



Queensland: an age-friendly community

Age friendly domains

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Queensland: an age-friendly community

The Queensland Government is committed to creating an age-friendly state where people of all ages can actively participate in community life. The following information has been developed to support the Advancing Queensland: an age-friendly community grants program in 2017–18.

Achieving an age-friendly Queensland

Our vision is for Queenslanders to live in age-friendly communities that allow people, regardless of their age, to stay active and connected, and contribute economically, socially and culturally.

Detailed information on the *Queensland: an age-friendly community* strategic direction, action plan and implementation schedule are available at www.qld.gov.au/agefriendlycommunity.

What is an age-friendly community?

An age-friendly community is one where older people are valued, respected and actively supported to participate in their community. They can stay in touch with people they care about and find the services and support they need. Age-friendly communities are more liveable for everyone.

Why age-friendly?

An age-friendly community approach helps government, community and businesses appreciate the value of older people and prepare to meet the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population. Doing this ensures:

- older people are supported in their pursuit of good health and active ageing, and remain independent and involved in their communities
- people of all ages and abilities benefit from safer, accessible buildings and streets, better access to local businesses and facilities, and more green spaces with shelter
- businesses benefit from the increased support and spending power of older customers, and are better able to support older workers
- communities benefit from the increased participation of older adults.

Age-friendly domains

The World Health Organization developed an age-friendly Cities model in 2007 and more recently an age-friendly world model.

These models are based on eight domains that assess a community's age-friendliness, which are:

-  **transportation**
-  **outdoor spaces and building**
-  **housing**
-  **respect and social inclusion**
-  **social participation**
-  **communication and information**
-  **civic participation and employment opportunities**
-  **community support and health services.**

Queensland has developed goals for each of the eight domains. These goals are outlined in this document along with an explanation of each domain, and examples of age-friendly initiatives from Australia and around the world.

Advancing Queensland: an age friendly community grants program

From 2017–18, \$1 million per annum over three years will be available to seed fund community projects to develop, implement and promote innovative age-friendly projects.

Each year, the age-friendly community grants program will focus on two to three age-friendly domains.

For more information about the grants and how to apply visit

www.qld.gov.au/agefriendlycommunity.



Outdoor spaces and buildings

Goal: Seniors live in an environment that includes open spaces, buildings, shaded areas and walkways that are safe and easy to navigate.

The physical structures and outdoor spaces of a community can significantly impact an older person's ability to engage safely in their community, and in turn, their quality of life.

Queensland's hot climate and the impact of the sun's ultraviolet rays can be harmful. Therefore, in addition to using hats, sunglasses and sunscreen, it is important that shading be provided to outdoor spaces such as parks, malls and recreation areas. Shading could include trees or built structures in a lighter colour to reflect the heat.¹

Having access to clean, safe, accessible and pleasant environments that are free from crime, enables older people to remain active and mobile within their local community, contributing to independence, sense of belonging and connection to place.

Proposed planning and upgrades to buildings, infrastructure and community spaces should consider the impact, accessibility and age-friendliness of physical space prior to development.

Sufficient outdoor lighting in public places, ample outdoor seating and public toilets, well-signed buildings and wheelchair-accessible footpaths are just some examples of age-friendly planning.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings²:

- ✓ Public areas are clean and pleasant.
- ✓ There are sufficient green spaces and outdoor seating which are well-maintained and safe.
- ✓ Footpaths are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians.
- ✓ Footpaths are non-slip and wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs at road level.
- ✓ Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability, with non-slip markings, visual and audio cues and adequate crossing times.
- ✓ Street crossings allow for adequate crossing times.
- ✓ Drivers give way to pedestrians at intersections and pedestrian crossings.
- ✓ Cycle paths are separate from footpaths and other walkways.
- ✓ Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police presence and community education.
- ✓ Services are situated together and are accessible.
- ✓ Special customer service arrangements are provided, such as separate queues or service counters for older people.
- ✓ Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs and non-slip floors.
- ✓ There are sufficient indoor and outdoor public toilets that are clean, well-maintained and accessible.

Examples of existing age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings initiatives:

- Neighbourhood and community centres where all members of the community can attend arts classes, exercise classes, access information and receive referrals to support services.
- Parks and outdoor spaces that have sufficient seating and provide shade for protection from the elements.
- Dedicated parking spaces for older people at shopping centres and venues.
- Traffic lights at pedestrian crossings that allow sufficient time for people to cross the road.
- Businesses with seating available for patrons.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Sunshine Coast Council – Mooloolaba Esplanade

The Sunshine Coast Council has contributed to age-friendly spaces with the enhancement of The Esplanade at Mooloolaba. Ample seating and chairs are located in close proximity to the shops and restaurants, as well as along the walking paths by the sea.³

Australian Institute of Environmental Health – Creating Shade in Public Facilities

Guidelines have been developed to assist local government with the planning process for new public facilities and when upgrading existing public facilities.⁴





Transport

Goal: Seniors can get out and about, using a range of affordable, user-friendly transport services.

Responses to a recent community survey to determine how Queensland could become more age-friendly highlighted transport as the number one issue affecting older Queenslanders. The World Health Organization also identifies accessible, affordable and reliable transport services as a key element influencing active ageing.

The ability of older Queenslanders to move around their communities using different modes of transport is fundamental to their quality of life and wellbeing, including: accessing services, shopping, connecting with family and friends, and participating in community activities and events. The use of cars, public transport, community transport and other transport services is an important part of daily life for seniors.

Proposed planning and upgrades to transport infrastructure, policies and services should consider the impact, accessibility and age-friendliness of transportation services prior to implementation.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly transport:

- ✓ Public transport costs are clearly displayed and affordable.
- ✓ Public transport is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- ✓ All city areas and services are accessible by public transport with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.
- ✓ Vehicles are clean, well maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- ✓ Specialised transport is available for people with a disability.
- ✓ Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- ✓ Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked with adequate seating and shelter.
- ✓ Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- ✓ A voluntary transport service is available where public transport is too limited.
- ✓ Taxis are accessible and affordable and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- ✓ Roads are well-maintained with covered drains and good lighting.
- ✓ Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- ✓ Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
- ✓ Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- ✓ Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- ✓ There are sufficient parking and drop-off areas that are safe and conveniently located.
- ✓ Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with disabilities are available and respected.

Examples of existing age-friendly **transport** initiatives:

- Neighbourhoods are serviced by public or community based transport services with a range of options for people who are frail or with disability.
- A central hub area could be identified where seniors can meet and be transported to various appointments, shopping centres and activities.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Brisbane City Council – Bus driver training

Bus drivers are required to contact Bus Control to advise if a passenger who is frail or uses a wheelchair requires a ramp so they are given priority when their bus arrives.

Safe Routes to Age in Place

This initiative in Miami-Dade County, Florida, was developed in collaboration with multiple levels of government and community to plan for an ageing population and create a supportive community for older adults. The program aims to foster accessible, safe, comfortable, and active transportation (e.g. walking, biking, and mass transit) options for adults of all ages and abilities.⁵

City of Sausalito – Californian Call a Ride for Sausalito Seniors

A partnership between a local council and government, this volunteer driver program offers free door to door rides to older adults in a driver-owned passenger car.⁶

Brisbane City Council – Council Cabs

The Council Cabs service coordinates a subsidised ride-sharing service for older or mobility impaired residents who have difficulty traveling to their local shops. The service enables older people to move freely around their local area, maintain independence, relationships, and an active lifestyle, and helps to reduce instances of social isolation.⁷

Gold Coast City Council – Free transport for seniors

The Gold Coast City Council provides free transport on Surfside buses for seniors who travel between 8:30am and 3:30pm Monday to Friday.

RACQ – Years Ahead program

The Years Ahead program assists older Queenslanders to become safer drivers. The 45 minute presentation is given to community groups and covers changes in rules, medical considerations and alternative transport options.⁸





Housing

Goal: Seniors' housing options are affordable, accessible and close to transport and community services.

Many older Queenslanders want to continue to live in their communities as they get older, that is, to age in place. The ability to age in place depends on many factors including: access to appropriate housing, transport, services and facilities, and connection to family, friends and the local community.

Access to housing that meets the needs of older people is important. This includes the affordability, planning and design of housing, which is suitable for older people and people with disability.

The ability to live at home, and being supported to engage within their home community is an important aspect to ageing comfortably, contributing to a sense of belonging, ageing in place and maintaining independence.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly housing:

- ✓ Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- ✓ Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- ✓ Housing is well built and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- ✓ Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- ✓ Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- ✓ Social and rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- ✓ Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and people with disability, with appropriate services, is provided locally.

Examples of existing age-friendly **housing** initiatives:

- A range of housing options that are close to shops, recreational areas, medical centres and public transport is available for older people.
- New housing is designed to be adaptable for people with special needs, such as easy access into the dwelling that includes a ramp and sufficient space for wheelchair access.
- Housing modifications are taken into consideration for people to age in place.
- Alert systems are available for seniors living in their homes to alert a friend or relative in the event of an emergency.
- Affordable or free house maintenance is available for seniors.
- Home and contents insurance is affordable for seniors.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Queensland Community Care Network – Homeshare

The Homeshare program is in its initial stages in Queensland, following great success in the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and other parts of Australia.

The program matches socially isolated older homeowners requiring assistance to remain living independently in their own home, with people seeking affordable or subsidised housing, such as university students. In exchange for providing support with pre-determined tasks and responsibilities, including household chores, companionship and a sense of security, the homesharer receives rent-free or low-rent accommodation.⁹





Social participation

Goal: Seniors are supported to be active in their community, doing the things they enjoy.

A vital part of ageing well is to be active and connected to others. It is important that seniors have opportunities to be active and engaged in their community, participating in a range of affordable and accessible events and activities.

One of the key challenges for older people is overcoming social isolation and loneliness to improve wellbeing and quality of life. There are strong links between wellbeing, social connection and transport options — older people are not able to access opportunities for participation and connection to other people if they are not able to travel to them.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly social participation:

- ✓ Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- ✓ Events are held at times that are convenient for older people.
- ✓ Activities and events can be attended alone or with a companion.
- ✓ Activities and attractions are affordable or at a reduced price, with no hidden or additional participation costs.
- ✓ Good information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people.
- ✓ A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- ✓ Events that include older people are held in various local community spots, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- ✓ There is a consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.
- ✓ Older people receive information and communication about what social groups and activities are available.
- ✓ More age appropriate and affordable events and programs are available.
- ✓ Older people are encouraged to provide input to event planning that brings together people of all ages at community events and activities.

Examples of existing age-friendly **social participation** initiatives:

- Sporting clubs offer a range of recreational activities to people of all ages.
- Community groups engage with a variety of people when planning events in their community to ensure that the event is inclusive.
- Events include parking and transport and accessibility options that are available to reach their venue.
- Venues offer a concessions to pensioners and carers.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Queensland Seniors Week

Queensland Seniors Week is held annually in August and recognises the contribution of older Queenslanders in our communities. Each year there are hundreds of intergenerational celebrations including expos, outings, forums and family fun days held across the state.¹⁰

New York City – Senior-only swim hours

The senior-only swim hours began at the Thomas Jefferson pool, New York City and offers adults a stress-free, quieter time to socialise, swim, stretch, and enjoy the benefits of water. Due to the program's high turnout, the program has expanded to 15 pools with water aerobics instructors at all participating pools.¹¹





Respect and social inclusion

Goal: Seniors from all backgrounds are valued and appreciated, and no one is excluded based on race, geography, culture, language, gender, sexuality, ability or socio-economic status.

Respect and feelings of social inclusion often have an impact on an older person's health and wellbeing and their levels of social, civic and economic participation. In particular, portrayals of older people in the media and changing public perceptions of older people contribute to feelings of social inclusion, and feelings of safety and security within their community.

Policies, programs and services should ensure seniors from all backgrounds feel valued and appreciated regardless of race, geography, culture, language, gender, sexuality, ability or socioeconomic status.

Older people should be included in community projects and activities, and recognised for their valuable services and contributions.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly respect and social inclusion:

- ✓ Older people are regularly consulted by government, community services and the private sector on how to serve them better.
- ✓ Services and products to suit varying needs and preferences are provided by government and the private sector.
- ✓ Service staff are courteous and helpful.
- ✓ Older people are visible in the media and depicted positively and without stereotyping.
- ✓ Older people are specifically included in community activities for "families".
- ✓ Community activities and events attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.
- ✓ Schools provide opportunities to learn about ageing and older people and involve older people in school activities.
- ✓ Older people are recognised by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.
- ✓ Older people who may be at risk of experiencing social isolation have good access to government, community services and the private sector services.

Examples of existing age-friendly **respect and social inclusion** initiatives:

- Older people are portrayed by the media in a positive light and active contributors to society.
- Computer literacy classes for older Queenslanders enabling them to find the services they require, including grocery shopping, finding support services and keeping in touch with family and friends through social media and video calls.
- Holding intergenerational events to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contribute to building more cohesive communities.
- Age-friendly activities or events to support inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse grandparents in the school life of their grandchildren.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Education Queensland – Elders in Schools

Elders in Schools involves cooperative arrangements between schools and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders who visit schools and provide guidance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. One example is the Bloomfield River State School, where Elders work with teachers and teacher-aides to expose children to the local Kuku Yalanji culture, language and stories. ¹²

Volunteering Queensland – Lifetime Contribution to Volunteering Award

Recognition of the contribution of older people is important. Launched in 2016, Volunteering Queensland's Lifetime Contribution to Volunteering Award recognises exemplary life-long contribution to volunteering. ¹³

Age-friendly Belfast

Age-friendly Belfast was developed as a result of a positive relationship between the City Council Youth Forum, Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, Policing and Community Safety Partnership and Linking Generations Northern Ireland. The resource assists people who work or volunteer with older and younger people's services to actively engage in their communities, promote participation and a sense of belonging. ¹⁴

Age-Friendly Basque Country

The Age-Friendly Basque Country initiative developed a legacy program consisting of 12 documentaries of the experiences of older people in Basque Country. They are available online and will be shared in schools, cultural centres, museums, libraries and community centres. The program aims to capture and share the cultural heritage of the older people, overcome ageism, change the image of the elderly and promote empowerment. ¹⁵



Civic participation and employment

Goal: Seniors participate in employment, training, lifelong learning and volunteering opportunities and inform government policies.

Many older people want to be able to keep working, learning, building their skills and volunteering. Seniors also want to be involved in decision-making processes, and to inform and influence government planning and policies.

Lifelong learning enables seniors to update skills and knowledge, and continue to be involved in the issues that are important to them. Seniors also provide a significant contribution as volunteers across Queensland each year.

Evidence shows that many older people face discrimination at work and in seeking new employment opportunities. New flexible ways of working will be required to support older people's workforce participation.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly civic participation and employment:

- ✓ A range of flexible options for older volunteers is available, with training, recognition, guidance and compensation for personal costs.
- ✓ The qualities of older employees are well-promoted.
- ✓ A range of flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older people to work is promoted.
- ✓ Discrimination on the basis of age alone is forbidden in the hiring, retention, promotion and training of employees.
- ✓ Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of people with disability.
- ✓ Self-employment options for older people are promoted and supported.
- ✓ Training in post-retirement options is provided for older workers.
- ✓ Decision-making bodies in public, private and the community sectors encourage and facilitate membership of older people.

Examples of existing age-friendly **civic participation and employment** initiatives:

- Boards, advisory groups and committees include a mix of members including older people.
- Volunteer drivers are compensated for petrol expenses when using their own vehicle.
- Older volunteers can share their knowledge by connecting with a community organisation to read homework to young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Volunteering Queensland

Volunteering is a great way to connect with your community in an area that interests you. It provides many benefits including health and wellbeing. Volunteering Queensland connects volunteers with a range of volunteering opportunities. They also have accredited training available for volunteers and volunteer managers.¹⁶

Council on the Ageing Queensland – Peer education program

Peer educators are seniors who volunteer their time and are trained to talk with small community groups in a jargon-free and friendly environment. The program provides seniors groups with one-hour sessions on information that is accurate, independent and relevant for older Queenslanders.¹⁷





Communication and information

Goal: Seniors access information they need in a variety of formats to stay informed and connected with their communities, families and friends.

Queensland seniors are becoming increasingly technologically savvy; however, internet access can be an issue for many seniors for a range of reasons, including a lack of access to a computer or electronic device, costs involved in owning a computer, and skills required to use the technology.

Access to information ensures older people are aware of services, activities and programs available to them. It is important to build the capability of older people to use online communication, as well as provide information in a range of accessible and user-friendly formats.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly civic communication and information:

- ✓ A basic, effective communication system reaches community residents of all ages.
- ✓ Regular and widespread distribution of information is assured and a coordinated centralised access is provided.
- ✓ Regular information and broadcasts of interest to older people are offered.
- ✓ Verbal communication accessible to older people is promoted.
- ✓ People at risk of social isolation get one-to-one information from trusted individuals or organisations.
- ✓ Public and private sector and community organisations provide friendly, personalised service on request.
- ✓ Printed information including official forms, television captions and text on visual displays has large lettering and the main ideas are shown by clear headings and bold-face type.
- ✓ Print and verbal communication uses simple, familiar words in short, straight-forward sentences.
- ✓ Automated telephone services give instructions slowly and clearly and tell callers how to repeat the message at any time.
- ✓ Electronic equipment, such as mobile phones, radios, televisions and bank and ticket machines, has large buttons and large lettering.
- ✓ There is a wide public access to computers and the internet at no minimal charge in public places such as libraries, government offices and community centres.

Examples of existing age-friendly **communication and information** initiatives:

- Information and services are offered in a range of formats, such as websites, via email and in newsletters.
- Packaging can be difficult to read in supermarkets, pharmacies and department stores due to the small fonts used. Germany’s supermarkets have magnifying lenses on their trolleys and shelves so people can read the labels more clearly and the lighting is brighter.
- Websites are easy to navigate with zoom control and text resize features.

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Kingston East Neighbourhood Group Inc. – Seniors Computer Club

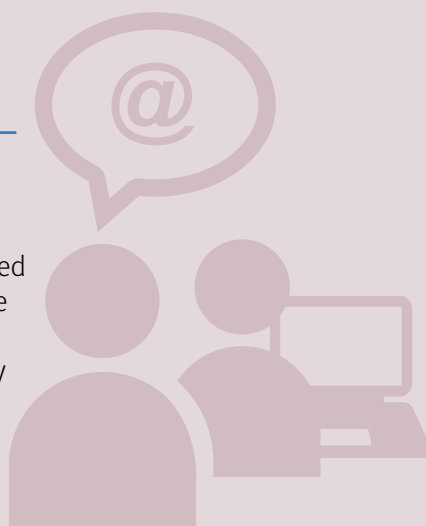
The Kingston East Neighbourhood Group delivers a weekly computer club for seniors as part of the Older Persons Action Program. The club offers computer skills training for people with all levels of computer competence. While the classes are a great opportunity for older people to learn about computers, they also contribute to lifelong learning, and increase social interaction — both in-person and online. ¹⁸

Welcome to Buderim

The Buderim community welcomes new residents every six weeks with a ‘Welcome to Buderim’ event. New residents receive a welcome kit that includes information on local clubs and activities, and encourages active involvement in their new community. ¹⁹

Redland District Committee on the Ageing – Computer tuition for seniors

A great example of communities coming together. The Redland District Committee on the Ageing has partnered with nine other community-focussed organisations and the Redland City Council to deliver computer one-on-one tuition for seniors. This is part of the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Outreach initiative. ²⁰





Community support and health services

Goal: Seniors are helped to stay healthy, active and independent through community support and health services, including services responding to elder abuse, fraud or exploitation.

Mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing has a large impact on active ageing and a person's ability to age in place. Access to health services and community support systems needs to be consistent across Queensland, to enable seniors to stay healthy, active and independent.

Community support, health services, policies and programs, including services responding to elder abuse, fraud and exploitation need to be consistent and accessible.

The World Health Organization advises the following features contribute to age-friendly community support and health services:

- ✓ An adequate range of health and community support services is offered for promoting, maintaining and restoring health.
- ✓ Home care services include health and personal care and housekeeping.
- ✓ Health and social services are conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport.
- ✓ Residential care facilities and designated older people's housing are located close to services and the rest of the community.
- ✓ Health and community service facilities are safely constructed and fully accessible.
- ✓ Clear and accessible information is provided about health and social services for older people.
- ✓ Delivery of services is coordinated and administratively simple.
- ✓ All staff who provide services for older people are respectful, helpful and trained.
- ✓ Economic barriers that hinder access to health and community support services are minimised.
- ✓ People of all ages are encouraged and supported to volunteer.
- ✓ There are sufficient and accessible burial sites.
- ✓ Emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.

Examples of existing age-friendly **community support and health services** initiatives:

- Better training for community and health staff of the needs of the elderly.
- Greater education on healthy living including the need to exercise, how to eat well and appropriate use of medication.
- Promotion of the community and health care services available to the elderly.
- Community education programs promoting the value of older people (e.g. address ageism, respect and acceptance).
- Access to affordable transport for seniors to get to and from their medical appointments

Existing age-friendly initiatives

Queensland Men's Shed Association – Men's sheds

Men's sheds aim to create an environment where men feel comfortable talking about their emotional, social and physical wellbeing. The spaces provide men an opportunity to engage in productive, creative projects, while developing intergenerational friendships, working relationships and respectful, empathetic connections. ²¹

Heart Foundation – Heart Foundation Walking program

Heart Foundation Walking is the largest free walking network in Australia, where groups of people can come together to meet new friends and walk in their neighbourhood. The groups support active ageing and social and civic engagement. ²²

Queensland Government – Non-emergency medical transport

The Queensland Government provides free transport services for eligible Queenslanders requiring non-emergency transport to medical appointments. Services such as this are necessary, particularly for older people and those with disability who may have difficulty commuting to regular appointments. ²³

Age-friendly Ireland – Message in a Bottle program

The Message in a Bottle program uses a specially designed plastic bottle that includes a personal information form which is placed in the fridge. Older people place a sticker in the entrance of their home to indicate the bottle is in use, allowing emergency teams to easily access critical information in the case of an emergency. ²⁴



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