

How to Apply



cs/09.07a

Applying for a Connecting Somerset grant is easy!

Just provide us with the correct paperwork and your application can be processed even more quickly. Here's an easy-to-use checklist to help you understand what we require with your Application Form.

Step		What we need to process your Claim	Enclosed (please tick)
A	Static Website	<p>A quote from a Web/IT supplier who is on our Supplier Register with Professional Indemnity Insurance. We can provide you with some web developer contacts who meet these requirements.</p> <p>We can consider a range of Website/IT costs as outlined in the Supplier Checklist (ask your chosen supplier to complete this when they give you their quote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	Content Managed Website		
C	E-Commerce		
D	E-Business Solutions	<p>Training course details are required except for Step D (see below).</p> <p>You must provide your completed Financial Details for us to be able to process your application.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Training	<p>If you are applying for a grant to help with Step A, B or C then one of the specified Workshops must be booked directly with Adult Learning & Leisure (please see the Training Courses sheet). The relevant details must be noted on the Application form.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: Failure to attend any required training as agreed by us, will require you to return any funds paid to you.

Please ensure that you have read our Questions & Answers section before you apply for funding. If you have any questions please call Connecting Somerset 0845 130 1595

Application for Assistance

For office use only

Grant No.

csID No.

Project

Date Received

cs/09.07a



My business details

Business Name											
Contact Name											
Position											
Business Address (see Q&A reference 1.4)											
County						Postcode					
Phone Number						Fax Number					
Website Address											
E-mail Address											
Business Nature / Sector											
Type of Ownership	(eg: Sole Trader, Partnership, Private Limited Company)										
Date Business Started	(dd/mm/yyyy)					Number of Employees (inc. owner/yourself)					
How did you find out about Connecting Somerset?	Flyer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Word of Mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	E-mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supplier	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other				

I want to make a step-change to my business by investing in

Please tick all sections that are relevant

STEP	A	Static Website (see Q&A 2.1)	B	Content Managed Website (see Q&A 2.2)	C	E-Commerce (see Q&A 2.3)	D	E-Business Solutions (see Q&A 2.4)
This is what we have now		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
What we plan to invest in		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

You must attach copies of quotes and the Supplier Checklist with this application.

TRAINING - If you are applying for a grant for Step A, B or C then you must have booked and paid for one of the following training courses for us to consider this application.

See Q&A 2.6 and Training Courses sheet.

Supplier	Adult Learning & Leisure		other course provider <i>(see Q&A 2.6)</i>
Course Name(s) <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	please specify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Provider • Name of Course • Qualification • Course Completion Date
Venue(s) <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Burnham-on-Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Ilminster <input type="checkbox"/> Wellington <input type="checkbox"/> Wells <input type="checkbox"/> Williton	<input type="checkbox"/> Burnham-on-Sea <input type="checkbox"/> Ilminster <input type="checkbox"/> Wellington <input type="checkbox"/> Wells <input type="checkbox"/> Williton	
Course Date(s)			
Reference Number(s): <i>(see Q&A 2.7)</i>			

How this investment will make a real change to my business

As an E-business owner I am also interested in:

Online Sales & Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Online Booking Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>
Search Engine Optimisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking Credit Card Payments	<input type="checkbox"/>	IT Related Training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visibility of Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet Law	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Relationship Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adding Services to Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	Best Practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offline Sales & Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Email Newsletter: I wish to receive regular information on Connecting Somerset Services

Gender majority	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> White majority
	<input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input type="checkbox"/> Other [_____]
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

The following Financial Details (GVA) must be provided for us to process your application. This will be used anonymously to measure the impact of Government funded assistance.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE FIGURES - Last Year and Current year must be completed

If you have been trading for less than 12 months complete current year and, if possible, next year forecast columns only

	LAST YEAR (Actual)	CURRENT YEAR (Forecast)	NEXT YEAR (Forecast)
Total Sales			
Operating Profit*			
Depreciation of Fixed Assets**			
Total Employee Costs*** (inc. Directors remunerations)			
Number of Employees (inc. Owner) (Full time equivalents)			
Is this information based on audited year end figures	Y/N		
Accounting Year End (Enter month and year)			
* Operating profit=Profit before tax ** Depreciation=Depreciation on owned assets & assets held under finance leases ***Employee Costs=Total Employment Costs(wages & salaries/social security/pension costs + Directors remuneration)			
Date Business Started	(dd/mm/yyyy)		
Business Nature / Sector			

Disclosure Statement

I am authorised to sign on behalf of the above business. The address provided is the business address which is located within the area served by Somerset County Council. The details in this form are correct to the best of my knowledge and I understand that we may be audited up until three years after the end of our project. I will, if asked, provide information on our project twice a year from the date of this document to March 2009 to help measure the benefits of the Connecting Somerset project. Applications for future funding and business assistance are at risk if I do not meet with these conditions. I give my permission for Connecting Somerset to hold and use my information in compliance with the Data Protection Act. I also agree that if I have already received a grant from Connecting Somerset for a particular step that I cannot apply for the same step again.

State Aid Declaration

I confirm that my business has not received more than 200,000 Euros of state aid in the last three years.

Eligibility Criteria

I confirm that the criteria for participation in Connecting Somerset have been explained to me, and that my business complies with these requirements. I understand that business growth is a primary output of the project and will endeavour to implement the intended business change.

I am applying for advice and a grant from the Connecting Somerset project

*** Please note that we cannot fund any work done before your application is approved ***

Signature	Name
Position in the business	Date

We recommend that you keep a copy of this information on file as our adviser will need to discuss the details with you to progress your request.

Please post application & quotes to Connecting Somerset, Business Link, Creech Castle, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2DX

Business details

Customer's Business Name	<input type="text"/>
Web/IT Supplier's Business Name	<input type="text"/>
Supplier Quote Number / Date	<input type="text"/>

THE FOLLOWING IS ONLY FOR COMPLETION BY THE SUPPLIER & SHOULD ACCOMPANY ANY QUOTE SUBMITTED

Please tick relevant step and enter quoted amounts

See separate 'Definitions of E-business Solutions' sheet for brief descriptions

Step	Description	Tick	Quote
A	Static/Brochure Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
B	Content Managed (CMS) Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
C	E-Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	£

			Total	£
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Step	Step D Solution		£	Step	Step D Solution		£
D1	VoiP & Telephony	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D14	SEO	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D2	Accounts Integration	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D15	Accounting & Financial Reporting software	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D3	CRM	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D16	Forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D4	EPOS	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D17	Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D5	VPN	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D18	Booking System	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D6	Databases	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D19	Web Based survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D7	Exchange Server	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D20	Network Server	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D8	Video Conferencing	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D21	Network/Server Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D9	Paperless Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D22	Network/Server Backup	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D10	E-Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D23	Structured Cabling	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D11	SMS Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D24	Flexible/Remote Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D12	E-Learning site	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	D25	Other E-Business Solution	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
D13	Barcode system	<input type="checkbox"/>	£	Please specify			

Ancillary Items (where relevant)

Hosting (1 st year only)		<input type="checkbox"/>	£
Single Domain Name (1 st year)		<input type="checkbox"/>	£
Total (of all items listed)		£	

Disclosure Statement

The details in this form are correct to the best of my knowledge.

Supplier's Signature	Supplier's Name
Supplier's Position	Date

Introduction

Each E-Business Solution must change the processes of a business. This must be achieved by utilising internet, communications, or server based technologies and may include one or both hardware and software solutions.

D1: VoIP (Voice over IP) & Telephony

Telephony solutions that impact the way a company communicates. Includes VoIP solutions for 3 users or above. Customer Relationship Management telephony solutions also included.

D2: Accounts Integration

Solutions that allow software or Internet components to integrate into your accounting software e.g. E-Commerce store integrating into Sage Line 50, etc.

D3: CRM

Customer Relationship Management solutions that are server side only (e.g. a CRM program held on a server that many users access to enable all customer information and interactions are recorded).

D4: EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale)

Till systems that are IT-based and integrate all information the business requires to track sales, stock, and other trading information. This includes EPOS systems that connect to ecommerce stores.

D5: VPN (Virtual Private Network)

For companies who wish to have remote workers, home workers, or wish to have IT systems from more than one location to talk to another. Hardware or software solutions considered.

D6: Databases (not E-Commerce)

Solutions where information gathered online is electronically fed into a database (online or back-office). This excludes simple databases such as address books or membership directories, but does include self populating databases such as those used on websites that allow the user to enter details (as opposed to a business employee having to re-enter the data at a later date). Databases that export or report information to streamline business processes, stock management and integrated booking systems are also considered. These booking systems must reside on your own domain.

D7: Exchange Server

This is a messaging and collaborative software product which consists of electronic mail, calendaring, contacts and tasks, and support for the mobile and web-based access to information, as well as supporting data storage. To find out more about servers and networks seek advice from your IT supplier.

D8: Video Conferencing

For businesses that wish to invest in video conferencing solutions in 2 or more locations. This excludes simple web cameras and solutions must be above £500.

D9: Paperless Office (Filing and Document Management)

Small to medium sized projects that assist a company in achieving a paperless office. This may include automated PDF creation systems but not PDF software. Scanners not included unless the scanner is designed specifically for high output of document scanning. Other solutions accepted. Speak to us before applying for funding.

D10: E-Newsletter

E-Newsletters are a simple, cheap and effective way to remind your customers of who you are and what you have to offer; thus building better awareness and long lasting relationships. To qualify this solution must be database-driven and provide auto opt-in and opt-out functionality.

D11: SMS Services (Mobile Phone Services)

Solutions that a business uses to automate communications and messaging on a mass scale by using technologies that utilise mobile phones. E.g. automated email responders from text messages to business.

D12: E- Learning Websites

If you want to develop a website that sells online training then you should have a website that allows people to create an online account and one that tracks the chapters or courses you are providing. This means that the site will need to be database driven and we can help fund this but we only fund the development of the website and not the actual content. The provider you choose for this solution must be on a Connecting Somerset recognised supplier.

D13: Bar Code system

Keeping track of stock and other items within a business can be tough and labour intensive but now that bar coding technology has come right down in price a small business can now make, print and scan its own bar codes. We will help fund both hardware and software items.

D14: Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

SEO is a range of techniques used to increase the organic ranking of a website within a given search engine e.g. Google. We encourage you to use a company that, in addition to 'strengthening' the metatags of your website, also include link building as well as monitoring and reporting on your SEO progress e.g. monthly reports. It is also important to consider how well your content 'ties' into any optimization and its relevance. The provider you choose for this solution must be on a Connecting Somerset recognised supplier.

D15: Accounting Software & Financial Reporting

Still using paper based accounting or Microsoft Excel? Why not upgrade to a full accounting software package and streamline your accounts and get real time information. We will fund any accounting software that costs £100 or more. Sage and Quickbooks are just a few accounting software solutions but we will also fund online hosted solutions.

D16: Forums

Forums are websites that provide online discussion groups, where participants with common interests can exchange open messages e.g. knowledgebase's, technical support. The grant step only supports forums that are database driven. The provider you choose for this solution must be on a Connecting Somerset recognised supplier.

D17: Blogs

Blogs are like an online diary and can, help the user stay in touch with the website with new and up to date information. This grant step supports database driven blogs only. The provider you choose for this solution must be on a Connecting Somerset recognised supplier.

D18: Booking systems

Booking systems such as table or accommodation reservations can be considered, but these booking systems must be real time (data that is captured, and made available as it is happening). Simple email based forms or forms that require human intervention are not included.

D19: Web Based surveys with Reporting

Web based surveys that provide reporting on the survey results can be a great benefit to the marketing and development of your company and its products and surveys. We can only fund if it is a database driven solution.

D20: Network Servers

If you are thinking about connecting several PC's together and centralising your company data in one location, then you should consider a server based network. We can help towards the cost of a server and its server operating system. To find out more about servers and networks seek advice from your IT supplier.

D21: Network/Server Security

Hardware and/or software security solutions that protect your server/network. Speak to your IT specialist or attend one of our technology workshops to learn more.

D22: Network/Server Backup

Hardware and/or software backup solutions for your network/server. Speak to your IT specialist or attend one of our technology workshops to learn more.

D23: Structured Cabling

If you want to connect your network then you may want to consider structured cabling. This is the installation of a copper or fibre optic cable which is fully tested for compliancy and data transfer rates. For best practice, structured cabling is to the company's centralised communications cabinet.

D24: Flexible/Remote Working

Would you benefit from working while on the move or remotely? Would email to your mobile phone be useful? Do you want your employees to work from home? If so we will help fund a range of flexible and remote working solutions. This includes Windows Mobile devices, Blackberries and more. Speak to your IT specialist or attend one of our technology workshops to learn more.

D25: Other E-Business Solution

Any other Solutions are at our discretion. Examples of other Solutions (such as Wired/Wireless internet access for your patrons) can be found on our website (www.connectingsomerset.co.uk)

For each Connecting Somerset Application that is requesting a grant under Steps A, B or C; a representative from the business must attend a course leading to a recognised qualification. We strongly recommend either or both of the following.

**You must book and pay for the course directly with Adult Learning & Leisure
Tel: 01749 343127
before sending your application to us if applying for a grant under Steps A, B or C.**

Accreditation	Both of the courses are accredited as a single ITQ unit.
Duration	Each course will run for 6 hours (from 10am - 4pm). There will be a post-course worksheet that must be completed for an ITQ accreditation.
Costs	Each course costs £80 per candidate.
Venues	Burnham-on-Sea - Ilminster - Wellington - Wells - Williton

1. Improve your Productivity, Efficiency and Promotion using ICT (Level 1)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are you making the best use of your E-mail contacts to enhance your business?</i> • <i>Do you know what website statistics are?</i> • <i>What should you consider when developing a website?</i> 	<p>This course will help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optimise your site for search engines • interpret web traffic statistics • understand website basics • be aware of the relevant legislation <p>You will also look at basic marketing concepts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Relation Management (CRM) • identifying roles within the organisation
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2. Improve your Productivity, Efficiency and Promotion using ICT (Level 2)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Want to learn more about Internet marketing?</i> • <i>Do you want to be able to update your website?</i> • <i>Do you want to be able to develop an Internet Marketing Strategy?</i> 	<p>This course will extend your knowledge in relation to Internet marketing. The trainer will provide information on how to create Cost per Click Ads (CPC) and how to develop an Internet Marketing Strategy. You will learn how to keep your website current and fresh by making sure it is updated on a regular basis.</p>
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Question		Quick Answer	More Detailed Answer
1.	Which businesses are eligible?		
1.1	Is my type of business eligible for help from Connecting Somerset?	<p>Any type of business is eligible, as long as it contributes to Somerset's gross domestic product.</p> <p>We reserve the right to refuse to fund any website which has defamatory, unsavoury or other dubious content.</p>	<p>Any ownership type (sole trader, plc, etc).</p> <p>Not businesses that are mainly funded by public funds.</p> <p>Not organisations in the voluntary sector.</p> <p>Not organisations that are community based.</p>
1.2	What about business size?	Any size business is eligible.	
1.3	What about the sector I trade in?	All sectors are eligible.	
1.4	What about where I trade?	As long as your main office/place of business is in Somerset, you are eligible.	By Somerset we mean the area served by Somerset County Council.
1.5	And the size of my turnover?	Any turnover size.	
1.6	I already receive state aid...	You must not receive more than 200,000 euros of state aid in any three-year period.	We'll be asking you to sign a State Aid declaration that you are under this limit.

Question		Quick Answer	More Detailed Answer
2.	I want to make a Step-change to my business. How can Connecting Somerset help me?	<p>We offer independent advice.</p> <p>We offer you a grant to cover part of your costs.</p> <p>These costs will include Training to make sure you don't waste your investment.</p> <p>We ask you to take a training course.</p> <p>The grant can help with the following Steps.</p>	
2.1	I need a static website (brochure website) for my business	<p>Step A - we can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying a web supplier (see 3.1) to build you a basic website. 	A brochure-type website that you can't alter directly yourself (unlike a content management system - See Dynamic website/Step B).
2.2	I need a content managed website (CMS) for my business	<p>Step B - we can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying a web supplier (see 3.1) to build you a website from scratch, or to adapt your existing website to be a content managed website. 	A content managed website will enable you to update some of the content yourself without going back to your web supplier; potentially saving time and money. For example, changing text and pictures on certain web pages (this does not include the changing of products on an E-commerce site).

	Question	Quick Answer	More Detailed Answer
2.3	I need to sell my products and services through my website (E-commerce)	<p>Step C - we can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying a web supplier (see 3.1) to develop an E-commerce store or to add E-commerce to an existing website. 	An E-commerce site allows visitors to purchase goods and/or services from your website using, for example, a credit card payment facility.
2.4	I really want to put the Internet at the heart of my business (E-business solutions)	<p>Step D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see E-business Solutions - Definitions sheet. 	We define E-business as the integration of your business system(s) with the Internet.
2.5	Other eligible elements	<p>We can also help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First year hosting cost • First year single domain cost 	By domain name we mean a full www address and not a sub-domain.
2.6	Training	<p>If you are applying for a grant for Step A, B or C then you must attend one of the training courses listed in the application pack (this is optional for Step D only applications).</p> <p>If you are considering an IT qualification with any other Training Provider, you must obtain approval from Connecting Somerset before proceeding and submitting your application.</p>	<p>Please see Training Courses sheet for course details and booking procedure.</p> <p>The grant funding towards the training costs will be considered separately and is 50% of the costs to a maximum of £100.</p>
2.7	Training Reference Number	When you book and pay for your Adult Learning & Leisure course you will be provided with a Reference Number which must be included with your application form.	If you are applying for a grant for Step A, B or C you must book and pay for the course before sending your application to us.

	Question	Quick Answer	More Detailed Answer
3.	OK, how do we get this done?		
3.1	Who do I choose to do the work?	<p>Connecting Somerset is impartial and cannot recommend any one supplier. However, we do insist that the supplier you choose must be on our Supplier Register - with Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII). We strongly recommend you get competitive quotes - we can offer up to three suppliers from the Supplier Register. If you have a supplier who has done work for you in the past, make sure they are on the Supplier Register with PII, then obtain a quote from them - if they are not please ask them to contact us so we can advise what they need to do.</p> <p>The supplier of any hardware or software for an E-business solution does not have to be on the Supplier Matching Service.</p>	<p>The use of the Supplier Register is free of charge to both the suppliers and to you. It gives you confidence that each supplier has been quality assessed, works to a code of conduct and already has satisfied customers. However, we recommend that you view the suppliers' portfolio on their website. Also, visit our website to see the gallery of existing sites and for further advice about website development.</p>
3.2	How much grant is available?	<p>Connecting Somerset can pay up to 50% of the cost of a Step, but must exclude VAT.</p> <p>Step D has multiple E-business Solution steps and, along with Steps A to C, they have a maximum possible grant of £500 each. For Step D we will pay up to a maximum of £3,000.</p> <p>Maximum available grant for all steps is £4,500.</p>	<p>Example 1: You need a static website (Step A). Your quote is £1,250, plus training costs of £80; the grant is £500 (maximum for this Step).</p> <p>Example 2: You need a website (Step A) that includes content-management (Step B). Steps A & B costs are £1800, plus training costs of £80; the grant is £940.</p> <p>Example 3: You need add an E-commerce store to your existing website (Step C). Steps C costs are £2200, plus training costs of £80; the grant is £540.</p> <p>Example 4: You need E-business solutions (Step D). Steps D costs are 1 @ £1,200, 2 steps @ £1,000 and 1 @ £800; the grant is £1900.</p>

	Question	Quick Answer	More Detailed Answer
3.3	How do I apply?	<p>Please follow the instructions on the 'How to Apply' form.</p> <p>We will approve or reject the application within 10 working days.</p> <p>We can't fund any work done before your application is approved.</p>	<p>If you need supplier information (see 3.1) please contact us.</p> <p>For any other information please visit our website (www.connectingsomerset.co.uk)</p>
3.4	Any small print?	<p>You need to declare your position on State Aid - no more than 200,000 euros in the last 3 years.</p> <p>Participating businesses may be contacted for research to record the business growth achieved from the investment made. You need to be prepared for us to ask you about your Financial Details - GVA (Gross Value Added), before the work and afterwards, in case you are selected.</p> <p>If within two years of receiving the grant, you cease to trade or move business outside of Somerset and/or you decide to sell any equipment that this grant has been used to purchase and/or you have not met your training obligations, then the grant must be repaid.</p> <p>Approved applications lapse after 3 months from the date of approval if no claim is made. The last approval date for applications is 31st March 2008 and the latest date for claims to be submitted is 30th May 2008. In the event that all funding is allocated prior to 31st March 2008, these dates will be subject to change.</p>	<p>GVA (Gross Value Added) is a measure of your business growth.</p> <p>Our experts will help you give us this information.</p> <p>We are unable to provide an extension of your claim completion date regardless of the circumstances.</p> <p>It is your responsibility to ensure that all work is completed; claim form, training record and receipted invoices are submitted prior to your claim lapsing.</p>
3.5	How involved is Connecting Somerset as the work is done?	<p>We step right back and let you get on with it - it's your project and they are your suppliers.</p>	
3.6	How do I get paid?	<p>When the work has been finished and paid for and required training completed, you must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proof of payment (receipted invoices) • completed claim form • new website address (where relevant) <p>A 'How to Claim' form is provided on approval of your application to provide a more detailed overview of our requirements.</p> <p>A cheque will be issued to you by Somerset County Council.</p>	<p>We'll validate the work that has been claimed for - this may be done remotely or onsite.</p> <p>All invoices should be dated after the date that the application was approved.</p> <p>We will be giving some businesses a marketing opportunity - a chance to feature in our high profile portfolio of case studies.</p>