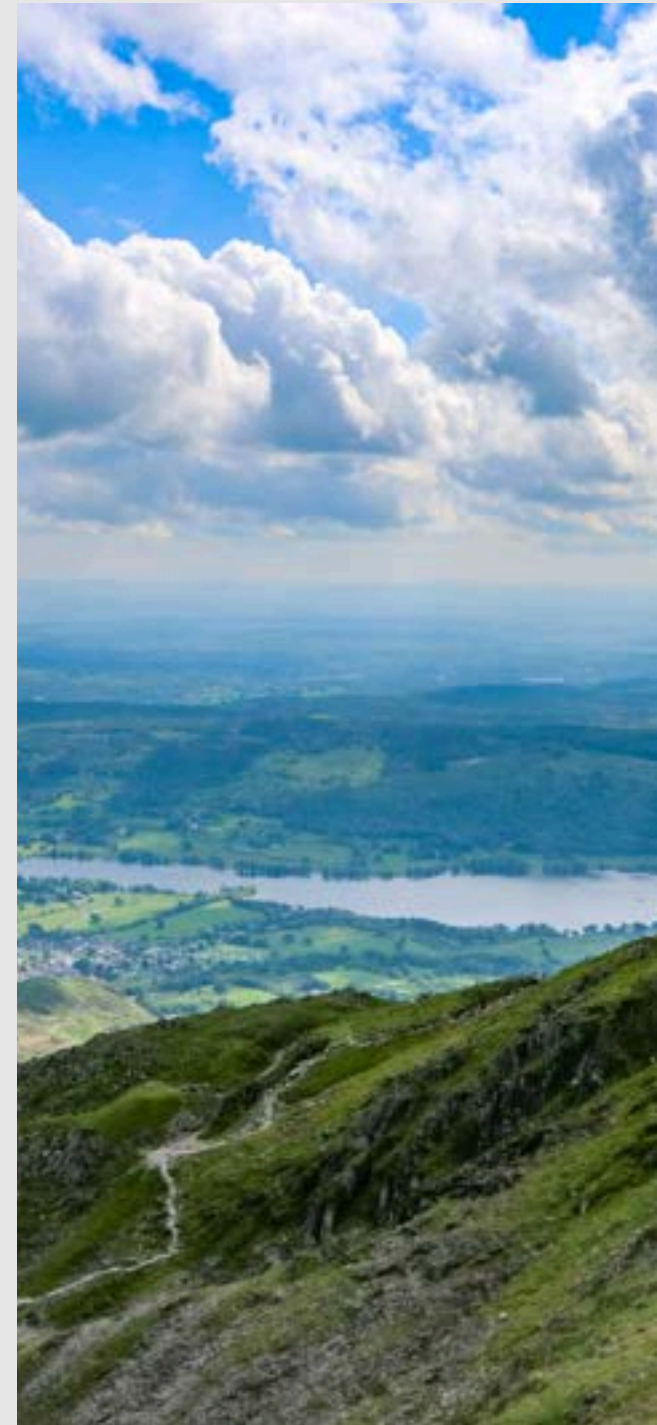




**LAND + NATURE**  
SKILLS SERVICE

**THE GATEWAY TO  
LAND AND NATURE  
BASED CAREERS IN  
CUMBRIA**



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# INTRODUCTION



The Land + Nature Skills Service (LANSS) was launched in September 2024. This brochure sets out our progress and highlights our future ambitions.

## ABOUT LANSS

The LANSS purpose is to support a skilled and inclusive workforce fit for the future of land and nature based work in Cumbria. LANSS is a facilitation service working with local businesses and training providers on engagement, research and delivery. LANSS hosts a unique searchable database of courses and work based opportunities in Cumbria.

## LANSS AIMS

- **Connect** people with learning and training opportunities relevant to land and nature-based work in Cumbria.
- **Co-ordinate** across the sector to enable the most effective array of learning and training opportunities to be offered.
- **Promote** land-and-nature based work in Cumbria, with realism and inclusivity.



# ESTABLISHING LANSS

The Land + Nature Skills Service was established via a partnership between Cumbria Chamber of Commerce, University of Cumbria, Cumbria Wildlife Trust and The Farmer Network. Cumbria Chamber of Commerce are the Accountable Body and University of Cumbria the Host. Representatives from the respective organisations sit on the Governing Board together with representatives from Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council and North Pennines National Landscape.



LANSS has received funding from the following organisations



Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

Farming in Protected Landscapes programme

# THE LAND + NATURE SKILLS SERVICE



Cumbria is England's second largest county, supporting approximately 19,000 rural sector jobs. In 2021 Newton Rigg, Cumbria's specialist land-based further education college closed, leaving Cumbria without an obvious hub to address the need for a highly skilled localised land and nature based workforce, fit for the future.

LANSS was established in 2024, following research by the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission which confirmed the need for such a Skills Service in Cumbria.

For many people it is hard to conceptualise a career in land and nature, and harder to picture training pathways close to home in such a rural area. LANSS works to highlight the wide variety of land-and nature-based careers found in Cumbria and to showcase the range of pathways available to attain these careers.

LANSS is about collaborative working and connecting people via our comprehensive searchable database showcasing courses, local training, volunteering vacancies, work experience positions and apprenticeships that are available within the sector. LANSS acts as a facilitator between employers, training providers and other stakeholders.

## LANSS focuses on three user groups:

### Learners

The work of LANSS begins by engaging young people in Year 9 as they consider what to choose as their GCSEs and continues with showcasing education and training options for 16+ and 18+ in Cumbria. LANSS also aims to inspire those people looking for a career change to consider the land and nature sector and showcases stories of others who have moved into a new career. For those already working in the sector who want to upskill with CPD opportunities, or who require mandatory training for their current work, LANSS advertises the available courses.

### Providers

LANSS supports careers leads/teachers and provides a link between education & training providers, small businesses and employers. This enables the promotion of traditional and non-traditional training and job opportunities to the next generation. LANSS provides a collective voice and adaptability in terms of training delivery and bespoke project facilitation.

### Employers

LANSS works collaboratively with employers and a range of partners both locally and nationally to ensure a joined-up approach to skills development. LANSS also researches employers' needs and the skills gaps they are seeing in the current workforce.

# THE LANSS WEBSITE

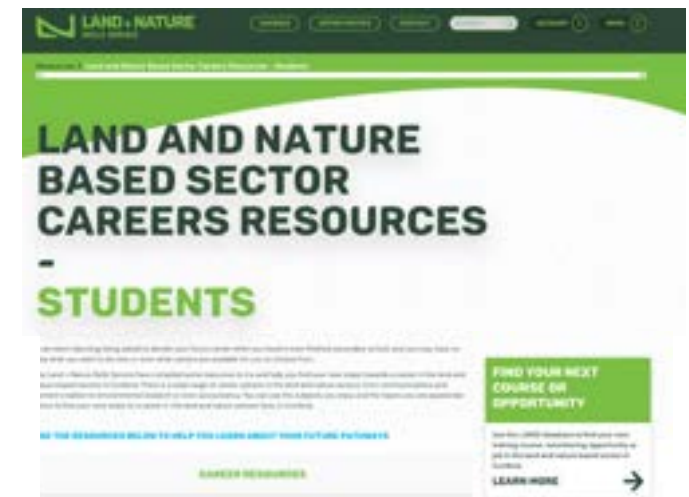


Since the launch of the LANSS website, the number of visitors to the site has steadily grown together with an increasing number of providers using the website to upload their courses and opportunities.

The LANSS website hosts a searchable database of courses, training, volunteering and job opportunities. LANSS users can also find topical news stories and a calendar of events relating to the land and nature based sector on the website. The website showcases stories from professionals and students working and studying in the sector, highlighting the wide variety of opportunities.

The LANSS team constantly research and develop new content to add to the LANSS website in order to improve the user experience.

“I really liked the layout of the website, the colours are engaging and the icons make the information easy to understand. I like the fact that you can easily filter your search and then find all the details of a course in one place as this means less time is wasted looking for opportunities.” – Eve, work experience student July 2025



# OUTREACH

The LANSS team has attended more than 100 events across the county, engaging thousands of people. These events range from careers fairs to business networking events, and include events aimed at each of the three user groups of the service.

The LANSS attendance at these events included facilitating, hosting, giving presentations and taking part in panel discussions. In order for LANSS to engage a variety of audiences at events, a range of resources and materials have been developed.



"Last Spring, the Farmer Network worked with the LANSS team on three special events aimed at the next generation of farmers on the theme of 'Your Soil: Your Future'. The events were held on farms in the Lake District, North Pennines and Yorkshire Dales and attracted over 50 young people in the early stages of their farming careers. We are now working with LANSS organising events this Spring in the West of Cumbria to help the next generation with the skills they need for their future farming journey." – Veronica Waller, The Farmer Network, Senior Project Manager





# RESEARCH

The LANSS team supports research into skills provision within Cumbria. LANSS sits on a range of strategic groups and boards to ensure that the land and nature sector is given a voice. Consequently, the LANSS team provide insight into the skills, training and career landscape within the land and nature sector in Cumbria.

LANSS receives support from the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) to undertake research and engagement with employers and providers to map the skills provision landscape in Cumbria.

As part of LANSS' research a Skills and Training Working Group has been set up for stakeholders to attend and share experiences and barriers to providing training, providing meaningful work experience and taking on apprentices in Cumbria. Through the Working Group LANSS is able to research and facilitate new bespoke projects to benefit the sector.

"The Ernest Cook Trust is part of a wide community that nurtures a natural connection to the countryside, and we are proud of the strong and purposeful collaboration that has grown between the Ernest Cook Trust and the Land and Nature Skills Service. Together with the LANSS team and other organisations in the steering group, we have a shared commitment to young people, rural communities, and the future of our lands. How we connect with land and nature today, impacts the way our lives are experienced tomorrow – with LANSS we are opening clearer pathways into land-based careers, strengthening local skills, and ensuring that every young person can see a future for themselves in the places they call home." – Vicki McDermott, Ernest Cook Trust Head of Learning, Operations and Partnerships (North)



# COMMUNICATIONS

LANSS delivers a newsletter on a monthly basis with current subscription levels around 300. It acts to connect learners with training and work opportunities. View the latest issues of the LANSS newsletter [here](#).

The LANSS social media channels have been steadily growing in follower numbers since the launch of LANSS with over 1700 followers across all platforms. We consistently see good engagement with our content, directly leading to individuals finding new opportunities.

LANSS promoted a Community Gardener Job from Art Gene for their Allotment Soup in January 2026 and received the following feedback:

“Wonderful. Thank you so much for sharing. We're delighted to have received applications already, no doubt as a result of your advocacy.”

“Thank you for your help LANSS, we've just made an excellent appointment. In recent years we've found it challenging to find a good fit with similarly advertised roles, so this is a great result.”

“I very much appreciate the work that LANSS does, promoting local news and opportunities in the land and nature based sector as it has been directly relevant to my interests and has led to me finding this role with the Silviculture Academy” – Naomi, Forest Research Assistant at Silviculture Academy

LANSS SOCIAL MEDIA



# COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The LANSS team have been working on a wide range of projects within the sector and have been collaborating with a variety of organisations to help promote skills provision.

W&FC were able to provide funding to LANSS via the Climate and Nature Partnership Grant “A skills strategy must be included as part of our nature strategies, management plans and economic growth strategies, to ensure that we are building a workforce fit for facing the challenges of the future such as climate change and nature recovery. . The LANSS helps to join up providers of land and nature-based skills with people interested in this sector, and helps to make adults and young people aware of the wide ranging skills and opportunities in this area” – Hannah Girvan, Westmorland and Furness Council, Senior Manager for Climate and Nature



“Cumberland Council is delighted to support LANSS in working alongside local residents to increase land-based sector skills both now and in the future. Through Cumberland’s UKSPF programme, support has been provided through the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) to increase the knowledge base of those already working in the sector, and for those considering a land-based sector career.” –

Chris Cunliffe, Skills & Enterprise Officer, Thriving Place & Investment Sustainable Growth & Transport, Cumberland Council



LANSS plays an active role in Cumbria's LSIP, which is led by Cumbria Chamber of Commerce. With land-based highlighted as a key sector for the county, LANSS is a member of the Employer Representative Body (ERB) Group and receives funding through LSIP to undertake research and engagement aimed at addressing skills and provision gaps in the sector.



"There is so much Land and Nature in Cumbria, it makes our stunning county. But today's generations are not aware of the variety of jobs available in the land-based sector. There is no single organisation that promotes anything about these careers and what they involve, and there are lots of people that could upskill into these roles. The Land and Nature Skills Service (LANSS) has helped rectify this over the last year, and plays an integral part in the delivery of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, in meeting the skills and employment needs of the land-based sector" – Kev Warman, Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Engagement Manager

LANSS is also included in Enterprising Cumbria's Going for Growth Strategy, Cumberland Council's Economic and Inclusive Growth Strategy and represents the land based sector on a number of steering groups.

"LANSS is essential for Cumbria's land-based sector. It helps connect education with industry needs, and strengthens our future workforce. By aligning with Cumbria's Going for Growth strategy, LANSS supports sustainable growth and ensures the sector remains competitive and resilient." – Cath Dutton MBE, Strategic Careers Lead, Enterprising Cumbria



LANSS are a member of the steering group of the Chartered Institute of Ecologists and Environmental Managers (CIEEM), Green Jobs for Nature initiative. Green Jobs for Nature works on a national scale, with a focus on underrepresented groups, to promote green careers to young people and to assist them in attaining a green career. LANSS have collaborated with the Green Jobs for Nature initiative on a range of projects including delivering a workshop entitled “Landscapes for the Future: Exploring Careers in Rural Land Management” as part of the Green Careers Week Festival 2025, which reached an audience of over 4,900 students across the country.



"LANSS have been an important and active partner in the Green Jobs for Nature project, supporting the work to increase the visibility of roles in the sector and the pathways in. A highlight was the session during Green Careers Week, which demonstrated the variety of roles in protected landscapes". – Brian Heppenstall MCIEEM, CIEEM Education and Careers Manager

LANSS have worked with a range of small organisations across the land-and nature-based sector to facilitate the delivery of new training opportunities and projects.

"It's been a pleasure to have been involved with LANSS on various projects over the last 12 months, the LANSS staff have been eager to assist with promoting and supporting land-based training project. Most recently, whilst applying to FiPL for funding to run a number of workshops in hedge laying and coppicing, LANSS were able to supply a letter of support for the project proposal. We were subsequently successful in our application, assisted, undoubtedly by the support offered from LANSS. These workshops will be advertised and promoted through the online LANSS portal." – Lee

Bassett, Ozawa Wildlife

LANSS has a close partnership with the University of Cumbria as our host but we also work collaboratively with the University and other partners on a variety of projects and training opportunities, showcasing the wide variety of land-and nature-based opportunities available in Cumbria.



"With an extensive network in Cumbria, the Land and Nature Skills Service are able to connect University of Cumbria students with opportunities to enhance their work-related skills through for example, volunteering with a range of local organisations. LANSS also supports promotion of our CPD short courses to those already working in the land-based sector. Their work in raising awareness of land-based careers and the various educational routes to access them, supports us in promoting the variety of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and apprenticeship courses offered at the University of Cumbria across subjects such as Forestry, Conservation, Zoology, Outdoor Studies and Geography.

LANSS are also supporting the University's partnership with the World Food Prize Foundation, promoting participation in the Global Challenge youth development programme to young people 15-18 years of age, with the first UK Youth Institute being held in April 2026 at the University of Cumbria's Ambleside campus". – Dr. Liz Mallabon, Head of Learning, Teaching and Student Experience in the Institute of Science and Environment, University of Cumbria

LANSS has worked closely with Kendal College since our launch to promote the range of training available to young people in the land-and nature-sector in Cumbria. LANSS has also worked with Kendal College to facilitate the clear communication between learners, providers and employers in the county to highlight skills gaps and training delivery requirements.



“LANSS plays a pivotal role in championing the training needs of the Cumbrian land-based sector—acting as a single voice that bridges industry and education, and creating a clear pathway that connects learners and workplace.” – Dan Stamper, Head of Faculty Agriculture, Animal, Health and Science, Kendal College

LANSS is delighted to be part of the Centre for Leadership and Performance (CforLP) Dream Placement 2025/2026. This is an excellent programme giving the opportunity for young people to develop links with employers, gain valuable experience in applying for jobs and having interviews and for some, a weeklong work placement. This year there was an incredible 300 applicants, with 154 selected for interview and 32 businesses offering a placement.



“CforLP are thrilled to be working in partnership with LANSS to widen the participation of organisations from the land-and nature-sector. It is so important that the young people of Cumbria understand the range of job opportunities available and how their skill sets can be transferred into jobs they might have never even thought about” – Nicola Woolley, Secondary Programme Manager.

# THE LANSS IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

OVER  
**500**  
**COURSES**

Listed on the  
LANSS website

OVER  
**200**  
**OPPORTUNITIES**

Listed on the LANSS website

PARTNERED WITH OVER  
**100**  
**STAKEHOLDERS**

To deliver LANSS

ATTENDED  
**25**  
**CAREERS**  
**EVENTS**

To showcase LANSS

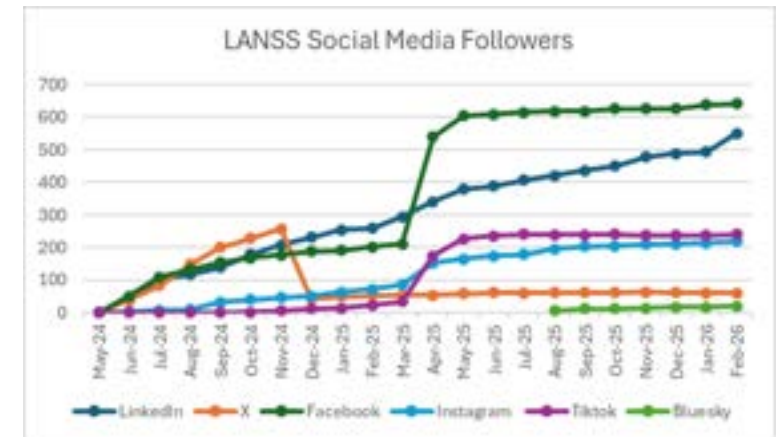
What are our readers interested  
in?



- LANSS activity
- LANSS offer
- LANSS social media
- Provider offer

PARTNERED WITH  
**5**  
**ORGANISATIONS**

To deliver outreach events  
which reached over 300  
people



# THE LANSS IMPACT

Since launch LANSS has seen a variety of real-world impacts for people in Cumbria looking to start or develop a career in the land and nature sector.

LANSS has directly supported small businesses in recruiting for new land-and nature-based roles. By acting as a voice for the land and nature sector LANSS has been able to facilitate the delivery of new training and courses for learners across the county.

“It was a real pleasure to join you all at the Neurofriendly networking event — I thoroughly enjoyed the day and truly appreciated the warm welcome. Thanks for all the work you put into organising such a thoughtful event.” – Jade, iCan Wellbeing and speaker at our event in October 2025

“Thanks very much for promoting the workshops and work opportunity, that's much appreciated. I've had quite a few people enquire about both, many of which came through as a result of your newsletter” – Lee Bassett, Witch Halse Coppice Crafts Jan 2026

LANSS has facilitated inclusive networking opportunities for professionals working within the sector to enable joined-up approaches to the land and nature based sector in Cumbria.

LANSS has collaborated with local organisations to deliver new opportunities to young people looking to develop a career in the land and nature based sector. One example of this is the delivery of three work experience placements for local young people at Wild Garsdale Pike.

# STRUCTURE AND TRANSITION

Now that it is suitably established, LANSS will transition to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This will allow LANSS to become an independent entity and enable LANSS the ability to bid for grant funding to support the future sustainability of the service.

The Trustees of LANSS will be supported by an Advisory Group made up of representatives from the original board and other local stakeholders. It is anticipated that this transition will be completed by Summer 2026.

The service is delivered by three team members.

## **The Charitable Objects are:**

To advance education for the public benefit by facilitating inclusive access to learning, training and careers opportunities related to land and nature based work in Cumbria, coordinating provision across the sector to ensure a comprehensive and effective offer.



The LANSS Team (From left to right): Rachel Toyn LANSS Engagement Facilitator, Tracey Jackson LANSS Manager, Megan Bartlett LANSS Outreach Facilitator

# FUTURE AIMS

To further increase engagement of stakeholder organisations and collaborations.

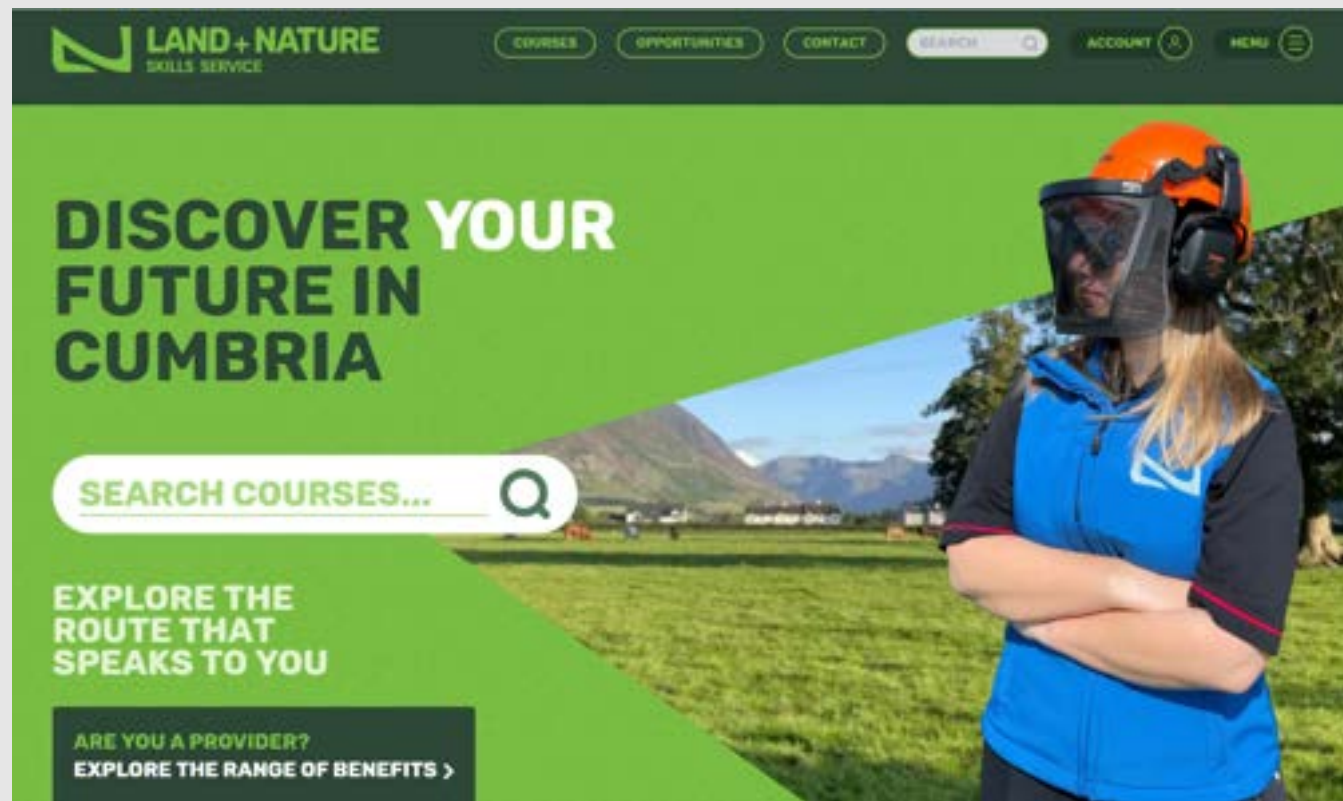
To be a pivotal coordinator, facilitating links between employers, providers and learners.

To be a strategic lead for land and nature based learning and skills in the county, undertaking research to map provision and skills needs in the sector.

To transition into a CIO and secure future funding to enable LANSS to develop as a comprehensive and sustainable service.

To showcase the variety of training courses, careers and opportunities to a wide audience across Cumbria via LANSS website and outreach.

**WITH THANKS  
FOR THE  
GENEROUS SUPPORT  
OF OUR PARTNERS,  
FUNDERS  
AND STAKEHOLDERS**



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