

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

June 2025

INTERNATIONAL DATA SPACES E. V. (IDSA)
DIGITAL HUB MANAGEMENT GMBH (DHM)
OPEN LOGISTICS FOUNDATION (OLF)

www.internationaldataspaces.org | www.digitalhub.eu | www.openlogisticsfoundation.org

INTERNATIONAL DATA
SPACES ASSOCIATION



DIGITAL HUB
MANAGEMENT



open logistics
foundation

Foreword

Dear interested parties,

Gender equality remains a central concern in our society. Much has been done in recent decades to reduce gender-specific disadvantages. For example, there are now binding requirements for business and the public sector to increase the proportion of women further significantly in management positions. The framework conditions have also improved so that young fathers can take parental leave and family work is distributed equally. Nevertheless, gender equality is still not fully achieved, as studies during the COVID-19 pandemic have shown regarding the unequal distribution of family care and child-rearing responsibilities.

The discussion surrounding the recognition of a third gender marks another step toward a more open and inclusive society. In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that gender in a social context is not limited to female and male. The amendment of the German Personal Status Act in 2018, which introduced the gender designation “diverse,” has broadened the debate and prompted greater attention to gender-sensitive language that does not favor or disadvantage any gender.

International Data Spaces e. V. (IDSA), the Open Logistics Foundation (OLF), and their associated company, Digital Hub Management GmbH (DHM), acknowledge their responsibility in this area. The growing participation in funding projects of the European Commission and German ministries has been an additional catalyst to intensify our efforts toward gender equality.

The current Gender Equality Plan was developed by a dedicated working group comprising colleagues from IDSA, OLF, and DHM. The group addressed a broad spectrum of gender-related topics, resulting in both the Equality Plan and a guideline for gender-sensitive language. Gender aspects within research projects were also examined.

Initial results were discussed in a workshop with all employees. It became clear that there is a high level of acceptance among employees for the relevance of gender equality strategies, the integration of gender-sensitive aspects into research work and the use of gender-sensitive language.

With this plan, IDSA, OLF, and DHM set goals and outline measures for the coming years. The association, foundation and the GmbH commit to evaluating the progress made at regular intervals. The implementation of the Equality Plan is the responsibility of all employees, and particularly the managers.

This Gender Equality Plan applies to International Data Spaces e. V., the Open Logistics Foundation, and the associated company Digital Hub Management GmbH.

1. Preamble

International Data Spaces e. V. (IDSA) is a non-profit association under German law. The registered office and the operational management are in Dortmund.

Open Logistics Foundation (OLF) is a non-profit foundation under German law. The registered office and the operational management are in Dortmund.

Digital Hub Management GmbH (DHM) is a non-profit limited liability company under German law. The registered office of the company and the operational management are in Dortmund.

Gender equality is one of the essential values of our organization and our work. It is a prerequisite and driver for sustainable development and the future viability of our society, both nationally and internationally. Gender-differentiated action and consistent advocacy for the elimination of existing gender-specific disadvantages, the realization of equal opportunities and rights for all people regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and thus the targeted promotion of gender equality are quality characteristics of IDSA, OLF, and DHM.

Gender equality is a human right whose implementation is not a matter of course or a foregone conclusion but requires a conscious approach to the transformation of gender relations and, above all, the active commitment of all of us. This is what Article 3 of the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany stands for, to which we feel deeply committed.

1. All people are equal before the law.
2. Men and women shall have equal rights. The state shall promote the actual implementation of equal rights for women and men and shall work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages.
3. No one shall be discriminated against or given preferential treatment because of sex, descent, race, language, nationality and origin, creed, religious or political views. No one may be disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

Gender equality and the elimination of gender-specific discrimination and disadvantages remain a central goal and guiding principle of international, European, and German policy. By aligning our work, strategies, and processes with these principles, and by supporting our clients and partners in designing and implementing measures that promote equality, we contribute to numerous national and international frameworks. In particular, we align with the European Commission's Roadmap for Women's Rights, which builds on the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, and with the Equality Strategy of the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Compliance with legal requirements and the achievement of established equality goals are the responsibility of management and all employees with management and project functions. The Equality Plan is integrated into personnel development planning and applies to all employees of IDSA, OLF, and DHM. A dedicated Equality Officer is available to management and employees for advice on all matters related to equality.

2. Introduction

Equality is a central task of the organizations, which extends to all areas of work. This equality plan presents the current status and perspectives of the organization's equality work. It serves as a guideline and working aid for the promotion and realization of equality of all genders. Against the background of demographic change and, at the same time, longer working lives, life-phase-oriented personnel planning is becoming increasingly important for IDSA, OLF, and DHM. In research and innovation organizations such as IDSA, OLF, and DHM, personnel development and personnel planning are also a strategic instrument for providing all employees with reliable career planning in often temporary employment relationships. The motivation and job satisfaction of employees are important assets of the organization. The regulations on a work-life balance also aim to achieve this.

To achieve the personal and professional development of all employees, all genders are treated equally. The same opportunities and promotions are offered, and the compatibility of family and career is ensured. For IDSA, OLF, and DHM, equal opportunities for all genders are essential in order to be able to recognize abilities and potential and to promote them in a targeted manner. IDSA, OLF, and DHM promote equal cooperation between women and men.

In the following chapters, the basics of the equality plan, the goal of IDSA, OLF, and DHM and the employee structure are presented. The subsequent measures serve to achieve the goals. For example, in order to present and measure the visibility of female employees, additional key figures from research and innovation activities were included beyond the employee statistics, such as gender-specific data on publications or project leads.

The Gender Equality Plan of IDSA, OLF, and DHM is based on the recommendations of the European Commission for the preparation and implementation of a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for organizations participating in projects of the Horizon Europe research framework program.

The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. Building on the achievements of the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the Commission now advances its objectives through the Roadmap for Women's Rights, aiming to overcome structural barriers that persist in the research and innovation sector. The goal is to strengthen the European research and innovation system by creating gender-equitable working environments where all talents can thrive. To enhance the quality and societal relevance of research, the gender dimension is to be systematically integrated into projects.

With Horizon Europe, the European Commission reaffirms gender equality as a cross-cutting priority and introduces stricter funding requirements to support its implementation. Gender equality is recommended to be treated as a management responsibility and embedded as a lived organizational culture, contributing to higher-quality research and innovation outcomes.

The strategy is continuously monitored, with annual internal evaluations ensuring progress and improvement. In the first year of implementation of this Gender Equality Plan, action plans were created to promote gender equality, including a list of activities and measures aimed at adapting existing procedures or introducing new ones in accordance with approved

timelines. This GEP builds on those initial actions and guides the continued implementation within IDSA, OLF, and DHM for the period July 2025–June 2026.

The Gender Equality Plan is structured around eight overarching objectives, which will be pursued through specific activities whose effectiveness will be monitored regularly to ensure progress.

Components of the Gender Equality Plan for IDSA, OLF, and DHM:

- **Diagnosis:** Key findings from research and investigations into the current state of gender equality within IDSA, OLF, and DHM, identifying existing gaps, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Fields of Action, Objectives, and Measures:** Defined areas of gender equality interventions, with clear objectives and concrete measures to promote equal opportunities across all levels of the organizations.

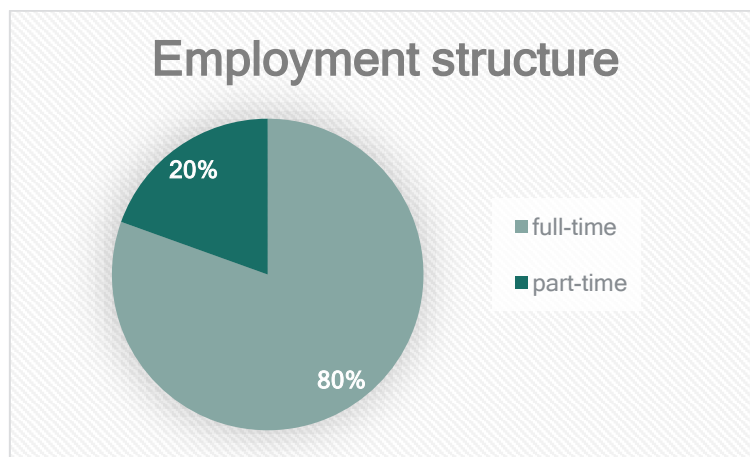
These components serve as the foundation for implementing and continuously improving gender equality practices, ensuring that initiatives are effective, measurable, and aligned with both EU and national policies.

3. Diagnosis: Gender in numbers. The equality as a task for the entire organization

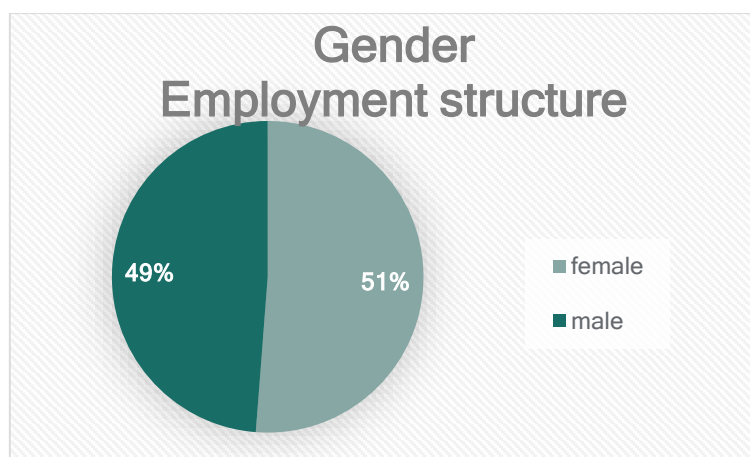
IDSA, OLF, and DHM assess the impact of all decisions affecting employees from a gender equality perspective during their preparation and implementation. This approach promotes awareness among managers regarding the goals of professional equality and work-life compatibility. All employees are informed and engaged on equality issues through targeted training sessions, workshops, and other awareness-raising activities.

3.1 Stocktaking of employee structure

During the stocktaking, the employee structure is analyzed in detail. As of the reporting date of 1 June 2025, IDSA, OLF, and DHM employ a total of 41 individuals, comprising full-time employees (approximately 80%), part-time staff, as well as working students. The analysis distinguishes between female and male employees, their positions, and full-time versus part-time employment (see attached charts). At IDSA, OLF, and DHM more than half of all employees, namely 33 persons, can be attributed to high level experienced specialists with functions of project and program management, senior qualified professionals in specified domains related to innovation consulting and general management. The project teams and Head office are supported by a total of 8 students and marginally employed persons involved. Working students include all employees who are pursuing a master's degree and are in the phase of studying at universities or applied universities.

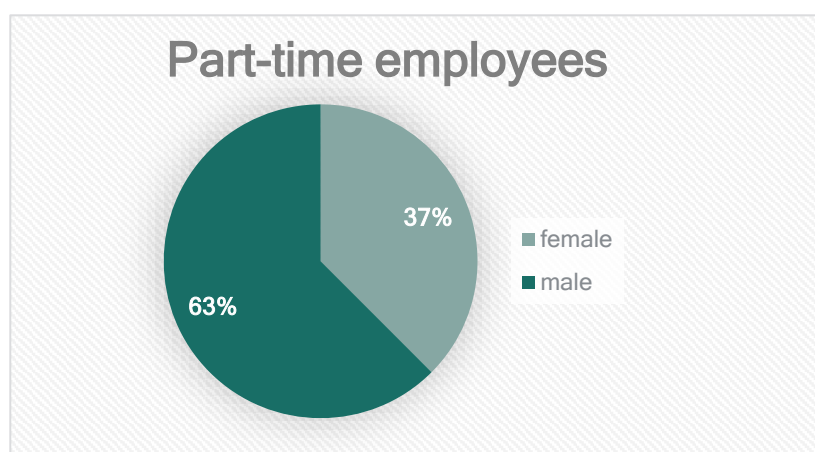


The representation of female employees compared to male employees is illustrated in the attached charts. As of 1 June 2025, the organizations employed 41 people, of whom 21 were women. This corresponds to a gender distribution of 51% female and 49% male. These data form the basis for assessing progress and serve as a control to evaluate the effectiveness of measures promoting equal opportunities at IDSA, OLF, and DHM.



3.1.1. Part-time

Part-time employment includes all positions that are not full-time. Full-time positions are defined as 40 hours per week; any employment below this threshold is considered part-time for the purposes of this analysis. Of the 41 employees, 8 work part-time, representing approximately 20% of the total workforce, 37% of whom are women. The average weekly working hours in part-time positions is 27 hours.



Part-time employment rates are generally high; however, the data require careful interpretation, as the underlying reasons are diverse and depend on individual circumstances. For both women and men, part-time work may reflect the need to balance professional responsibilities with family obligations or to engage in voluntary activities alongside employment. Additionally, some employees, such as working students, may opt for part-time positions to acquire relevant professional experience while financing their education. The chart presents the proportion of women among part-time employees.

3.1.2. Career stages and value of positions

There are various management positions and main career stages at IDSA, OLF, and DHM:

- Pre-employment level (working students)
- Junior specialist level
- Senior specialist level
- Leading specialist level.

All employees at IDSA, OLF, and DHM are able to experience their career development with an individual passing according to their professional and personal skills and preferences.

3.1.3. Family support

The measures for implementing and promoting work-life balance are constantly evaluated to improve the compatibility of work and family synergy for all employees. They have been showing their effects for a long time. Family support is part of everyday practice. In particular, the flexible arrangement of the place of work through mobile work and flexible working hours are actively used. Additionally, any employee can apply to decrease temporarily the general number of working hours in case additional support is needed for family care needs.

Based on the analysis, the compiled data and the legal requirements, the following fields of action for IDSA, OLF, and DHM have been identified, and various measures have been defined and organized thematically:

1. Cooperation and organizational culture.
2. Balanced employment structure.
3. Forward-looking personnel development.
4. Forward-looking personnel policy with a view to health and working lives.
5. Promoting the compatibility of work and family life.
6. Increasing the visibility of female managers and consultants.
7. Gender parity in the composition of external advisory boards.
8. Integrating the gender dimension into research content.

4. Fields of gender equality actions, objectives, and measures

The following section defines the objectives of the Gender Equality Plan. These objectives represent a commitment by IDSA, OLF, and DHM and are pursued through ongoing monitoring of the current status and the development of appropriate measures. Implementation is continuous, with annual assessments to ensure effectiveness and improvement.

4.1 Cooperation and organizational culture

Objective: IDSA, OLF, and DHM promote respectful interaction and a discrimination-free working environment for all employees. This includes a living organizational culture recognizing the equal value of all people, regardless of gender, hierarchy, origin, religion, or other individual characteristics. Diversity is actively appreciated, and decisive action is taken against discrimination. Language use and communication reflect gender equality and social diversity.

Measure 1: Participation in events on awareness-raising topics will strengthen employee cohesion and promote deeper understanding.

Measure 2: Further training and personal development opportunities, including specialists training, will be available for teams or individual interested parties.

Measure 3: The Equal Opportunity Officer will organize annual workshops on topics relating to equality for all genders. Efforts will be made to strengthen women in their personal development.

Measure 4: A guideline for gender-sensitive language use will be developed in a broadly based process in order to provide orientation in view of the dynamic social discussion. The guideline with binding gender rules is intended to reflect the social debate on the visibility and representation of women and men. This succeeds, among other things, through the linguistic representation of social diversity to break down the binary gender order.

Measure 5: Attention will be paid to the selection of images and reporting, stereotypes and to represent all genders.

Measure 6: Conducive working environment and equal opportunities will be created in everyday work for all employees.

Measure 7: Continuous cultivation of a collaborative and appreciative culture, supported by transparent structures, clear procedures, and open communication.

Implementation and timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.2 Balanced employment structure

Objective: IDSA, OLF, and DHM strive to achieve a balanced employment structure across all pay groups, career levels, and organizational units. Forward-looking human resources development is a key focus, with competencies for specialist and management roles cultivated through the targeted support and promotion of female junior and senior staff. The organizations are committed to professional equality and the advancement of women's

rights, in line with the European Commission's gender equality priorities, and actively encourage applications from women in areas where they are underrepresented.

The gender distribution across the organizations is already relatively balanced, with approximately 51% female and 49% male employees.

Measure 1: Transparent conditions for career development will be established for all employees through an unbiased recruitment process with clear evaluation criteria, guidelines for assessing achievements, and, where appropriate, consultation with external experts of all genders. All applications will be considered regardless of gender, cultural or social background, religion, ideology, disability, or sexual identity.

Measure 2: Applications from people with severe disabilities will be given priority in cases of equal suitability, ability and performance. In the case of candidates having the same qualifications, it is suggested to select the person from the underrepresented sex/ from the underrepresented group.

Measure 3: Job vacancies will be advertised widely across multiple platforms, including portals, mailing lists, forums, and professional networks, to attract a diverse pool of applicants.

Measure 4: All positions will be suitable for part-time employment. If full-time positions are not available, advertisements will indicate part-time options, flexible working hours, and teleworking arrangements.

Measure 5: Women will be promoted in areas where they are underrepresented, and men in areas where they are underrepresented, by ensuring job opportunities are widely communicated to all potential candidates.

Measure 6: Employees will be offered information and training on career development opportunities. Qualification goals and professional development plans will be continuously reviewed with support from senior management.

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.3 Forward-looking personnel development

Objective: Transparent personnel planning and development promote career opportunities for all employees. IDSA, OLF, and DHM provide diverse, target-group-specific support across all career phases, strengthening core tasks and professional growth.

Measure 1: In order to remain an attractive employer in the future, a comprehensive personnel development concept in 2025 will be developed.

Measure 2: Management ensures personal responsibility to increase representation of employees in higher career levels, offering targeted professional development support.

Measure 3: Regularly inform employees about funding programs, grants, and other opportunities for self-development.

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.4 Forward-looking personnel policy with a view to health and working lives

Objective: IDSA, OLF, and DHM deal with topics that concern the future as part of their activities. The same applies to personnel policy. Demographic change is leading to longer working lives. Many individuals are no longer healthy enough to receive full benefits by the time they reach retirement age. Thus, all employees can access collection of contributions on the intranet to the preservation of health. Events have already been held on topics such as back coaching, 7,000 steps a day or a mobility check. Participation was and is possible for all employees and was/is offered at family-friendly times.

In addition, women are particularly affected by old-age poverty due to care work, such as child-rearing and nursing tasks. Due to part-time employment, absenteeism and choice of occupations that are not highly remunerated, women are not adequately protected in old age.

Measure 1: To enable employees to enter retirement without worries, we promote the health of employees through health campaigns. In addition, women are promoted by enabling IDSA, OLF, and DHM to provide them with careers in higher-level positions.

Measure 2: With regard to longer working lives and the associated stresses and strains, health campaigns will be regularly offered.

Measure 3: In the following two years, an internal survey will be conducted to evaluate whether employees in part-time employment are generally satisfied with this form of employment.

Measure 5: The survey will be concluded on evaluation whether we can provide a better work-life balance, and if any employees would like to work more hours in order to resist the soaring world economic recession which impacts on the wealth of employees.

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.5 Promoting the compatibility of work and family life

Objective: IDSA, OLF, and DHM support the compatibility of family and career with a family-friendly human resources policy. This includes flexible working time arrangements, such as flextime and trust-based working time, as well as flexible arrangements for working hours that accommodate the individual requirements of employees who combine professional activities with family care and nursing work. Also worthy of mention are the promotion of career reintegration after child-rearing periods and an openness to flexible arrangements for parental allowance periods, with which IDSA, OLF, and DHM enable family-friendliness for young parents.

In addition, the following measures which have already been successfully implemented and continue to be used daily by all employees should be highlighted:

Counseling support for women and men during parental leave.

Individual working time concepts after consultation with the management staff.

Flexible working time arrangements to reconcile work and family life.

Collection of information on care work topics on the intranet.

Measure 1: Reliable, family-friendly personnel policy will be constantly maintained, and the corresponding service agreements will be adapted to current legal, operational and social conditions, such as more flexible room utilization models.

Measure 2: It will be constantly revised that employees who reduce their working hours or take time off for reasons of family care and support work will not be disadvantaged in their professional development.

Measure 3: The compatibility of family and career is constantly supported and secured by the work and family audit.

Measure 4: The opportunity for all employees for mobile work is provided.

Measure 5: The flexible working time arrangement is implemented and promoted in order to avoid conflicts with family care activities and work.

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.6 Increasing the visibility of women in research and innovations

Objective: IDSA, OLF, and DHM make use of various opportunities to increase the visibility of women in research and innovation activities. In funded EU projects, publications, meetings, conferences, and workshops organized by IDSA, OLF, and DHM, attention is paid to equal visibility of all genders. Furthermore, we pay attention to gender balance in project development and presentation activities. To enable women to remain in research and innovation through the various career stages, IDSA, DHM, OLF support its female researchers by arranging external offers for participate in mentoring programs, such as those offered by the Transfer festival provided by Fraunhofer-Institute IML.

Measure 1: Annual general gender-specific analysis and evaluation of the scientific output will be conducted.

Measure 2: In order to achieve a more equal representation of men and women externally attention will be paid for raising awareness among managers and the targeted, individual approaching female of research and innovation to take on corresponding external activities.

Measure 3: In order to enable women to make their research involvement more visible and to help female employees to be more presented to the public the specialized workshops on writing, presenting, moderating and speaking will be arranged.

Measure 4: The additional attention will be paid to gender parity in all panels, at the conferences and meetings where companies will participate.

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment.

4.7 Integrating the gender dimension into research and development content

In general, in the future, the IDSA, OLF, and DHM will integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in terms of content and pay attention to gender sensitivity in work for granted by the EU commission projects. This includes the composition of project management and project teams as well as content-related aspects of gender-sensitive, demand-oriented research for conducting relevant items in work packages. The goal of the process towards more equality and gender equity is not only justice in research and innovation careers and decision-making processes at all hierarchical levels, but also to integrate the gender

dimension into the research and development content. The underlying norms, identities, and relationships of gender differences are to be better understood in order to uncover and break hidden patterns which able to break through them. Gender and diversity aspects are understood as cross-cutting issues that can be relevant in numerous other topics. Furthermore, the consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content contributes to the improvement of the quality of research designs, research approaches, development, and adoption of achieved results. A greater diversity of users is reflected, which particularly benefits the quality of applied research achievements.

Measure 1: To enable a thorough analysis and comparison of the gender dimension, gender-disaggregated data will be collected and utilized across relevant working groups. Intersectional factors, such as origin, age, religion, and sexual orientation, will also be considered and analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of inequalities.

Measure 2: To strengthen the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation, relevant development projects, work packages, research objectives, and questions will be continuously identified and defined.

Measure 3: All transformative formats, cooperation partners, interviewees, and stakeholders will be selected to ensure balanced representation of genders

Measure 4: During the development of strategies, recommendations, or policy approaches, potential gender impacts will be systematically assessed and incorporated through gender impact assessments.

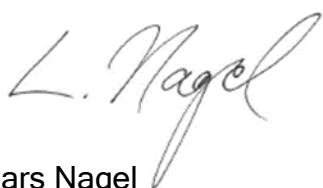
Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing; annual assessment

5. Duration and updating of Gender Equality Plan activities

IDSA, OLF, and DHM are committed to continuously updating and improving the Gender Equality Plan. This plan reflects the employee structure as of 1 June 2025 and will undergo internal evaluation on an annual basis. Should targets not be achieved, measures will be further refined and expanded.

The employee structure is reviewed and analyzed annually, with a summary report prepared for submission to the EU using a cut-off date of 1 June each year.

For International Data Spaces e. V.

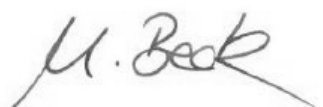


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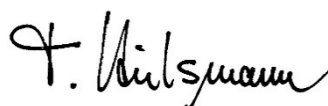


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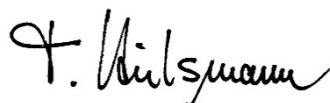


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