



2020 IMPACT REPORT

For the 2019-2020 fiscal year



Credit: Althea Dotzour Photography

The Wisconsin Academy is a place where people can connect with experts and learn from each other. Our programs are made for people who are curious about the world and proud of Wisconsin ideas.

OUR MISSION

To create a better world by connecting Wisconsin people and ideas.

OUR VISION

A brighter future inspired by Wisconsin ideas.

OUR VALUES

**Curiosity
Critical thinking
Creativity
Civil discourse**

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Credit (Cover): Althea Dotzour Photography

WHO WE ARE

As of June 30, 2020

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 Jody Clowes • Director, James Watrous Gallery
 Catie DeMets • Program Coordinator, Wisconsin Strategy Initiatives
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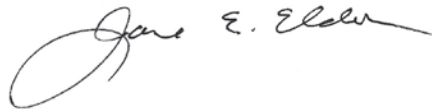


Introduction

Our 150th anniversary year was, in many ways, a remarkable one. We brought together thousands of people to explore the best Wisconsin ideas across the disciplines, published nearly one hundred articles and videos highlighting creativity and innovation, and collaborated with dozens of community and cultural organizations—all in the effort to grow leadership and share solutions for a better Wisconsin.

Much of this activity happened just before and during a global pandemic, and we continue to be able to do this important work because of the relationships we have built with our donors and members, as well as with our program participants: the artist that trusts us to present his or her works in a way that amplifies their vision, the reader that finds insight in the pages of our magazine, the partner organization that joins forces with us in order to make a bigger impact.

As the Wisconsin Academy moves into 2021 and beyond, you can count on us to rise to the challenges at hand, to keep people connected, and to work toward solutions that benefit all of Wisconsin. We're proud to have you along on this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jane E. Elder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Jane Elder
Executive Director

AMPLIFYING WISCONSIN IDEAS





Throughout our 150-year history, the Academy has played an important role in bringing compelling ideas from Wisconsin artists, writers, scientists, and others to wider audiences. From encounters with innovation in the pages of our *Wisconsin People & Ideas* magazine to astonishing new works on the walls of our James Watrous Gallery, our work in and across the disciplines sparks curiosity and conversation that opens minds, enriches culture, and explores all the ways we can make a brighter Wisconsin.

Driftless Area artist S.V. Medaris rolls ink on a large woodcut in her studio.
Credit: Beth McConnell



Credit: Scott Kearney



Credit: Derek Rickert/UWM



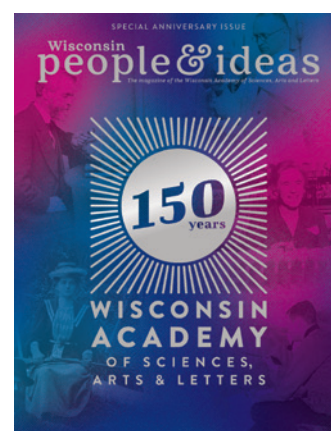
Credit: Jesse Paucek

Wisconsin People & Ideas

Since 1954, the Academy has published a magazine that features thoughtful stories about our people and culture, original creative writing and artwork, and informative articles about homegrown innovation. No other publication draws together the best Wisconsin-based writers, artists, and photographers to create a forum for exploring Wisconsin ideas (we're even printed in Wisconsin).

The 150th anniversary issue of *Wisconsin People & Ideas* was by far the most ambitious one we've ever produced at the Academy. With 88 pages, multiple inserts, and a “flip-book” composition, the magazine offered a comprehensive look at the evolution of the Academy and its programs over the years while offering new readers some easy ways to join the great conversation of Wisconsin ideas.

With cover features on the fabric art of Sharon Kerry Harlan, the research of aquatic biologist Rebecca Klaper, and the domestic scenes captured by photographer Lois Bielefeld, you could call 2019–2020 the “Year of the Woman” for the magazine. In these issues we also shared award-winning works of fiction and poetry by Wisconsin writers—many of whom were published for the very first time—as well as reviews of important books.



The recap of the Academy’s Initiatives on water, rural life, and climate change in the 150th issue of *Wisconsin People & Ideas* was superbly done: good summaries, hopeful, and with some reasoned conclusions about outputs and accomplishments. Truly the Academy is positioned for this unique work, and it has engaged Wisconsinites of all stripes in making it happen.

—Stephen Born, Professor Emeritus, UW–Madison Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture



Curated Exhibitions

The Academy's curated exhibitions bring together artists from across the state to explore provocative topics through the medium of art. Notable curated exhibitions in recent years include *Uprooted: Plants in a Changing Climate* (April–June 2019) and the monumental *Connections and Collections: 150 Years of the Wisconsin Academy* (February–April 2020). Visitors tell us these exhibitions help them see a topic like climate change or the history of natural science in a new light, and that they spark questions and conversations, which contribute to deeper understanding and a curiosity to learn more.

During our anniversary year, one of the ideas we wanted to amplify in particular was the Academy's own evolution and impact over the last 150 years.

On February 14, 2020, the Academy premiered *Collections and Connections: 150 Years of the Wisconsin Academy*, a fascinating array of specimens, maps, and historic objects brought together at the James Watrous Gallery. The exhibition told the story of the Academy's founders, the significance of their work to survey the state, and the growth of the Academy from a private learned society to a more public-oriented service organization.

For this exhibition, guest curator and former Watrous Gallery director Martha Glowacki devised an imaginative recreation of a 19th-century "cabinet" of natural history and archaeology, while current director Jody Clowes curated sections focused on the Academy's history from 1920 to the present. *Collections & Connections* garnered major media coverage, with features in the *Wisconsin State Journal* and *Isthmus* as well as on local television news.

This project required extensive research in the Academy's archives as well as UW–Madison and Wisconsin Historical Society collections, a process that benefited greatly from the efforts of public humanities historian Chrissy Widmayer and archivist Jerry Marra. The exhibition also received critical support through grants from Wisconsin Humanities and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

When the exhibit was forced to close early due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we produced a twenty-minute video tour to capture its message and meaning as well as all of those fascinating fossils, taxidermy mounts, and vintage scientific instruments.



IDEAS AMPLIFIED

Paintings from the Watrous Gallery's *Uprooted: Plants in a Changing Climate* (spring 2019) exhibition were featured at Wisconsin Public Television's 2020 Garden Expo in Madison. Over 20,000 visitors enjoyed selected works by *Uprooted* artists Helen Klebesadel, Bethann Moran-Handzlik, and Lynne Railsback, as well as real-time painting demonstrations by Moran-Handzlik.



Credit (this page): Martha Glowacki



Solo Exhibitions

The Academy's James Watrous Gallery is a premier venue for professional Wisconsin artists, whose works are often shown in solo or paired-solo exhibitions. Solo exhibitions play a particular role in bringing the work of Wisconsin artists to new and wider audiences, and also showcase the rich diversity of creative artistic talent in the state. Exhibiting artists often tell us how their exhibition at the Watrous Gallery provides opportunity and encouragement, connecting them with collectors, other artists, and the media. Too, they relish the opportunity to work with professional curators to display their works in a major regional art center. We help Wisconsin artists succeed, and open new art horizons for the visitors who enjoy their works.



Credit (unless indicated): Althea Dotzour Photography



Credit: Huston Design

Our 2019–2020 program year began with a solo exhibition featuring the powerful work of Wauwatosa-based artist Sharon Kerry-Harlan. Working with Kerry-Harlan, gallery director Jody Clowes mounted a series of quilts that set bold, graphic shapes and patterns against a background of subtle color and lively stitched line. Clowes arranged an entire wall of the artist's "Black Eyed Peas," foot-high dolls made of fabric scraps, paint, and buttons. The effect was captivating, and led to many of the dolls being sold—another, sometimes unseen, service the gallery provides.

By March 2020, all remaining events and exhibits—including *Collections & Connections*, our major 150th anniversary show—were cut short or postponed due to the pandemic. The doors to the gallery and Overture Center remain closed for the rest of 2020.

IDEAS AMPLIFIED

Surface Design Magazine reprinted Clowes' profile of artist Sharon Kerry-Harlan that first appeared in our *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, sharing her work with artists and designers far beyond Wisconsin.



Credit: Huston Design



JAMES WATROUS GALLERY

Exhibiting Artists

SHARON KERRY-HARLAN

July 12 – August 25, 2019

GABRIEL PIONKOWSKI • HELEN HAWLEY

September 13 – November 3, 2019

S.V. MEDARIS • CRAIG BLIETZ

November 15, 2019 – January 26, 2020

LOIS BIELEFELD • COMFORT WASIKHONGO

Postponed until 2022



ELEVATING OUR CAPACITY TO THRIVE



The health and wellbeing of Wisconsin's people, land, and water are of the utmost importance to the Academy. With 150 years of experience in responding to the call of our founders to serve "the betterment of the state," the Academy excels at deep deliberation and taking the long view. Our Wisconsin Strategy Initiatives are designed to generate strategies that will serve present and future generations. To date, our major initiatives have explored the Waters of Wisconsin, the Future of Farming and Rural Life, and Climate & Energy. We serve as a neutral convener to bring together leaders and experts from diverse fields to collaborate on strategies that shape solutions grounded in science, informed by culture, and aligned with Wisconsin's unique needs. When powerful ideas emerge, we share them with decision-makers and the public.

Attendees to the Academy's *Climate Fast Forward Conference* learn about climate strategies for Wisconsin.

Credit: Althea Dotzour Photography

Climate Fast Forward Conference & Briefing

After eight years of cultivating leadership and collaboration on climate strategies, we knew the time was right to host Wisconsin's largest-ever public conference on ways to rapidly respond to climate change in our state.

Thanks to support from the McKnight Foundation, Carolyn Foundation, Sally Mead Hands Foundation, and many other sponsors, we brought together 300 people from across Wisconsin at the Monona Terrace in Madison for the Academy's *Climate Fast Forward Conference* on November 8, 2019. Conference participants included state and local government leaders, experts and organizers from nonprofit advocacy organizations, agency staff, scientists, utility experts, community organizers, educators, technical experts from many fields, students, and so many more. The rousing opening session included remarks from Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank followed by perspectives from climate leaders Dan Vimont, Director of the Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research, and Mic Isham, Executive Administrator of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Conference participants broke into groups where they energetically exchanged ideas and connected over shared interests in pursuit of solutions in five key areas: energy generation, energy use, resilience and adaptation, natural

climate solutions, and policy and governance. Each group was charged to bring top recommendations back to the full conference body at the end of the day.

Addressing conference participants at the end of the day, Department of Natural Resources Secretary Preston Cole highlighted the urgency of responding to climate change. Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes responded positively to the recommendations, affirming the Evers administration's partnership in this important work. UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies Dean Paul Robbins noted that the day's effort had produced "diverse, actionable strategies for climate change mitigation," asserting, "Now we have a *Drawdown* [a plan for drawing down carbon emissions] for Wisconsin."

IDEAS
AMPLIFIED

Climate Fast Forward generated seven broad priorities for action and more than 400 ready-to-go recommendations for use by the public and key decision-makers.



Credit (this page): Althea Dotzour Photography

Beyond Sandbags: Strategies for Extreme Weather

In August 2019, with support from the Brookby Foundation, we brought together forty community leaders to collaborate on building a set of priority actions for developing community resilience in the face of extreme, climate change-fueled flooding. In addition to sending participants home with these actions for use in their respective communities, the Academy developed a short video to help public audiences understand the growing threat from climate change-fueled flooding. As one participant stressed: “We need to rethink the ways we live with water—codes and engineering solutions will not save us.” In discussions about local planning and emergency-preparedness, another stated. “We have to stop starving local government.”



Environmental Breakfast Series

Through our Climate & Energy Initiative we host a regular breakfast discussion to share ideas from experts with wider audiences and support civil dialog on complex Wisconsin challenges. These Environmental Breakfast Series events (which moved entirely online after April 2020) have drawn together hundreds of participants to explore and discuss Wisconsin strategies related to reducing Wisconsin's carbon footprint and strengthening community resilience.



Credit: Althea Dotzour Photography



CELEBRATING CREATIVITY & ACHIEVEMENT



Wisconsin Academy members and program participants believe that *Wisconsin* culture is worth preserving and cultivating. We're proud of Wisconsin ideas, and we find that too often, as Wisconsinites, we don't celebrate our own creativity or achievements. The Academy is proud of Wisconsin ideas and through our Fellows and Literary awards we seek to showcase the incredible thinkers and doers we have here in our state.

Attendees at the Academy's GALA150 enjoyed presentations by historical re-enactors and contemporary Academy "champions" for the sciences, arts, and letters.

Credit: Althea Dotzour Photography



Credit (both pages): Althea Dotzour Photography

GALA150

This year the Academy celebrated 150 years of Wisconsin creativity and achievement. To mark the occasion, we hosted GALA150 on March 6 at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Over 200 people gathered together to support the Academy, explore the science of champagne, savor the arts through unique musical and theatrical performances, and enjoy the camaraderie of friends over a Wisconsin-sourced dinner.

It was an unforgettable evening honoring the Academy's past, present, and future, made possible by the many sponsors and friends who recognize and value the Academy's significant contributions to Wisconsin over the decades.



Thanks to our GALA150 sponsors and partners:

Amanda White Consulting

Dane Arts

The Evjue Foundation, the charitable extension of *The Capital Times*

Huston Design

Madison Community Foundation

PBS Wisconsin

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Science is Fun

TrustPoint

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University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

UW Health/UnityPoint Health
Meriter/Quartz

WegnerCPAs

Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation

Wisconsin Arts Board

Wisconsin Book Festival

Wisconsin Historical Society

Wisconsin Humanities Council

Wisconsin Public Radio

WiSys Technology Foundation

Working Draft Beer Company

A special thanks to our GALA150 Committee: Tina Abert, Roberta Filicky-Peneski, Jane Hamblen, and Andy Richards.



Credit: Jesse Paucek

Literary Awards

Each year, writers and poets across Wisconsin are invited to submit their work to the *Wisconsin People & Ideas* Fiction and Poetry Contests. This year, the contest received 77 fiction manuscripts and 669 poems, from which contest judges Tom Miller (fiction) and Dasha Kelly Hamilton (poetry) selected six winners (see below) as well as numerous honorable mentions.

Winners receive awards of \$500 to \$100, publication in *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, and a reading at the Wisconsin

Book Festival. First-place winners in both categories also receive a one-week writers' residency at Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts in Mineral Point. For many of our contest winners, these prizes are the first time they are rewarded for their creative work—let alone recognized for it. For some, the contest is life changing, providing the encouragement and exposure they need to pursue their writerly dreams.

FICTION CONTEST

1ST PLACE

Exile

Steve Fox

Hudson

2ND PLACE

Spirit Box

Nikki Kallio

Waupaca

3RD PLACE

Mirror Box

Michael Hopkins

Neenah

POETRY CONTEST

1ST PLACE

Greyhound

Robert Russell

Madison

2ND PLACE

Morning's Detour

Mary Wehner

Fond du Lac

3RD PLACE

Nineteen Forty-Five

Jeri McCormick

Madison



Credit: MN Reynolds Photography

Academy Fellows Awards

The Academy named seven new Wisconsin Academy Fellows for 2020, each selected based on his or her substantial contributions to the cultural and intellectual life of our state.

The excitement surrounding our January announcement was tempered by the subsequent postponement of the April 17 Fellows Award Ceremony & Reception due to Covid-19 related restrictions on gatherings. We look forward to a celebratory event when it is safe to gather again in the future. Congratulations to our 2020 Wisconsin Academy Fellows!

Since 1982, we have recognized 165 individuals as Wisconsin Academy Fellows. Over the years, we have been honored that many of our Fellows choose to participate in Academy programs, further sharing their knowledge, talent, and other gifts with the people of Wisconsin.

Thank you to our 2020 Fellows Selection Committee:

Steven Ackerman	Jane Hamblen (chair)
Tino Balio	Paul Hayes
Marcia Bjornerud	Joe Heim
Malcolm Brett	Dipesh Navsaria

2020 WISCONSIN ACADEMY FELLOWS



SARA BALBIN
Visual Artist
Drummond



KIMBERLY M. BLAESER
Poet & Educator
Burlington



RICHARD R. BURGESS
Molecular Biologist
Madison



MIK DERKS
Documentary Producer
Madison



HALLET J. "BUD" HARRIS
Wetland Ecologist
De Pere



J. VAL KLUMP
Great Lakes Limnologist
Milwaukee



NASIA SAFDAR
Infectious Disease
Physician & Researcher
Madison

In Appreciation of our 2019-2020 Donors & Sponsors

The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters is pleased to publicly acknowledge the community of donors who gave combined cash or in-kind contributions of \$100 or more between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our many endeavors this past year. With your help, we reached our annual fundraising goals. Together we are building a brighter future inspired by Wisconsin ideas.

*Special thanks to everyone who invested in our future by providing funding in connection to our 150th Anniversary.

THE MINERVA SOCIETY

Annual Contribution of \$10,000+

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–Great Performance Fund
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Heritage Tavern

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Table Wines
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Milwaukee Ballet
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Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra
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Additional thanks to our Gala150 presenters and volunteers

Randall Berndt
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Colleen Madden
Jerry Marra
Marsha McDonald
Curt Meine
Joe Moskwa
Ella Nowicki
Rob Nurre
James Ridge
Margaret Rozga
Bassam Shakashiri
Chrissy Widmayer

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The Full Circle Society

Connecting your values to your legacy



Elizabeth McCoy



Ira Baldwin



Nancy Noeske



Harry Steenbock

The Full Circle Society recognizes and thanks those who have included the Wisconsin Academy in their estate plan. Their generosity provides the financial cornerstone for building a future of possibilities and furthering our promise to enrich the scientific and cultural fabric of our state.

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Joseph D. & Patricia M. Heim	Linda L. Ware
Jane C. Hutchison	Patricia Weisberg*

Thank you to all our Full Circle Society members for leaving a legacy gift. Members and friends are encouraged to consider including the Wisconsin Academy and Wisconsin Academy Foundation in your estate plans. Every planned gift has the power to complete the circle that connects us to our past and our future.

If you are not listed in the Full Circle Society, but have made a commitment or would like more information about leaving your legacy to the Wisconsin Academy, please contact Amanda E. Shilling at 608-733-6633 x16. You can also contact her if you are interested in growing either of our named endowment funds.

Named Endowment Funds

In 2017, Wisconsin Academy Foundation established two endowment funds:

The Terry Haller Fund for the Arts to celebrate the retirement of long-serving Board member Terry Haller

The Thomas Pleger Memorial Fund to celebrate the life of former Board member Tom Pleger (1969-2017)

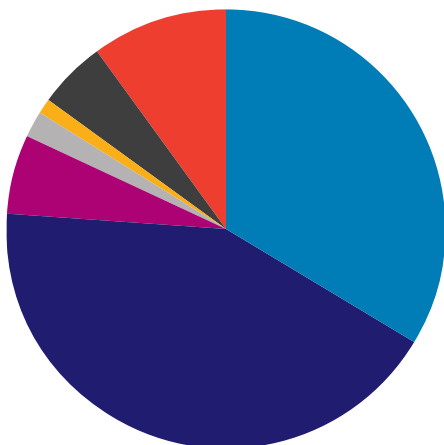
Wisconsin Academy Foundation

Established in 1992, the Wisconsin Academy Foundation is a separate 501(c)3 dedicated to the stewardship of the Academy's endowment as a way to provide the Academy with a steady source of income in perpetuity. Currently, this income represents approximately one-third of total annual funds needed for Academy programming and operations.

A special thank you to the many donors who contributed to the Great Performance Fund at the Madison Community Foundation, which is separate from the permanent endowment held by the Wisconsin Academy Foundation. The Great Performance Fund directly supports Academy Talks and James Watrous Gallery programming at Overture Center for the Arts.

**Gift has been realized.*

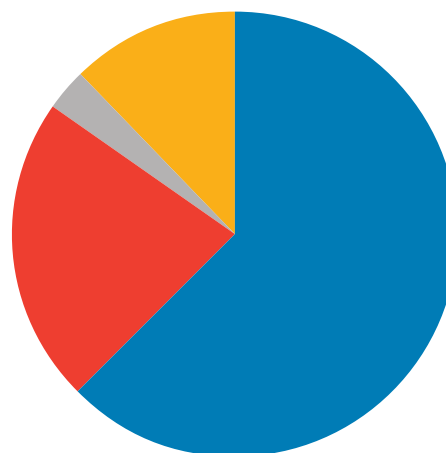
WISCONSIN ACADEMY 2020 Year-End Financial Statement



Fiscal Year 2020 Revenues

Fiscal year ending June 30, 2020

34%	Academy Foundation Distributions
43%	Contributions
6%	Grant Revenue
2%	Membership Dues
>1%	Earned Income
5%	Conference & Events
10%	Paycheck Protection Program



Fiscal Year 2020 Expenses

Fiscal year ending June 30, 2020

62%	Program-Related Expenses
23%	Administration
3%	Membership & Development
12%	Communications

Statement of Activity

Fiscal year ending June 30, 2020

Revenue

Academy Foundation Distributions	\$ 303,188
Contributions	388,035
Grant Revenue	51,831
Donated Services	0
Membership Dues	16,182
Earned Income	2,496
Conference & Events	41,873
Paycheck Protection Program	91,607

Total Revenue \$ 895,212

Expenses

Program-Related Expenses	\$ 643,966
Administration	232,375
Membership & Development	33,899
Communications	122,962

Total Expenses \$ 1,033,202

Change in net assets \$ 66,793

Net assets - Beginning of year \$ 297,646

Net assets - End of Year \$ 364,439

Statement of Financial Position

as of June 30, 2020

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 361,376
Fixed assets, net	52,052
Prepaid expenses	8,497
Accounts receivable	4,300
Unconditional promises to give	2,000

Total Assets \$ 428,225

Liabilities

Accrued payroll, taxes, and vacation	\$ 42,247
Unearned revenue	11,289
Paycheck Protection Program refundable advance	7,199
Accounts Payable	3,051
Line of credit	0

Total Liabilities \$ 63,786

Total Net Assets \$ 364,439

Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$ 428,225

This is a summarized financial presentation. Complete audited financial statements are available upon request. Auditors: Wegner CPAs, LLP

About this Report

The Wisconsin Academy is an 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization (EIN 39-1054856) dedicated to creating a better world by connecting Wisconsin people and ideas. Our endowment is managed by the Wisconsin Academy Foundation, a separate 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization (EIN 39-1681809).

In an effort to provide transparency and context for our operations, the Wisconsin Academy publishes an annual report. For a digital version of our 2020 Impact Report, visit wisconsinacademy.org/2020ImpactReport.



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