

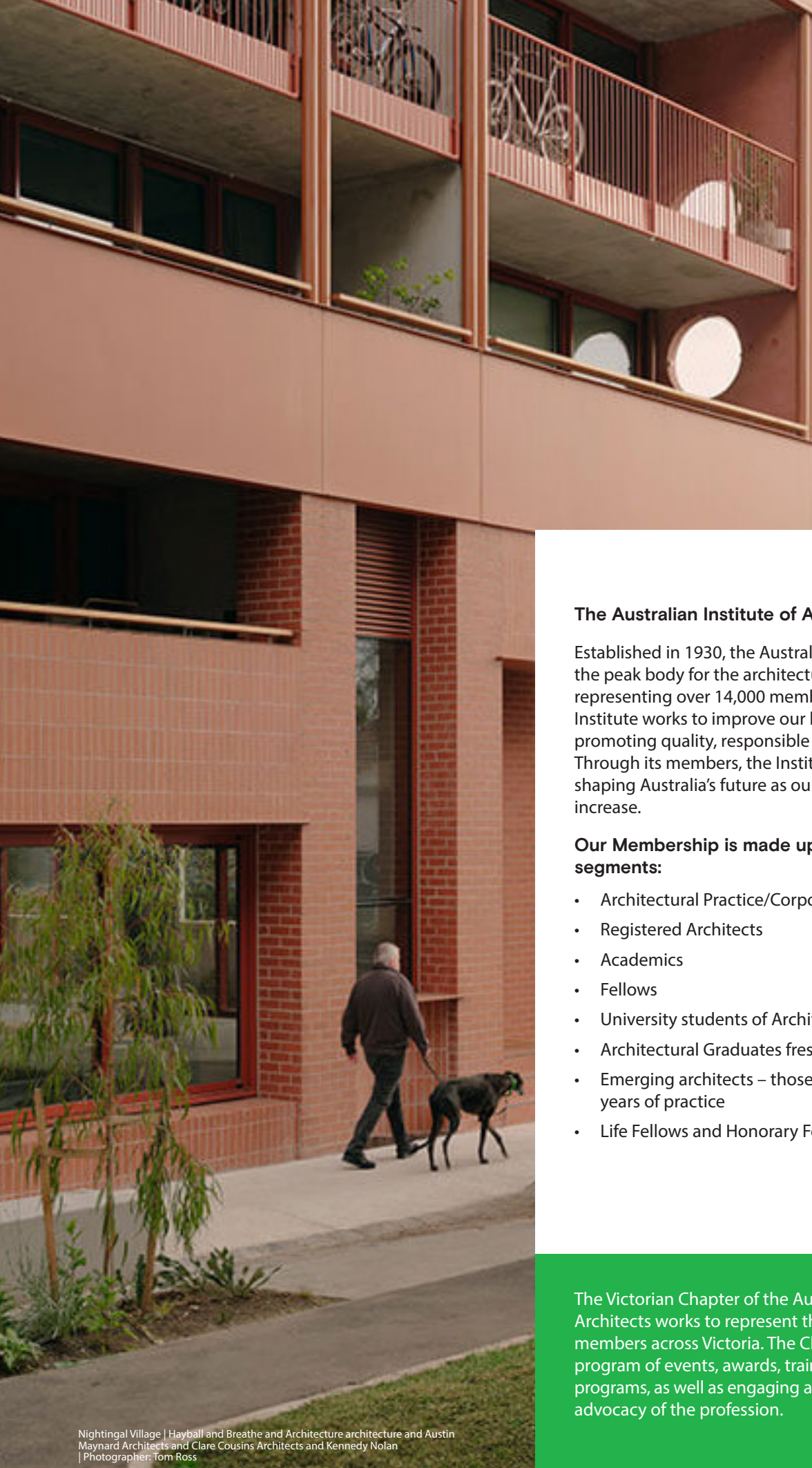


Australian  
Institute of  
Architects

# PLAN FOR VICTORIA

Australian Institute of Architects  
Submission

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### **The Australian Institute of Architects**

Established in 1930, the Australian Institute of Architects is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia, representing over 14,000 members across Australia. The Institute works to improve our built environment by promoting quality, responsible and sustainable design. Through its members, the Institute plays a major role in shaping Australia's future as our population and cities increase.

### **Our Membership is made up of the following segments:**

- Architectural Practice/Corporate members
- Registered Architects
- Academics
- Fellows
- University students of Architecture (SONA)
- Architectural Graduates freshly joining the profession
- Emerging architects – those in the first ten years of practice
- Life Fellows and Honorary Fellows

The Victorian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects works to represent the Institute and its 4000+ members across Victoria. The Chapter manages a regular program of events, awards, training and education programs, as well as engaging actively with policy and advocacy of the profession.



| Dennis-House by Olaver Architecture  
| Photo by Tom-Ross

# Plan for Victoria

## Proposal Overview

The Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) supports the Victorian Government's Plan for Victoria, addressing key issues like affordable housing, equity, thriving communities, and sustainability. To effectively implement this plan, we advocate for a unified approach to architecture and urbanism that prioritizes innovation, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship.

For affordable housing, we suggest utilizing innovative design solutions such as modular and prefabricated housing to reduce costs and increase supply. Promoting mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces can foster vibrant, accessible neighbourhoods. Supporting the adaptive reuse of existing structures will enhance housing options and preserve cultural heritage.

On equity and job creation, we propose applying universal design principles to ensure accessibility in new buildings and public spaces. Supporting local materials and labour will boost regional economies and create jobs. Additionally, investing in training for architects and urban planners, especially in regional areas, will ensure they are well-equipped to address evolving challenges and provide high-quality design services.

To enhance liveability, we recommend investing in high-quality public spaces and integrating green infrastructure, such as urban forests and sustainable drainage systems. Adopting smart growth principles will balance urban development with environmental and cultural preservation. For climate action, stringent green building standards and renewable energy use are essential for a sustainable future.



# Pillar 1 – Affordable Housing and Choice

## Incentivize Innovative Housing Solutions

### Policy Implementation:

- Modular and Prefabricated Housing: Provide financial incentives such as grants or tax breaks for developers who use modular or prefabricated construction methods. These methods can reduce construction costs and timeframes, making housing more affordable.
- Co-Housing Models: Support co-housing initiatives that focus on shared living arrangements and communal spaces. This can be achieved through zoning changes and subsidies for projects that include shared facilities.
- Review of Domestic Buildings Contracts Act to enable modular housing to compete in the marketplace (in particular revise how payments are claimed and paid)

### Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced Construction Costs: Faster and cheaper construction methods lower overall housing costs.
- Increased Housing Supply: Innovative designs can quickly expand the availability of affordable housing options.

## Expand Mixed-Use Developments

### Policy Implementation:

- Flexible Zoning Regulations: Revise zoning laws to allow for greater integration of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces within the same development. This promotes walkable communities and reduces reliance on cars.
- Incentives for Affordable Units: Provide incentives, such as density bonuses or tax credits, for developers who include affordable housing units in mixed-use projects.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced Community Vibrancy: Mixed-use developments create dynamic neighbourhoods with accessible amenities, improving residents' quality of life.
- Economic and Social Benefits: Increased local services and reduced commuting needs contribute to economic vitality and community cohesion.



# Pillar 1 – Affordable Housing and Choice

## Support Adaptive Reuse of Existing Buildings

### Policy Implementation:

- Incentives for Adaptive Reuse: Offer grants or tax credits to developers and property owners who repurpose existing buildings for residential use. Streamline the approval process for adaptive reuse projects and require an application for a demolition to provide justification for demolition.
- Preservation and Innovation: Ensure that adaptive reuse projects respect historical and cultural aspects of buildings while incorporating modern amenities.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Increased Housing Supply: Reusing existing structures can quickly add to the housing supply without the environmental impact of new construction.
- Cultural and Historical Preservation: Adaptive reuse preserves the character of neighbourhoods and maintains cultural heritage.

## Promote Sustainable and Resilient Design

### Policy Implementation:

- Building Efficiency Transparency: Require that all types of buildings undergo energy efficiency testing (using NatHERS or NABERS) and display the results when the building is for rent, lease, or sale.
- Climate-Resilient Design: Incorporate climate-resilient design principles to protect homes from extreme weather and environmental impacts.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Lower Operating Costs: Energy-efficient buildings reduce utility expenses for residents.
- Increased Resilience: Sustainable and resilient designs help homes withstand climate-related challenges.
- By implementing these policies, the Victorian Government can improve the delivery of affordable housing and provide better housing choices, leading to more vibrant, sustainable, and equitable communities.



# Pillar 2 - Equity and Jobs

Sanders Place by NMBW  
Photo by Peter Bennetts

## Inclusive Design Standards

### Policy Implementation:

- Advocate for the adoption of universal design principles in building codes and public space guidelines. Ensure that accessibility standards are integrated into all planning and development regulations, with specific requirements for accommodating people with disabilities and the elderly.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced accessibility and usability of buildings and public spaces for all individuals, leading to greater inclusion and improved quality of life. Increased compliance with accessibility standards will also support broader community engagement and participation.

## Implement a 'Design with Country' Approach in Architecture

### Policy Implementations:

- Develop and enforce policies that integrate a 'Designing with Country' approach in architectural planning and design processes. This includes ensuring that all architectural projects consider the impact on Country, respect Traditional Owners' rights, and align with their cultural and environmental aspirations. Establish guidelines for direct engagement with Indigenous communities throughout the project lifecycle.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Designs that are culturally sensitive and sustainable, reflecting the values and needs of Indigenous communities. Improved protection of cultural heritage and natural environments, fostering positive relationships between architects, planners, and Indigenous stakeholders. Enhanced community trust and more resilient, contextually relevant outcomes in architectural projects.



# Pillar 3 - Thriving and Liveable Suburbs and Towns

Berninnet Cultural and Community Centre by JCB Architects  
| Photo by Victor Vieaux

## Enhance Public Space Design

### Policy Implementations:

- Establish higher design standards for new subdivisions in existing suburbs and greenfield developments to require a significant uplift in public open space. Develop guidelines that ensure these spaces are accessible, promote equity, and support health and well-being for all ages and abilities. Mandate regular reviews and updates to these standards to adapt to emerging needs and best practices.
- Implement flood and bushfire zoning policies to proactively identify and map anticipated climate change effected zones. This approach will guide future subdivisions and land sales, ensuring informed decision-making and enhanced resilience against flooding. Collaboration with planning and environmental experts is essential for accurate and effective flood risk management.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Improved accessibility and usability of public and private spaces, fostering greater inclusivity and engagement across diverse age groups and abilities. Enhanced quality of life through well-designed environments that support physical and mental health, encouraging community interaction and overall well-being.
- By integrating anticipated climate change zoning into land use planning, communities will experience reduced climate change risk and safer development. This proactive approach will safeguard property investments, enhance public safety, and support sustainable growth, ultimately fostering resilient neighborhoods and minimizing future flood-related disruptions and damages.

## Integrate Green Infrastructure

### Policy Implementations:

- Advocate for policies that mandate the integration of green infrastructure in urban planning and development. This includes requirements for urban forests, green roofs, and sustainable drainage systems in new and existing projects. Provide incentives for developers to incorporate these features and offer technical guidelines to support implementation.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced environmental sustainability and liveability in suburbs and towns, leading to improved air quality, reduced urban heat islands, and better management of stormwater. Increased green spaces will also contribute to residents' well-being and biodiversity, creating healthier and more attractive urban environments.

# Pillar 4 – Sustainable Environments and Climate Action



Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre by Warren And Mahoney  
Photo by Tom Roe

## Green Building Standards

### Policy Implementations:

- Advocate for the mandatory adoption of stringent green building standards and certifications, such as Green Star and NABERS, for all new developments and retrofits. Establish regulations that require adherence to these standards and provide incentives for projects that exceed the minimum requirements.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Significant reductions in carbon footprints and enhanced energy efficiency across new and existing buildings. Improved environmental performance will lead to lower operational costs, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and a stronger commitment to sustainability within the construction industry.

## Climate-Resilient Design

### Policy Implementations:

- Promote policies that integrate climate-resilient design principles into building codes and planning regulations. Require the use of resilient building materials and sustainable site planning practices that address climate change impacts, such as heatwaves and flooding. Develop guidelines and provide resources to support the implementation of these principles.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Increased resilience of buildings and infrastructure to climate-related risks, reducing vulnerability to extreme weather events. Enhanced community safety and sustainability through designs that effectively manage and mitigate the impacts of climate change, leading to more durable and adaptable built environments.

## Energy and Water Efficiency

### Policy Implementations:

- Support and implement policies that mandate or incentivize the use of renewable energy sources, energy-efficient systems, and water-saving technologies in both new and existing buildings. Establish benchmarks for performance and offer financial incentives or grants to encourage adoption of these technologies.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Improved energy and water efficiency in buildings, leading to reduced utility costs and lower environmental impact. Increased adoption of renewable energy and efficient technologies will contribute to sustainability goals, enhance resource conservation, and support climate action efforts by minimizing the ecological footprint of the built environment.



# Metropolitan and Regional Considerations



| Sweetwater House by Christopher Botterill and JCB Architects  
| Photo by Tom Blachford

**Regional Development Incentives:** There should be incentives for sustainable development in regional areas, including support for infrastructure that connects regional towns with metropolitan areas and enhances regional resilience.

**Transport and Connectivity:** The Institute would support policies that enhance public transport options and active transport infrastructure (like cycling paths and high-performance rail) to improve connectivity between metropolitan and regional areas.

**Local Context Sensitivity:** Implement incentives during RFT and EOI architectural processes to engage local architects (in line with the engagement of local contractors) to respect and enhance the unique character of different regions, balancing modern needs with heritage and local context.

By promoting these policies, the Victorian Government can help shape a future for the state that is equitable, sustainable, and enriching for all communities, addressing the needs of both metropolitan and regional areas.

# Pillar 1 – Affordable Housing and Choice

## Example policies with exemplary housing affordability and choice outcomes

### Singapore's Public Housing Model

Policy Overview: Singapore's approach to public housing, managed by the Housing and Development Board (HDB), builds and sells high-quality, subsidized flats to citizens, with a focus on inclusivity and community building.

#### Key Features:

- Subsidized Home Ownership: Singapore provides substantial subsidies for citizens to purchase HDB flats, making homeownership more attainable.
- Mandatory Savings Plan: The Central Provident Fund (CPF) requires residents to save a portion of their income for housing and retirement.
- Diverse Housing Options: HDB offers a range of flat sizes and types to cater to different needs and income levels.

#### Outcomes:

- High Homeownership Rates: Over 80% of Singaporeans live in HDB flats, with a high rate of homeownership.
- Stable Housing Market: The system reduces housing speculation and ensures long-term affordability.

### Vienna's Social Housing Program

Policy Overview: Vienna's social housing program is renowned for its extensive and high-quality rental housing stock. The city emphasizes affordability and integration, providing long-term, affordable rental options to a broad segment of the population.

#### Key Features:

- Public and Non-Profit Development: Housing is developed and managed by public and non-profit organizations, ensuring affordability and quality.
- Long-Term Rent Control: Rent levels are controlled and kept low, often linked to the cost of living.
- Mixed-Income Communities: Social housing is integrated with market-rate housing to foster diverse and vibrant communities.

#### Outcomes:

- Wide Availability of Affordable Rentals: Over 60% of Vienna's residents live in social housing.
- High Quality of Life: The program contributes to high living standards and social cohesion.

# Pillar 1 – Affordable Housing and Choice

## Example policies with exemplary housing affordability and choice outcomes

### Canada's National Housing Strategy

Policy Overview: Canada's National Housing Strategy is a comprehensive approach to increasing the supply of affordable housing, improving existing stock, and supporting vulnerable populations.

### Key Features:

- Investment in Housing Supply: Significant investments are made in the construction of new affordable housing units and the renovation of existing ones.
- Targeted Programs: Programs are tailored for different needs, including Indigenous communities, the homeless, and low-income families.
- Affordable Housing Innovation Fund: This fund supports innovative housing solutions and partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors.

### Outcomes:

- Increased Housing Supply: The strategy aims to build or repair over 100,000 units and reduce homelessness.
- Broad Impact: The focus on diverse needs helps address various aspects of affordable housing.

# Pillar 2 – Equity and Jobs

## Example policies with exemplary equity and jobs outcomes

### Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs)

Policy Overview: Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) are negotiated contracts between developers and community organizations that outline specific benefits for the local community associated with large-scale development projects. These agreements ensure that development projects provide tangible benefits to the community beyond the construction itself.

#### Key Features:

- Local Hiring Requirements: Stipulates that a percentage of construction jobs must be filled by local residents.
- Training Programs: Includes provisions for job training and apprenticeships to equip local residents with skills for employment.
- Support for Local Businesses: Encourages the use of local and minority-owned businesses for subcontracting and supply needs.

#### Outcomes:

- Increased Local Employment: More job opportunities for local residents, especially those from underrepresented communities.
- Skills Development: Improved workforce skills through training programs, leading to better job prospects.
- Economic Empowerment: Enhanced support for local businesses and contractors, contributing to regional economic growth.

### Green Building Certification and Local Hiring

Policy Overview: Green Building Standards with Local Employment Requirements combine environmental sustainability goals with local economic development. These policies mandate green building certifications and include stipulations for local hiring and use of local materials in construction projects.

#### Key Features:

- Green Building Certifications: Requires adherence to recognized green building standards (e.g., LEED, Green Star) for new and retrofitted buildings.
- Local Hiring Requirements: Specifies that a portion of the construction workforce must be local residents.
- Use of Local Materials: Encourages or mandates the use of locally sourced materials in building projects.

#### Outcomes:

- Sustainable Employment: Creation of green jobs through local hiring and sustainable building practices.
- Environmental Benefits: Improved environmental performance of buildings through adherence to green building standards.
- Community Development: Boosted local economic development and job creation, while promoting environmentally friendly construction practices.

# Pillar 2 – Equity and Jobs

## Example policies with exemplary equity and jobs outcomes

### Inclusive Design and Accessibility Standards

Policy Overview: Accessibility Design Standards mandate that public buildings and spaces must meet specific criteria to ensure they are usable by individuals of all abilities. These standards promote equity by making public spaces more inclusive.

### Key Features:

- Accessibility Requirements: Enforces features such as ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms to accommodate people with disabilities.
- Regular Updates: Includes provisions for periodic reviews and updates to ensure compliance with evolving accessibility needs.
- Enforcement and Compliance: Sets out mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing adherence to accessibility standards.

### Outcomes:

- Improved Accessibility: Enhanced usability of public spaces for individuals with disabilities, fostering greater inclusion.
- Job Creation: Increased demand for specialized design and construction services focused on accessibility.
- Enhanced Quality of Life: Greater community engagement and participation through improved access to essential services and spaces.

# Pillar 4 – Sustainable Environments and Climate Action

## Example policies with exemplary sustainable environments and climate action outcomes

### The European Union's Green Building Initiative

Policy Overview: The European Union's Green Building Initiative aims to promote energy-efficient and sustainable building practices across member states. This policy involves setting stringent standards for building performance and encouraging the adoption of green technologies through regulations and incentives.

### Key Features:

- Energy Performance Standards: Mandates that new buildings meet high energy performance standards and undergo energy efficiency assessments.
- Green Building Certifications: Encourages buildings to achieve certifications such as BREEAM or LEED by providing incentives and recognition.
- Renovation Strategies: Includes policies to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings, focusing on deep retrofits and energy-saving measures.

### Outcomes:

- Reduced Carbon Emissions: Significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings due to improved energy efficiency.
- Lower Energy Costs: Decreased operational costs for building owners and occupants through enhanced energy performance.
- Enhanced Sustainability: Greater adoption of sustainable building practices and technologies across Europe.

### Cities with Successful Implementation:

- London, United Kingdom: Implemented stringent energy performance standards and promotes green building certifications, contributing to reduced carbon footprints and energy costs.
- Amsterdam, Netherlands: Known for its rigorous green building policies and retrofitting programs that significantly enhance building sustainability.



# CONTACT



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