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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE OF THIS STAFF CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

What is the Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct?

This Code was developed combining a Code of Ethics and a Code of Conduct into a single governing document, which describes our ethical standards, and serves as a foundation for our organization policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Why do we have a Code?

This document is a clear statement of what we believe in and the way we work. It represents a crucial resource intended to help us recognize issues involving organizational integrity and take appropriate actions with confidence.

2. APPLICABILITY

Why do we have common provisions with country customization?

This Code provides a global ethical framework to guide our conduct based on the organization’s fundamental values, respecting all applicable laws and regulations of the countries where we operate.

3. SCOPE

Who is covered under the Code?

This Code applies to all employees, staff members, Board of Trustees and all those who have an employment and /or contractual relationship with the organization when performing their duties and responsibilities, in their personal conduct inside and outside of the workplace, engaging in any outside employment or activity, and post-employment.

4. ACRONYMS

OMU: Organizational Management Unit

BOT: Board of Trustees

SMT: Senior Management Team

CGIAR: CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources.
PART TWO: OUR FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

1. OUR VALUES

**Integrity:** We are honest, tell the truth, keep promises, admit mistakes, earn trust and always act professionally by being accountable and transparent.

**Sustainability:** We plan responsibly for the long term, and are committed to environmental, social and economic food security, safety and global prosperity.

**Partnership:** We value the diverse voices of our internal and external stakeholders, and seek all forms of engagement, collaboration and teamwork.

**Excellence and Innovation:** We strive for excellence by maintaining high standards of scientific rigor, actively encouraging innovation and creativity, and pursuing our passion for learning and discovery.
Diversity and inclusion: we value and embrace diversity and inclusion through proactive dialogue and inclusive behaviors, promote equity and fairness, avoiding all forms of discrimination, and promote human rights, including in the form of safe and respectful workplaces.

PART THREE: ETHICS IN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

1. Why do we need science and research ethics?

This Code provides guidelines for the responsible practice of science and research. It is an introduction of our ethical principles, which are developed in detail in our Research relevant policies and underlying documents.

2. Living our principles in science and research

Honesty and integrity in research methods: We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal, and professional frameworks, obligations, and standards and our research partners uphold the same.

Objectivity and avoiding bias—conscious and unconscious: We strive to ensure that research is designed, conducted and reported in a transparent way, and without any deviation from the truth.

Critical review of outcomes, including peer review publication: At the Alliance, methodology and findings should be open for discussion, and researchers shall strive to publish their results in high quality peer-reviewed journals to ensure results have been critically reviewed and guarantee we produce good quality research and results.

Openness and transparency of research findings and methods, including publication of all results (positive, adverse or negative): We are committed to ensure widespread diffusion of our research findings accurately and truthfully.

Respect for authorship: plagiarism, attribution, and permission: We seek to define the criteria for attribution of authorship for all research outputs.

Respect for intellectual property: patents, trademarks, copyrights and technology transfer for scientific inventions: We are committed to ensure appropriate referencing and acknowledging sources of intellectual property inputs, research objects and proper recognition of contribution to the research outputs, also in line with the CGIAR Intellectual Assets Management Principles.

Keeping promises: confidentiality and anonymity: We shall protect the privacy of those who voluntary agree to participate in research, in line with all applicable laws and regulations of the countries where we operate.
Research participants and stakeholders protection: Through its Institutional Review Board and supporting policy, the Alliance strives to ensure appropriate evaluation of research applications that involve human participants of research and stakeholders, taking into consideration the potential risk and benefits of the research to subjects, the adequacy of protections against risk, respecting human dignity, privacy, and autonomy.

Protection of the environment and genetic resources: We are committed to the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity and genetic resources to improve environmental conservation, agricultural sustainability and food and nutrition security.

Artificial intelligence and use of “Big Data”: At the Alliance, artificial intelligence and use of “Big Data” shall be used as a research tool that aims to improve people’s quality of life, respecting privacy and confidentiality of research participants and stakeholders.

PART FOUR: INTEGRITY AND TRUST IN OPERATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL CONDUCT

As part of the world’s largest global agricultural innovation network (CGIAR), we are committed to promoting an institutional culture of ethics, integrity and accountability, and thereby enhance the trust in, and the credibility of, the Alliance, both internally, and externally within the context of the CGIAR Ethics Framework.

The Alliance recognizes that the ethical conduct of all those who are covered under this code is fundamental to its success as an organization.

This section is substantially based on the Alliance’s and CGIAR Ethical values. All Alliance staff is expected to read and embrace all the documents developed under the corresponding standards of the countries where we operate.

1. Dignity and respect

We are deeply committed to treating each other with understanding, dignity, and respect. We demonstrate politeness, courtesy in behavior and speech in all our dealings with each other, and general awareness of the rights and concerns of others.

Promoting positive interrelationships and ensuring a peaceable work experience comes first for our organization.

2. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse of authority

The Alliance operates under zero tolerance for any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse of authority. Specific provisions and definitions complying with local regulations in countries where we operate are provided in Annex 1.
Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person’s race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment, bullying or abuse of authority.

Harassment, a form of discrimination, is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited physical, verbal or non-verbal behavior that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended, and that interferes with work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassment may consist of a single or repeated incident. A single incident is considered harassment if it has a negative impact on an individual or the work environment. Although harassment may not always be intended, the impact – not intent – is a key factor.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Examples of prohibited conduct association with harassment includes, but is not limited to slurs, negative stereotyping, racial, ethnic or religious epithets, written or graphic material, offensive jokes, bullying, non-violent threats or insult, belittling, aggression, abuse or molestation whether emotional, verbal, or physical.

At the Alliance, we strive to promote and protect people’s health, well-being, and human rights enabling them to live free from any harm, exploitation, and abuse. The safety and welfare of vulnerable adults and children are of the utmost importance and it is the duty of all our employees to protect them.

3. Legal compliance and Anti-Trafficking in Persons

We are committed to high standards of ethics and integrity and compliance with all applicable global and local laws across our global operations, including the prohibition of actions that would support or advance trafficking in persons.

Trafficking in Persons includes recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.

4. Safety, health, and environmental sustainability

At the Alliance, we are committed to providing our employees with a safe and healthy working environment. We promote sustainability and environmental awareness at all levels of the organization by complying with all
applicable legal environmental requirements as well as our internal policies where specific environmental legislation is non-existent or insufficient.

We ensure our employees are aware of the environmental impact of their work activities and encourage them through regular training to minimize those impacts.

We endorse the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystems through employee awareness programs and stakeholder engagement and we aim for continual improvement of the environmental performance of our activities by reviewing our internal instruments, management systems, objectives and targets, policies and practices.

5. **Conduct outside of work and when on duty travel**

All those who are covered under this Code shall be aware that their conduct and activities outside the workplace, even if unrelated to official duties, can compromise the image and interests of the organization. While recognizing the right of staff to engage in personal activities, national sentiments or their political and religious convictions, staff are not permitted to utilize, or represent their official position or capacity in these activities as these may be in conflict with their employment and may adversely reflect the integrity, independence and impartiality of the organization.

**PART FIVE: TRANSPARENCY OF RESOURCES AND FUNDING**

1. **Avoiding conflicts of interest: Personal**

A conflict of interest is a situation in which staff personal interests interfere or have the potential of interfering with the interests of the Alliance. The way we conduct ourselves in our business dealings influences our reputation and the trust we maintain with stakeholders. By taking proactive steps to prevent conflicts of interest, we send a clear message about upholding the Organization’s integrity.

Anyone covered under this Code is encouraged to discuss any potential personal conflict with his or her supervisor, the Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations Unit, or the Legal Office.

What follows are several areas where conflicts commonly arise;

A. **Gifts, honors, and awards**

Business gifts and entertainment can promote understanding and goodwill provided that these are legal in the operating context and are aligned with the provisions of this Code. As a global organization, we operate in different countries where certain activities are an expression of local practices. We respect cultural norms to
the extent possible under the local laws and regulations by which we are governed, but those activities shall be aligned with the provisions of this Code.

It is permissible to exchange modest gifts with an outside party or entity so long as they are freely given, without coercion, of nominal value below US$50 and not offered to affect our ability to make objective and fair business decisions, but must be disclosed to the corresponding supervisor.

Gifts valued at or over US$50 should be reported to the HR office which will maintain a registry for the purposes of transparency.

B. Outside employment and activities

The Alliance generally supports and approves activities that contribute to professional development and further the Organization’s mission. Paid or unpaid activities may be undertaken provided that the staff member does not use working hours on such tasks, that they do not use office facilities or property and such outside employment and activities shall not adversely affect the employee’s performance with the organization, create a conflict of interests, or conflict with the regular employment schedule of the employee.

Alliance employees seeking to pursue outside employment or engaging in any outside activities, whether paid or not, are required to obtain prior approval from the Human Resources Director.

Employees must take appropriate action to identify, disclose, and avoid potential conflicts of interest with the performance of their official duties.

C. Close personal relationships and avoiding nepotism

What is a close personal relationship?

It is a relation with a family member, or another person staff is close to, which could impair their objectivity when making business decisions.

Employees are required to declare a close personal relationship to their supervisor where there is a real or perceived potential conflict of interest. What follows are several circumstances where a declaration is required:

- Any employee who is involved in staff recruitment must inform his/her supervisor if he/she has a close personal relationship with any of the candidates for appointment. He/she should not be involved in the selection process.
- Any employee who has a close personal relationship with a contractor or supplier where the employee's job allows him/her authority over the contractor or supplier, must declare the relationship to his/her supervisor.
- A manager should declare, to the head of Department/Unit, a close personal relationship with any employee whom he/she supervises (directly or indirectly).
- Any employee who is involved in a close personal relationship with a colleague, contractor or supplier must not allow that relationship to influence his/her conduct at work in a way that could be, or be perceived to be, detrimental to the interests of the Organization or to other employees.

Spouses, recognized partners and other family members may be appointed as Alliance employees if certain conditions are met in which case the guidelines provided in our Human Resources relevant policies and underlying documents need to be followed.

While it is discouraged to enter into romantic relationships in the workplace, relationships with a subordinate or someone in his/he reporting line, or where it would be difficult to maintain professionalism and objectivity must be reported to the staff member’s supervisor or the Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations unit for follow up actions to ensure a safe and appropriate workplace climate.

**What is nepotism in business?**

Nepotism in business is the act of receiving or offering opportunities based on a close personal relationship. The Alliance is committed to handling nepotism in business through focusing on creating an institutional culture that discourages unfair treatment.

**D. Political activity and engagement**

Any staff member who becomes a candidate for public office of a governmental character shall immediately disclose such information to the Human Resources Director.

**E. Post-employment obligations and restrictions**

Whether staff resign, retire, or are involuntarily terminated, they remain under the obligations of confidentiality of the information that came to their knowledge through their work at the Alliance.

2. **Avoiding conflicts of interest: Finances and relationships**

**A. Disclosures and declarations**

The Alliance is committed to maintain and enhance public trust in the integrity of the organization by managing and mitigating the risk of personal conflict of interest. Staff must disclose any outside financial interest that could potentially compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, their professional judgment in any business concern. It is the responsibility of every staff member to be aware of our organization’s policies on financial disclosure and to comply with all required training and reporting.

3. **Stewardship**
The Alliance funds are received from funders for specific objectives and purposes and staff must not misuse the Alliance funds. Staff is expected to demonstrate respect, tolerance and professional behavior towards the funders. Bear in mind that staff behavior affects our international credibility and reputation and influences the willingness of funders to continue supporting our efforts.

We place emphasis on research and aim to conduct rigorous monitoring and evaluation in order to provide clear and transparent accountability for the funders.

Efficiency should always be considered in any resource management activity, and the value added through the effective and appropriate use of resources in meeting priorities should be of high concern.

4. Obeying the law of host countries, enjoying privileges and immunities

We have great responsibilities in any country where we may do business. We are required to know and comply with the laws, regulations, and customs of each host country and community where we operate.

The privileges and immunities that staff members enjoy are conferred upon them solely in the interest of the organization. They do not exempt staff from observing local laws, nor do they provide an excuse for ignoring private legal or financial obligations. Staff members shall not abuse their privileges and immunities.

In any case, where immunities are invoked, the staff member shall immediately report the matter to the Director General, who will decide whether or not the immunity should be lifted.

PART SIX: PROTECTING ASSETS AND RESOURCES

While working with the Alliance, staff are responsible for the appropriate use and protection of the Organization’s assets and resources. Staff are expected to use Alliance resources for the benefit of the Organization and the public we serve, and to prevent waste or misuse.

Our assets include, but are not limited to, money, physical items, time, information and technology and intellectual assets.

1. Preventing fraud, waste, abuse and corruption.

The Alliance has zero tolerance toward fraudulent dishonest and corrupt practices. All those who are covered under this Code shall be aware that their conduct and activities must be performed fairly, and honestly with the highest standards of integrity. The Organization’s internal controls, operating procedures and training initiatives are intended to prevent, detect, report, minimize, and deal with improper activities and misuse of the Organization’s resources.

We have a duty to report any fraudulent activity that could potentially compromise or have the appearance of compromising the Organization resources.
We shall comply with the Alliance Policies, codes and applicable legislation where we operate and are responsible for the good stewardship of the Organization resources. For additional information, please refer to the Alliance Fraud Policy.

2. **Accuracy of books and records**

Each of us must ensure that all business records are retained in accordance with the law and the organization records management policies.

Staff must prepare and deal with all records truthfully, and sign or enter records only to the extent staff know they are correct and have authorization to do it. Do not damage, delete, conceal or create false or misleading records of the Organization.

3. **Protecting confidentiality**

We shall respect and protect confidential information and abide by all laws governing the possession, management, use and storage of such information. Confidential information should only be released when it is legally permitted or required. We shall not use confidential work information for personal gain.

We shall be certain to code information confidential or proprietary as warranted in order to protect it from intentional or inadvertent disclosure.

4. **Risk management**

We are committed to identify, manage, and treat all risks through the Organization, encourage proactive management and better-informed strategic decision-making, and effectively allocate and use resources for risk treatment following the provisions of the Risk Management Policy.

We have an obligation to mitigate risks by reporting concerns and by following control and other mandated steps to lessen the Organization’s exposure to the risks.

5. **Audit and examination**

The Alliance is committed to ensuring that all processes and transactions within the organization are represented fairly and accurately. Audits help us identify opportunities for improvement and thus improve our practices, therefore staff is expected to cooperate fully, openly and honestly with internal and external auditors.

6. **Procurement integrity**
The Alliance bids fairly and ethically on potential work and we ensure that all statements, communications, and representations to potential customers are accurate and truthful. When contracts are awarded, we must comply with all the requirements following the Alliance Procurement Policy.

7. Use of technology

The Alliance technologies are intended for official business purposes. The organization is entitled the right to monitor the information contained in these systems.

Any improper use or abuse is prohibited. Staff must help maintain the security of the Organization’s technology and systems, as well as its records and other information.

8. Social media, digital platforms, publications and public speaking

Staff must adhere to the highest ethical standards when participating in social media, digital platforms, publications, and public speaking about their professional services, credentials, and expertise or work products. Position titles should only be used in work related communications and for official work-related purposes. This precludes the use of official position titles for non-work-related purposes such as in publications and journal articles.

If posting on social media, sharing content on digital platforms, speaking to the media or publishing as part of your duties, this should be done using official accounts and platforms. Your personal point of view is a position that is not expressly supported, published or endorsed by the Organization. In these cases, it should be clearly mentioned that a personal opinion is being shared including that it does not represent the opinion of the Organization.

PART SEVEN: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS

1. Roles and responsibilities

A. System Organization

- Actively embracing “tone from the top” leadership
- Approving, and revising in consultation with CGIAR System stakeholders from time to time, this Code, a set of Codes of Conduct, and CGIAR Policies on specific ethics-related topics.
- Acting in accordance with CGIAR’s core Ethical Values and promoting their incorporation into decision-making throughout the CGIAR System.
B. Research Centers

- Actively embracing “tone from the top” leadership.
- Acting in accordance with CGIAR’s Core Ethical Values and promoting their incorporation into decision-making.
- Approving, and revising in consultation with CGIAR System stakeholder, changes to this code.
- Providing inputs into CGIAR System expectations regarding ethical standards.

C. Governance Bodies and Governance Officials

- Governance body activities have oversight of entity constitutions and the Alliance Board Manual.
- Overseeing effective notification, risk evaluation, and referral of specific ethical concerns or reports to support a common ethical escalation of complaints and or concerns with appropriate controls.
- Setting and sustaining a strategic ethics governance agenda that is in line with CGIAR Core Ethical Values.
- Committing to periodic ethics training and knowledge-sharing on best practices.
- Holding itself and management accountable for supporting ethical conduct at the individual and institutional levels.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are made available to support the ethics function within the CGIAR entity.

This function is allocated to the Board of Trustees.

D. Leadership

- Serving as role models, emphasizing the importance of ethical conduct as a core operational and strategic value.
- Promoting the implementation of the Code of Ethics and conduct and its various components.
- Ensuring adequate budgetary and human resources to ensure the successful implementation of this code of ethics and conduct and its various components at each organizational level.
- Reinforcing an ethical organizational culture and adopting the best practical in ethical leadership.
- Regularly speaking about the ethical implications of their agenda and sharing with subordinates their decision-making about tough ethical choices.
- Taking prompt action on incidents of unethical behavior and misconduct, including consultation and advice with the Board of Trustees on the imposition of significant disciplinary action.

This function is allocated to the Senior Management Team.

E. Managers

- Managers are expected to set an example of a high standard of professional behavior and personal conduct by modeling appropriate behavior.
- To serve requests for investigating behavior contrary to what is defined in the code of Ethics and Conduct.
- Be alert in order to promptly detect behavior that runs counter to the principles set in the code of Ethics and Conduct and jointly with HR, take appropriate steps to deal with it and ensure corrective action is taken.
- Advise in case of consultations or doubts or when orientation on ethic-related issues is required in relation to the behavior that the Alliance personnel or the institution itself should abide by.
- Ensures maximum awareness of the Code of ethics and conduct to all staff.
- Continuously review the relevance of the Code of Ethics and conduct and present pertinent recommendations to the office of the HR Director.

F. Staff Members, Consultants, Interns and Contractual Workers

The Alliance provides multiple mechanisms to support employees with taking action if they feel they are being subjected to subjected to harassment, intimidation, or discrimination regardless of who the alleged offender is. These include, reporting it to the supervisor, someone from the Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations Unit and Alliance Whistleblower Hotline.

Directors, Managers, and Supervisors have a key role to play in this effort by ensuring that any incident of unacceptable behavior is promptly dealt with and that corrective action is taken.

The Alliance shall continue its practice of promptly investigating concerns regarding undesirable behavior and, where appropriate, take adequate corrective action.

2. Making Ethical decisions

A. Ethical Decision-Making Model

It is not always easy to determine the best course of action in every situation. In those circumstances, staff can use the model below as a guide in making ethical decisions.

Get insights

Staff shall become familiar with the Alliance’s Code of Ethics and Conduct. Staff should consider these questions: Are there specific rules and guidelines for this situation? Does it comply?

Find out

Staff are expected to pay attention and learn to recognize situations that may involve their own or someone else’s improper conduct. Staff should consider these questions: what are the relevant facts? Who may be affected by this decision?
Seek advice

Staff shall confer with supervisors, the Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations Unit, or the Legal Office. Staff should consider this question: do I need help deciding what to do?

Take action

Staff shall find the courage to take the right action.

B. Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations Unit

The Alliance Policy and Employee Relations Unit is a confidential, impartial, and professional resource for all personnel around the globe. This office promotes an institutional culture of ethics, integrity, accountability, and mutual respect.

This Unit offers the following services:

1. Providing confidential ethics advice and guidance.
2. Promoting ethics awareness, and training initiatives on ethics, values, and standards.
3. Providing protection against retaliation.

PART EIGHT: OBLIGATIONS

1. What must employees do?

Alliance employees shall know and comply with the Organization policies and regulatory requirements that affect their job responsibilities. They shall be committed to raising any concern about potential ethics violations and are expected to cooperate in any investigation related to an ethics concern.

2. What must leaders do?

Alliance leaders are responsible for creating a culture of prevention, detection, and response to compliance issues in which employees feel comfortable raising concerns.

3. Speak up culture

We encourage employees to raise questions or concerns. We listen to them carefully and offer guidance when they need help, including identifying available resources for reporting. Speak up if someone is breaking our Code, regardless of the person’s position in the organization.
Employees must be encouraged to make reports in good faith of wrongdoing without fear of retaliation, relying on our detailed Whistleblowing policy, which aims to provide an avenue for employees to raise concerns and reassurance that they will be protected from reprisals or victimization for whistleblowing.

We also provide an anonymous ethics and compliance whistleblower line for all staff of the Alliance. Specific information regarding such reporting mechanism is provided in Annex 2.

PART NINE: ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Accountability of non-compliance with the code

Any staff found to have violated this Code and other underlying documents and local laws may be subjected to discipline up to dismissal or termination of their contract, or, depending on the violation, even referral to local authorities for possible criminal prosecution.

2. Protection against retaliation

The Code, our policies and other applicable laws and regulations prohibit retaliation against anyone who reports a concern or who cooperates in an ethics investigation.

We encourage staff to come forward, speak up and raise any breach of the Organization’s regulations and we support an open environment where this reporting is viewed as a positive action because they are protecting the best interests of the Organization.

We expect our leaders to support employees who come forward to discuss questions or concerns about business conduct.

3. No false accusations

We will take great care to protect persons from false accusations. Employees who knowingly submit a false report will be subject to disciplinary action.

PART TEN: OTHER RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

1. Offices

Human Resources Policy and Employee Relations Unit
Address
Viale Tre Denari, 472, 00054 Maccarese-Stazione RM
Email
AllianceEmployeeRelations@cgiar.org

Legal Office
Address
The Americas Hub
Km 17, Recta Cali-Palmira CP 763537
Email
AllianceLegalOffice@cgiar.org

CGIAR Ethics & Integrity Office
Address
CGIAR System Management Office
1000, Avenue Agropolis
F-34394 Montpellier cedex 5
France
Email
ethics@cgiar.org

PART ELEVEN: RELATED POLICIES/REFERENCE FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Research Ethics Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Discipline Code Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Data Protection Policy

PART TWELVE: POLICY APPROVAL AND REVIEW

This Code of ethics and conduct shall be approved by the Alliance Board of Trustees and will be managed and reviewed by Human Resources. The effective date of this revised Code is September 21, 2020. This code supersedes previous policies regarding this subject matter, and previous policies are considered rescinded.

VERSION CONTROL

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