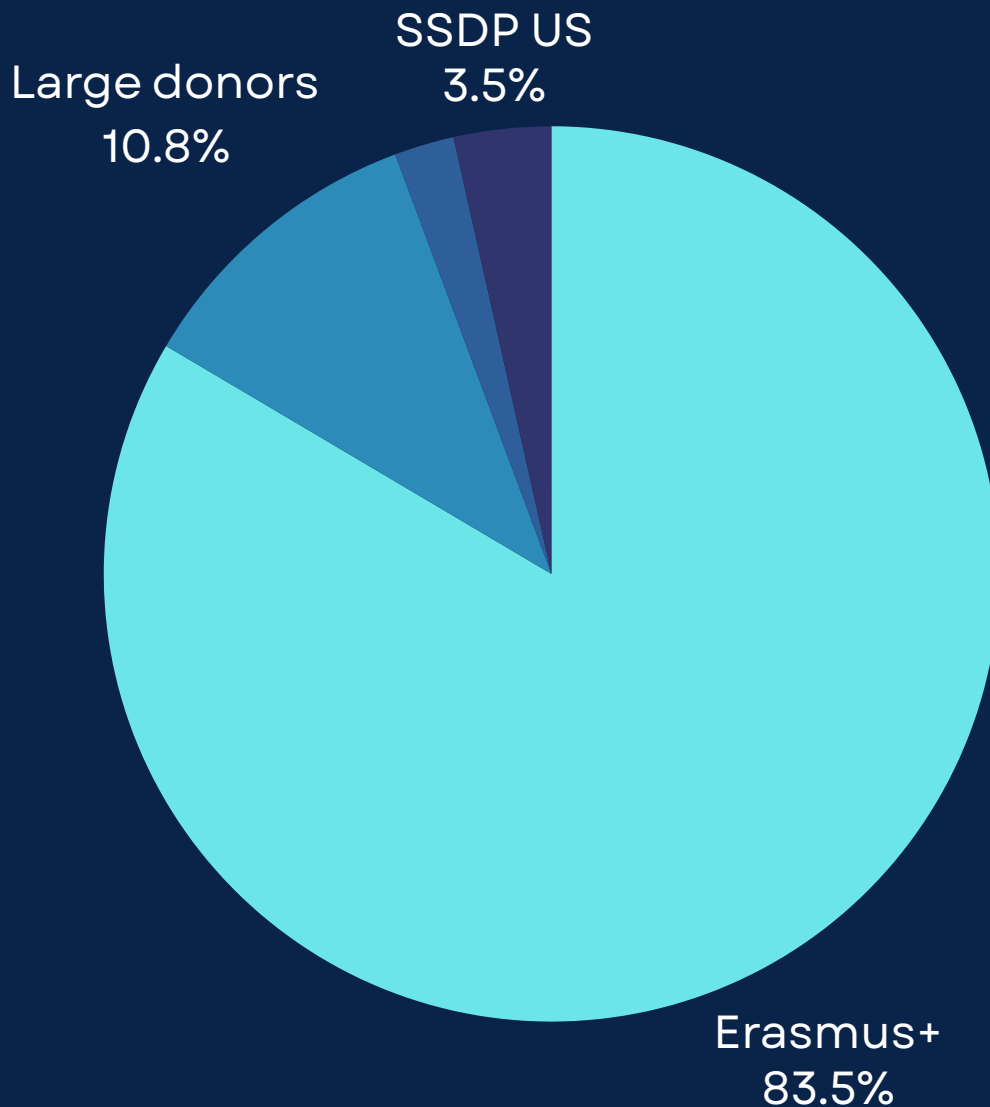
LOOKING AHEAD



As we move forward, SSDP International aims to:

- **Expand Our Reach:** Establish new chapters in underserved regions.
- **Enhance Advocacy Efforts:** Continue to push for decriminalisation and harm reduction policies globally.
- **Strengthen Education Programmes:** Develop comprehensive drug education curricula based on the insights gathered from our surveys.
- **Foster Global Collaboration:** Host international conferences to bring together youth advocates from around the world.
- **Fundraising, Fundraising, Fundraising**

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



INCOME 2023

TOTAL INCOME = 64 669 EUR APROX

SSDP International went through a transition, as such the organisation is in the process of raising funds to have a full organisational audit to provide full financial reports and financial audits from 2022

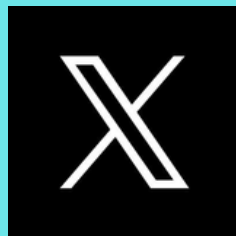
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



We extend our deepest gratitude to our donors, partners, and volunteers. Your support and dedication have been instrumental in our achievements over the past two years. Together, we are making a difference and creating a future where sensible drug policies prevail.

Thank you for standing with us.

CONTACT US



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