



Share Your Story

2018 4-H Youth in Action Awards Program Guidelines

Submission Deadline: October 23, 2017
Questions: YouthInAction@4-H.org

A. About the 4-H Youth in Action Awards Program

Every 4-H'er has a story, and every story is worth telling! National 4-H Council's 4-H Youth in Action Awards Program is a premier opportunity for youth to share their stories of how 4-H has changed their lives and how they have, in turn, impacted others. Through this program, we will honor four confident leaders who will each receive a \$5,000 scholarship and have the chance to tell their stories on a national level.

The 2018 4-H Youth in Action Awards will recognize four pillar winners – one in each of our core pillar areas. Through a formal selection process, one winner will be chosen in each pillar area: **Agriculture, Citizenship, Healthy Living and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics)**. One of these pillar winners will also be selected as the 2018 4-H Youth in Action National Award Winner.

The 4-H Youth in Action Awards are presented at National 4-H Council's Legacy Awards. The 9th annual Legacy Awards will be held on Tuesday, March 20th, 2018, in Washington, D.C. This special evening of celebration honors the accomplishments of both 4-H youth and the adults who make life-changing experiences possible for millions of 4-H young people. Pillar winners will have the chance to interact with National 4-H Council CEO Jennifer Sirangelo as well as celebrities and other prominent 4-H alumni.

Selecting Your Pillar Area

Within the application you'll be asked to share your story of leadership & community impact within your chosen pillar area. Your work within the pillar area may include a key project, program, or 4-H experience, or it may center around a series of activities in which you've served as a leader. You will self-select the pillar area with which you feel your experiences best align. Each pillar area is represented by a variety of topics, and several examples for each pillar are listed below. Read the pillar area descriptions carefully to choose the best pillar area for your work. If you have any questions regarding which pillar area to select, please contact YouthInAction@4-H.org.

4-H Youth in Action: Agriculture

In Agriculture programs, 4-H'ers experience activities that range from farming & raising animals to growing crops & other resources. Some of the topics that may be covered in the Agriculture pillar include, but are not limited to:

- **Animal Science** – responsibility, proper care & nutrition
- **Veterinary Science** – animal nutrition, examinations & treatment, infectious diseases
- **Biotechnology & Sustainability** – producing healthy, plentiful & environmentally responsible products
- **Plant Science & Forestry** – plants, insects, water, soil, tree identification, forest evaluation

4-H Youth in Action: Citizenship

In Citizenship programs, 4-H'ers experience activities that encourage youth to engage others around causes or issues that are important to the community. Some of the topics that may be covered in the Citizenship pillar area include, but are not limited to:

- **Community Action** - community service, service learning, community youth development
- **Communication & Expressive Arts** - artistic expression, communication
- **Civic Education & Engagement** - history & cultural heritage, civic & social responsibility, government principles, promoting quality of life and advocacy

4-H Youth in Action: Healthy Living

In Healthy Living programs, 4-H'ers may learn about healthy eating, physical fitness, managing emotions, and developing & maintain positive relationships. Some of the topics that may be covered in the Healthy Living pillar area include, but are not limited to:

- **Health, Nutrition & Fitness** – eating right, physical fitness, being active, good hygiene
- **Social & Emotional Well-Being** – alcohol/tobacco/drug use prevention, bullying prevention, stress management, encouraging good decision-making skills

4-H Youth in Action: STEM

In STEM programs, 4-H'ers learn about Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics through hands-on activities and projects. Some of the topics that may be covered in the STEM pillar area include, but are not limited to:

- **Environmental Science & Alternative Energy** - alternative energy, conserving energy, limiting humanity's impact on the environment, natural science
- **Engineering & Technology** – rocketry, computer science, technology, engineering, mathematics

Selection Process

The award selection is a two-round process, determined by a selection committee comprised of National 4-H Council Associates, Board of Trustee members, past 4-H Youth in Action winners and sponsor representatives. The selection is based on how well the applicant demonstrates Personal 4-H Impact and Community Impact in the Pillar Area.

Three finalists will be chosen per pillar. Those finalists will be asked to participate in a 30-minute video interview, which will be recorded. Once chosen, the Pillar Winners will be informed by National 4-H Council. The awardees agree to comply with the requirements set forth in the application and by the Pillar Winner agreement sent by National 4-H Council at the time of selection. Pillar Winners also agree to utilize the 4-H Name and Emblem (Clover) when publicizing the award.

Those not selected will receive an email indicating that their application was not selected. Scores and/or comments concerning individual applications will not be released.

Awards & Recognition

The winner within each of the four pillar areas will receive:

- A \$5,000 scholarship for higher education, to be paid directly to the institution. This includes two-year and four-year colleges, trade schools or other advanced learning opportunities.
- An all-expenses paid trip for the awardee and one chaperone to Washington, D.C. to be recognized at National 4-H Council's Legacy Awards on Tuesday, March 20, 2018, and to participate in training opportunities and media engagements. Youth will have the opportunity to engage with Council leadership as well as celebrities & other prominent 4-H alumni.
- An opportunity to be featured as the 4-H Youth Spokesperson for their pillar area.
- An official reference letter from National 4-H Council President and CEO, Jennifer Sirangelo.

One 4-H Youth in Action National Award winner will be chosen from the four pillar winners and will receive an additional scholarship for higher education and the opportunity to be featured in media spotlights.

B. Qualifications

4-H Youth in Action Award applicants should meet the following qualifications

- A. **4-H Member:** Applicants should be a 4-H member or recent alumni within the United States. The 4-H Youth in Action program is open to youth of all types of 4-H programs.
- B. **Age:** Applicants should be ages 16-19. NOTE: Applicants should fall within this range by January of the application year. Applicants who turn 20 by January 1 of the application year (2017) will not be eligible to apply.
- C. **Impact:** Applicants should be able to share their story in the following areas:
 - **Personal 4-H Impact:** How 4-H impacted the applicant and helped him or her develop life skills to overcome a personal obstacle.
 - **Community Impact in Pillar Area:** How 4-H has empowered the applicant to positively impact the community through the chosen pillar area.

C. Application Requirements

The following criteria is required for an application to be considered acceptable. Successful applicants will receive an email confirmation of their submission. Applicants will NOT receive an email confirmation for incomplete applications. If you are not sure you have received a confirmation email, you may contact National 4-H Council at YouthinAction@4-H.org to confirm the status of your application.

The online application will be live on the National 4-H Council website at www.4-h.org/4-H-Youth-In-Action from **August 1 to October 23, 2017**, and is comprised of the following components:

1. General Information

Youth will submit personal and county/state 4-H leadership contact information.

2. Short Answer Questions

In the following questions, you will be asked to share your 4-H story – how 4-H has impacted your life and what you learned about yourself as a result of being a part of 4-H. You'll also be asked to share your story of leadership and community impact within your chosen pillar area. This work should provide benefit to the community and require significant personal leadership.

1. **Describe how 4-H has impacted your life. (250 words)** How did 4-H change or improve your life? Has your experience in 4-H helped you overcome a personal challenge? What have you learned about yourself through 4-H? Has 4-H helped you define your interests/passions? Are there particular traits or skills you've gained in 4-H?
2. **Give an overview of a 4-H experience, program, project or activities within the pillar area in which you demonstrated leadership. (150 words)** Describe the issue you've become involved with and why you chose this particular area. Define the nature of your leadership role.
3. **Describe in detail how you implemented your work within the pillar area. (300 words)** When and where did your work occur? Is it on-going? What steps did you take to carry out your work? Did teamwork play a role? How did you manage your volunteers (if applicable)? How did youth and adults work together (if applicable)?

4. **Describe how your work in this particular area has improved or influenced your community. (150 words)** Who benefitted from your program or project? What are the long-term effects of your work?

3. Video Submission

An important responsibility of 4-H Youth in Action pillar winners is to serve as spokespeople for their pillar area, sharing their 4-H story. As such, it is important that the pillar winners demonstrate excellence in communication and ability to present themselves. The video submission component of the application should meet the following requirements:

- **Prompt:** Introduce yourself and share how 4-H has impacted your life. This may include similar information to the personal 4-H impact short answer question.
- **Time:** 60 seconds or less
- **Video Specifications:** Should feature the applicant speaking (no other speakers should be featured, and no supporting visuals should be used). May be recorded with a smart phone or other recording device – no sophisticated equipment or editing is expected.
- **Video Upload:** May be uploaded to YouTube, Vimeo, or other video sharing website. Applicants will submit a link to the video on the online application and should ensure that the video is viewable by anyone with the video link.

4. Photo Submission

Each applicant should submit three photos demonstrating his or her work within the pillar area. These should be three individual photos; photo montages will not be reviewed. Photos will be submitted as an attachment with the application. File formats accepted include JPG, GIF, or PNG. Photo files should not exceed 5 MB each.

5. Reference Form

Applicants will also submit a completed reference form. This form is available for download on the 4-H Youth in Action website and will provide reference to the applicant's 4-H experience and leadership skills. After completion, the youth should scan and upload the reference form to his or her application. A letter of recommendation should not be submitted in place of or in addition to the reference form, as it will not be reviewed.

This form should be completed by a 4-H educator, 4-H volunteer, community leader, or key project stakeholder, and it should not be completed by a parent, relative or youth. Once the top 3 finalists in each pillar area have been selected, National 4-H Council will contact the individual who completed the reference form for authenticity verification.

6. 4-H Verification

The online application requires applicants to supply their State staff or County 4-H Extension Agent's name and contact information. Applicants must have approval by a State Program Leader or County Extension Agent with 4-H oversight for an application to be officially considered. Once the 3 finalists in each pillar are selected, National 4-H Council will contact the identified staff member asking that they verify the applicant as a current 4-H member.

IMPORTANT: It is highly recommended that applicants connect with their State Program Leader and/or County 4-H Extension Staff prior to completing the online application, as verification is a requirement for an applicant to advance to the finalist round of selection. The staff member will be allowed 3 days to complete the verification.



D. Award Timeline

Date	Action
August 1, 2017	Online application opens
October 23, 2017	Online application closes
Week of November 13, 2017	Finalists selected
November 16-22, 2017	Online interviews begin <i>(If selected as a finalist, a 4-H staff member will have 3 business days to confirm an applicant's participation in 4-H)</i>
Week of December 18, 2017	Award notifications sent to all applicants. All applicants will be notified via email. No phone or email inquiries, please.
February 2018	Pillar winners announced to the 4-H Field.
January – February 2018	Professional coaching for media and PR. Video shoot for National 4-H Council's Legacy Award spotlight. Travel arrangements finalist for trip to Washington, D.C.
February 2018	Pillar winners announced externally to local community & media
March 18-21, 2018	National 4-H Council's Legacy Awards in Washington, D.C. All winners must attend.

E. Questions?

We are glad to have you apply for the 2018 4-H Youth in Action Awards! We know that the application is an extensive process and you may have questions. Please use the following contacts:

General Award Questions: contact YouthInAction@4-H.org

Online Submission Issues: contact webadmin@4-H.org

We look forward to seeing your 4-H Youth in Action submission by October 23, 2017!