University of Tampere

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

ACTION PLAN 2014-2016

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RECTOR
1. Introduction

The University of Tampere

The University of Tampere (UTA) is a culturally-committed higher education institution with the social mission of educating visionaries who understand the world and change it. The profile of the University of Tampere accentuates the university’s multifaceted research and education on society and health.

In its research, UTA addresses the central issues in contemporary society. By providing critical knowledge and education, the university helps people and societies to improve their health and their cultural, social and economic well-being.

The origins of the university in its forerunner, the Civic College founded in 1925 (in 1930-1966 the college was called the School of Social Sciences), have endowed it with a singularly clear and extensive mission to serve society. Today, this mission binds the university to take on global responsibilities.

The University of Tampere is Finland’s most popular university. Over 18,000 people apply to the university annually, with only around one tenth of them securing a place to study. Some 15,000 students are currently pursuing degrees at the University of Tampere, and every year over one thousand Master’s degrees and one hundred doctoral degrees are produced.

The strength of the University of Tampere lies in its multidisciplinary nature, and in particular in research and education on society and health. The University of Tampere produces Master’s, Licentiate’s and Doctor’s degrees, and the graduates of the university work in both the private and public sector in various expert, developmental, research, administration, communication and management jobs. Moreover, the university produces doctors, teachers, journalists, social workers, psychologists, translators and actors, for instance. The graduates of the University of Tampere are well placed in working life.

The University of Tampere includes nine schools. In addition to the schools, the university incorporates the library, language centre, the Finnish Social Science Data Archive and university services. The annual budget of the university is around EUR 180 million. Mrs Kaija Holli is the current Rector of the University, while Mr Kai Öistämö is the Chair of the University Board.

The management system of UTA consists of the decision-making bodies of schools and other profit centres defined in the Regulations of the University of Tampere and their interconnected remits. Plans, guidelines and decisions issued by the Rector and the University Board further specify the management system.
University of Tampere organisation.

The Strategy of the University of Tampere for 2010-2015

The strategy of the University of Tampere is named Let’s Shape the Future! Change in the University of Tampere 2010–2015. The central measures of the strategy are broader-based degrees, improving the opportunities for internationalising research, and streamlining the university’s administrative structure. Work on updating the strategy began in 2014.

HR Strategy of the University of Tampere 2012–2015

The HR strategy is a part of implementing the university-level strategy. The HR strategy defines the goals and actions of human resources management and the measures undertaken to develop and improve staff training, bonuses, well-being at work and the work environment.

The main aims of the HR strategy are the following:

- Supporting the skillset, development and career advancement of every employee,
- Improving the attractiveness and incentives of working at the university,
- Increasing openness, feelings of community and responsibility at UTA,
- Ensuring that the principles of justice, equality and non-discrimination are observed in the work community.

The central measures included in the HR strategy are the following:

- Supporting the career advancement of teaching and research personnel,
- Developing the research sabbatical system,
- Encouraging a system of leave of absences from the employees’ regular job in order to accomplish a development task that benefits work at the university,
- Regularising the practice of performance evaluations.
The University of Tampere as an employer

The University of Tampere is an active academic community with around 2 200 employees, out of whom some 240 are professors. The values of the University emphasise creativity, social responsibility, academic freedom and equal opportunities to learn, acquire knowledge, participate and have an impact.

The terms of employment and salaries at the University of Tampere are based on the General Collective Agreement for Universities in Finland. The University of Tampere also provides various training and developmental services for its personnel. Furthermore, the University supports voluntary studies related to the employee’s tasks.

Employees may participate in trainings and other developmental activities organised by the employer during working hours. In general, participation to personnel training is free of charge for the University staff.

In order for the university to reach its goals, the expertise of its employees and students is required in the preparation of matters related to them. Cooperation improves both the performance of the work community and the working conditions within it. As per the agreement on cooperation, the cooperation procedure at the University of Tampere is implemented on three levels: the individuals, profit centres and the university.

The university and its profit centres use their operations and economy plans to further define the university’s strategic goals and measures and to lay out the way they allocate resources for those tasks. The HR strategy includes the alignments and goals that concern human resources development and the measures undertaken to build the employees’ capacity and improve well-being at work. Recruitment is based on the HR strategy. A profit centre’s proposal for a HR strategy is discussed in staff meetings and the management board and further in the target and performance negotiations university leadership conducts with each profit centre.
Work on HRS4R is included in the operating and financial plan for 2014–2017 approved by the University Board.

Current issues at the University of Tampere

Research assessment

The University of Tampere carried out an international Research Assessment Exercise in 2014. The assessment covered the research activity of all teachers and researchers at UTA in 2008–2013.

The aim of the evaluation was to:

- Develop the University of Tampere as a high-level research university,
- Support the strategic work of the university and its schools and independent institutes and allocate resources for the best and most promising research,
- Get current knowledge and perspectives on the current status and potential of the research conducted at the University of Tampere in comparison to the international level,
- Identify strong research areas and groups as well as areas and groups that have the potential of becoming strong,
- Get recommendations and ideas on how to strengthen research quality and the scientific and societal impact of research at UTA,
- Assess the functionality of the current research organisation and its support services,
Develop research monitoring at the university.

External audit of the Quality Management System

The information produced by the Quality Management System is documented in the Quality Manual. The Quality Manual includes the central actors and procedures with which the university and its profit centres ensure the quality of research, education and the university’s social service mission.

The University of Tampere participated in the external auditing of its Quality Management System executed in 2014 by an independent expert body, the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (hereafter FINEEC). The audit consisted of a review made by FINEEC and the university’s internal quality work. Central tasks in the quality work conducted within the university were defining the aims and responsibilities of the Quality Management System, various self-evaluations and compiling the quality assurance documentation. The university had chosen the feedback and monitoring systems of degree programmes as its optional target of the audit.

The Quality Management System is an organisational and methodical whole which is in place to maintain and develop the quality of operations, demonstrate quality outwards and, at the same time, develop the operations. Each higher education institution may decide on the aims and structures of their own Quality Management System, but in the audit FINEEC evaluates whether the system is suitable and fulfils the agreed criteria. At the University of Tampere, quality management is considered to be a part of the entirety of the university’s operations.

2. Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (hereafter HRS4R) is a tool provided by the European Commission. With its help, the University of Tampere has adopted the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers as a part of the development processes of the researchers’ employment contracts, careers and the work environment. The University of Tampere committed to adhering to the principles of the Charter and the Code of Conduct in September 2012. The University of Tampere was accepted as a member of the 4th cohort in autumn 2012.

The European Charter for Researchers

The European Charter for Researchers is a set of general principles and requirements which specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers as well as their employers. The aim of the Charter is to ensure that the nature of the relationship between researchers and employers is conducive to successful performance in generating, transferring, sharing and disseminating knowledge and technological development, and to the career development of researchers. The Charter addresses all researchers in the European Union at all stages of their career and covers all fields of research in the public and private sectors.

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers consists of a set of general principles and requirements that should be followed by employers when appointing or recruiting researchers. These principles and requirements should ensure the observance of such values as the transparency of the
recruitment process and the equal treatment of all applicants. The principles and requirements of the Code complement those outlined in the European Charter for Researchers. The HRS4R process consists of five phases, outlined below.

1. **Gap analysis**
   - The current practices and procedures of the University are compared to the principles identified in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

2. **Drafting an action plan**
   - The action plan incorporates a concrete plan outlining how to implement the observed developmental measures.

3. **The European Commission reviews the action plan.**

4. **The University subjects the implementation of its action plan to a self-assessment after two years. This process is repeated every two years.**

5. **An external evaluation is carried out every four years.**

3. **The organisation of HRS4R work at the University of Tampere**

The practical implementation of HRS4R work at the University of Tampere was coordinated and planned by a working group authorised by Rector Kaija Holli. The members of the working group were HR Manager Pirjo Hankala, HR Specialist Hanna Heino, Education Manager Niina Hietaniemi-Virtanen, Heads of Administration Sari Saastamoinen and Jaana Salmensivu-Anttila, Head of Research Development Johanna Hakala and HR Specialists Sivi Aalto, Kati Nurminen and Tiia Vuorinen.

The work was directed by the university’s quality steering group, which has representatives from both teaching and research personnel and is chaired by the Rector. The quality steering group examines quality management at the University of Tampere as a whole and supports the Rector in the development of the Quality Management System. HRS4R work is a part of the quality work and development of operations at UTA.

The working group called its work the Good to do research! project.

The working group operated in cooperation with the personnel organisations and other stakeholder groups. Teaching and research personnel participated in the work in workshops and through the following channels:

- Research and teaching councils,
- Quality steering group,
- Cooperation committee.

The cooperation committee consists of three members representing the employer and six members representing the personnel. The committee is tasked with developing the university's operations and employees’ opportunities to influence the decisions made at the university that concern their work, working conditions and position at the university.
Communication

The university community was informed about the HRS4R work in the intranet and the University Forum, an open event for the whole university community. Additionally, HRS4R work was presented to the central administrative bodies of the university, such as the research and teaching councils, the cooperation committee, Rector’s executive group and the quality steering group.

3.1. Gap analysis

The work schedule

- 9-12/2013
  - Defining the groundwork
  - Questionnaire on well-being at work
- 1-2/2014
  - Choosing the agenda for workshops
  - Gathering workshops
- 3-4/2014
  - Workshops
  - Prioritising developmental measures
- 5-6/2014
  - Drafting the action plan

Head of research development Johanna Hakala represented UTA in a kick off meeting of the 4th cohort organised in Brussels on 29 October 2012. HR specialists Tiia Vuorinen and Hanna Heino participated in a seminar organised by the European Commission in Warsaw in April 2013 and studied how the other Finnish universities had implemented the HRS4R process.

In spring 2013, the Rector approved the implementation of HRS4R work at the university and the implementation plan was also discussed in the cooperation committee. The gap analysis started in August 2013. The working group compared the regulations, principles and operations models used at UTA with the goals set in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment. Interviews with experts at UTA added to the assessment materials.

On the basis of its assessment, the working group concluded that the procedures that are based on legislation, the Strategy of the University and its implementation programmes (internationalisation, HR and communications strategies), the regulations of UTA and the guidelines issued on their basis are generally in accordance with the recommendations. For example, the terms of employment, recruitment, salaries, gender balance and participation in decision-making bodies are areas where
the required regulations and instructions are already in place. The procedures that generally correspond to the recommendations have been collected in Appendix 1 together with a list of related actions already undertaken at UTA.

The survey on well-being at work

UTA monitors the well-being of its employees with a survey on well-being at work, which is conducted regularly and used as the basis for planning development measures in human resources. The survey conducted in autumn 2013 concentrated on the views of the teaching and research personnel especially in view of the gap analysis. The instructors and researchers were asked for their views on the teaching and research careers, the mobility of instructors and researchers and issues that help promote equality:

Please name three things that promote the mobility of instructors and researchers, the most common answers:

- Increasing funding for mobility and facilitating the application process,
- Increasing communications about mobility, especially by supervisors,
- Work arrangements during periods of mobility, longer employment contracts,
- Cooperation and cooperation agreements with Finnish and international universities,
- Increasing support and information services, making the administrative processes clear.

Please name three things that promote equality at the university, the most common answers:

- Competent directors and supervisors,
- Longer employment contracts, the same career advancement prospects for all, clear job descriptions,
- More equal distribution of the different statuses and amount of work in instruction and research,
- Open communications and transparency,
- The equal treatment of employees at all ages.

Please name three things that promote teaching and research careers, the most common answers:

- A sufficient, wider and more stable funding base,
- Longer employment contracts of the post-doctoral research personnel,
- Instructors' opportunities to take research sabbaticals,
- Opportunity to participate in training on university pedagogy,
- Development of supervisory work.

Issues related to the stability of employment contracts, the meaning of supervisory work and communications were highlighted in the answers as things that promote mobility, equality and career advancement.

All in all, 534 members of the teaching and research personnel answered the survey representing all career stages and schools at UTA.
Choosing the agendas for the workshops

The agendas for the workshops were chosen by using the results of the survey on well-being at work and the working group’s estimates as to what things still needed development compared with the recommendations made by the European Commission. In the definition of topics, the working group grouped the issues into more wide-ranging entities that were different from those originally used by the Commission:

- professional responsibility and attitude,
- ethical principles,
- disseminating research results,
- the stability and permanence of employment contracts,
- support in the early stages of the research career.

The topics that were defined on the basis of the gap analysis as areas that did not need further development actions have been presented in Appendix 1.

3.2. Action Plan

Workshops

The aim was to write the Action Plan by carefully hearing the instruction and research personnel in a participatory manner. Members of the research and teaching personnel were invited to participate and discuss the development needs they had identified.

The work was organised in two workshops: one for the teaching and research personnel in stages 1 and 2 of their careers (doctoral students, university instructors, postdoctoral researchers) and the other for faculty in stages 3 and 4 (university lecturers, university researchers, professors and research directors). The quality steering group appointed the chairs of the working groups.

Information about the workshops was disseminated to the whole UTA community by announcements in the intranet. In addition, key people were invited to the workshops by email.

About 30 people participated in the workshops. Dean, Professor Risto Kunelius chaired the workshop for researchers at stages 3 and 4 of their research careers. University lecturer Jussi Kivistö chaired the other workshop for instructors and researchers at stages 1 and 2 of their research careers.

Work undertaken by the workshops took place in small groups with each choosing one topic for discussion. The groups were also able to use background materials, which included the European Commission’s principles and a description of the current situation at UTA.
The working groups named concrete development needs and actions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPMENT NEEDS</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility:</strong> Systematic arrangements and goals, increasing the number of researchers visiting UTA, orientation of mentors, more wide-ranging thinking: mobility is not necessarily the same things as physical mobility – e.g. international research groups.</td>
<td><strong>Mobility:</strong> Information bank for young researchers, resources, capitalising on the know-how of researchers who come back from abroad.</td>
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<td><strong>Access to career advice:</strong> Peer support, orientation, mentoring.</td>
<td><strong>Access to career advice:</strong> Self-assessments, pedagogical training.</td>
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<td><strong>Stability and permanence of employment:</strong> Longer employment contracts, the tenure track system, clarifying the role of research groups, highlighting collective responsibility.</td>
<td><strong>Stability and permanence of employment:</strong> Funding between projects, sharing good practices, HR planning, more clear career plans, highlighting the supervisory role, making use of development discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethical principles:</strong> Educating all basic degree and postgraduate students on ethical principles, procedures for dealing with suspicions of misconduct, open discussion forums.</td>
<td><strong>Ethical principles:</strong> The operations manuals of schools should include teaching ethical principles and each school must adhere to ethical principles in research, university-level procedures, training, agreement templates available to all.</td>
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<td><strong>Professional responsibility and a professional attitude:</strong> A balance between expectations and opportunities.</td>
<td><strong>Professional responsibility and a professional attitude:</strong> Training on the legislation concerning document management, protection of research data.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dissemination of research results:</strong> Clearer role of the university’s communications services, development of IT systems, identifying stakeholder groups, cooperation, continuing education.</td>
<td><strong>Dissemination of research results:</strong> Support for scientific writing (international publications), support for publishing, active support for popularising research results; training, researcher interviews on YouTube, researchers’ blogs, open events for stakeholder groups, communications plans of research projects, meetings with the funders after research projects have been completed.</td>
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Prioritising the development measures

After the discussions in the workshops and an evaluation of the whole HRS4R process by the workshop chairs, the working group collected areas that need further development and should be included in the action plan.

The gap analysis consisted of the HRS4R working group’s assessment of the decisions and procedures that guide the actions at the university, the survey on well-being at work and the workshop work.
On the basis of the gap analysis, the working group drafted an Action Plan on development measures that the university community evaluated afterwards. The plan was available for comments in the UTA staff intranet. The development measures were presented to the quality steering group and the Action Plan was discussed in the Rector’s executive group and the cooperation committee.

The Good to do research! Action Plan for the development of the researchers’ contracts of employment, careers and the work environment are presented in a concise way in the table below, which also details who is responsible for each development measure and the timetable of when the actions take place. The execution of the plan is included in the operations plans of the university and the schools and profit centres. The execution is reported to the Rector and the Board according to the principles of operations steering.

The realisation of the Good to do research! Action Plan is assessed and evaluated as a part of the annual planning process of the university and its schools and profit centres, in which the whole personnel can participate. The Good to Do Research! Action Plan page on the intranet contains up-to-date information on the realisation of the plan.

According to the HRS4R process, the University of Tampere evaluates the realisation of the Action Plan two years after the plan has been approved.

**Good to Do Research! Action Plan**

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<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improving knowledge about ethical principles and practices and adherence to them. An ethical evaluation of research in all disciplines before research starts. Training on ethical principles for supervisors and other groups.</td>
<td>Research council, schools, university services</td>
<td>As a continuous activity since autumn 2014.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Staff training on ethical principles in Q2 2015.</td>
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<td>Extending instruction on ethical principles also to degree programmes.</td>
<td>University services and schools</td>
<td>Is a part of curriculum design work since Q3 2014.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Ethics –course in Finnish Q4 2014 and in English Q1 2015 as a part of Joint doctoral studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organising training and orientation on legislation that concerns document management and protection of research data.</td>
<td>University services, the Finnish Social Science Data Archive</td>
<td>Orientation is a continuous activity, training sessions in Q4 2015 as a part of the programme on staff well-being and training.</td>
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<td>Ensuring the availability of contract templates and other document templates.</td>
<td>University services</td>
<td>Q3 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing project management and supervisory work as well as making responsibilities and obligations clear.</td>
<td>Deans, university services (training and education)</td>
<td>Training for project directors Q4 2014, the next training in Q4 2015. The training of supervisors according to the plan on HR development and well-being at work.</td>
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<td>Improving researchers' communication skills.</td>
<td>University services</td>
<td>According to the plan on HR development and well-being at work starting from Q4 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popularising science; for example by organising regular and open thematic events that present current research.</td>
<td>Research centres and programmes, university services</td>
<td>Yearly lectures, seminars and events open for public. In 2015 for example: Café Scientifique -scientific discussion events Light into Darkness -science event Monttu auki -artistic experience and discussion soirée Studia Generalia –series of lectures Ikääntyvien yliopisto (University for seniors) - seminars and lectures Tutkija mediassa (Researcher in Media) -course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening innovation services and increasing cooperation with local actors.</td>
<td>University Board, schools, university services</td>
<td>The aim of the TUTUIN project is to create joint procedures for innovation services at UTA and the Tampere University of Technology / Q1 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defining the principles that govern immaterial property rights in research and instruction, organising training on immaterial property rights.</td>
<td>University services</td>
<td>The definition of immaterial property rights in March 2015, according to the plan on HR development and well-being at work Q2 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the availability of expert knowledge.</td>
<td>Researchers, schools, university services</td>
<td>Project with the aim of making expert knowledge more accessible.</td>
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<td>Creating a procedure to support the publication process.</td>
<td>Schools, the library, university services</td>
<td>The instructions, guidance and training requirements concerning the publication process identified and implemented Q4 2015. The electronic services required to support the publication process identified and prioritised Q4 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting research funding applications.</td>
<td>University services</td>
<td>A working group for research funding was set up for H2020. The aim of the group is to find practical ways of increasing UTA’s performance in the competition for research funding and disseminate best practices.</td>
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<td>Increasing the number of five-year post-doctoral positions in the strategic focus areas of research (positions that are not funded by projects).</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>According to the schools’ HR strategies starting from Q1 2015.</td>
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<td>Sharing experiences on mobility, mentoring those who are leaving to go abroad.</td>
<td>Schools, university services and researchers</td>
<td>A mobility café, starting in Q4 2015. Mentoring starting in Q2 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling periods of working abroad, especially for post-doctoral researchers.</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>A permanent financial instrument to support mobility, introduced Q3 2014. Research periods according to the schools’ plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting a Euraxess service point at the University of Tampere. Euraxess is a European Commission website that provides researchers with information on employment opportunities in Finland.</td>
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<td>University services 31 October 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing training and guidance that is related to entering working life after completing a doctoral degree.</td>
<td>UTA Doctoral School, university services</td>
<td>Starting in Q4 2014, a continuous activity. The training plan of the career and recruitment services Q2 2016.</td>
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<td>Incorporating the self-evaluation of doctoral students as a part of their development discussions. The goal is to support their career planning.</td>
<td>Supervisors, university services</td>
<td>Q4 2015. Included in the plan on HR development and well-being at work for 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing support services for employees arriving from abroad; orientation, Finnish language skills.</td>
<td>Schools and university services</td>
<td>Starting from Q3 2014, a basic and an advanced course in the Finnish language are offered. Making sure that the orientation process of international employees corresponds to the orientation process of Finnish employees Q4 2016.</td>
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