Columbia County 4-H

Educational Travel Opportunities – Application Packet

This packet contains:

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Choose one of the following application times:

FALL APPLICATIONS

ALL MATERIALS DUE:
Fri., October 9, 2026

INTERVIEWS:
Wed., October 14, 2026

SPRING APPLICATIONS

ALL MATERIALS DUE:
Fri., February 19, 2027

INTERVIEWS:
Wed., February 24, 2027

A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET REQUIRES ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Educational Travel Opportunity Selection Form with Signatures of Parent/Guardian and 4-H Club Leader
- Cover letter with Your Signature
- Resume
- Application Reflection
- Interview Schedule Sheet

Applications are due no later than 4:30pm of the due date. Late applications will not be accepted. Hardcopies can be brought to the Extension office or mailed to Becky Pfile, 112 E. Edgewater St. Rm #212, Portage, WI 53901. Electronic copies can be emailed to becky.pfile@wisc.edu.

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Columbia County 4-H

Guide to Apply for Educational Travel Opportunities

The Columbia County 4-H Leader's Association invites you to apply for sponsorship to attend one or more of the statewide or national events and opportunities available to youth members in grades 6-13. The Columbia County 4-H Leader's Association will pay ½ the registration cost of one educational travel opportunity per member annually. Members may attend each experience only one time with 4-H Leader's Association support. An exception will be made for a member nominated and then selected to be part of the state's National 4-H Conference delegation. In that case, the 4-H Leader's Association will pay ½ of the member's registration cost for National 4-H Conference and the member may choose to attend one other trip, with 4-H Leader's Association support, in the year they are selected to be part of the state's National 4-H Conference delegation.

A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET REQUIRES ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Awards and Educational Travel Opportunity Selection Form with Parent/Guardian and 4-H Club Leader signatures
- Cover letter with Your Signature
- Resume
- Application Reflection
- Interview Schedule Sheet

Applying for sponsorship is a two-part process:

Part 1 – Application: Youth must submit a written application that consists of a cover letter, a resume, and the selection form indicating the trip the applicant is interested in attending. Applicants should highlight the skills they have developed durin their 4-H experience. In the application process, youth will:

- Use time management skills to prepare the materials and ensure they are submitted on time.
- Build valuable record keeping and written communication skills.

Part 2 – Interview: Youth applicants will participate in an interview with a small panel of 4-H adult volunteers and community members. In the interview process, youth will:

- Practice verbal communication and social skills as they talk about their 4-H experiences in a way that is understandable to people both within 4-H and outside of 4-H.
- Use critical thinking skills to formulate appropriate answers to interview questions.

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Travel Opportunities Sponsored By Columbia County 4-H Leaders Association

Note: You can apply for any of the following experiences during either the fall or spring application period.

Recommended to apply for sponsorship during fall 2026:

Trip Info	Age Eligibility	Total Cost (estimated)	Your Cost (approx.)
Fall Forum – November 6-8, 2026 in Green Lake, WI Connect, collaborate, celebrate, and build excitement and energy for a new 4-H year of learning. Fall Forum – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 7-13	$160	$80
Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership – November 13-15, 2026 at Upham Woods The mission of the YPCL Conference is to advance youth voice in WI by increasing the capacity for youth and adults to share civic leadership in local communities, schools, and organizations. Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership	Ages 14-18	$200	$100
Ignite by 4-H – March 15-21, 2027 in Washington D.C. For four days, teens from all over the country come to D.C. to collaborate, connect, and cultivate a passion for expanding their minds and their world – becoming resilient and ready for everything life has to offer. Teens will immerse themselves in hands-on workshops, experiences, activities in their key programming areas. Ignite by 4-H – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 10-12	$2500	$1250
Citizenship Washington Focus at Ignite by 4-H – March 15-21, 2027 in Washington D.C. Strengthen an understanding of the democratic process and cultivate leadership skills rooted in civic responsibility. Citizenship Washington Focus – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 10-12	$2600	$1300
National 4-H Conference – 2027 Dates TBD in Washington D.C. National 4-H Conference annually brings 4-H youth and adults from around the nation to work towards strengthening the 4-H program at local, state, and national levels. National 4-H Conference – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 10-12	$2000	$1000
Space Camp – April 30 – May 2, 2027 in Huntsville, AL Space camp participants experience life as an astronaut, what it would be like to work at NASA, and participate in hands-on space simulations. Space Camp – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 6-8	$1300	$650
***NEW** **Beyond Wisconsin: Exploring the Midwest – February 11 – 15, 2027 in St. Louis, Missouri** Over President's Day weekend in February 2027, youth will journey from Wisconsin to St. Louis, Missouri, by coach bus for an adventure that blends fun, learning, and cultural discovery. Along the way, participants will explore science museums, art centers, and enjoy live music and performances, all while sampling local flavors like St. Louis-style barbecue. Beyond Wisconsin: Exploring the Midwest – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 6-8	TBD Check 4-H Online	TBD
4-H Zoo Apprentice Camp – December 27 – 31, 2027 at Busch Gardens in Tampa, FL and SeaWorld in Orlando, FL Become an amateur zookeeper and discover firsthand what it takes to care for animals from around the world. Assist zoo staff behind the scenes and observe animal care sessions. 4-H Zoo Apprentice Camp	Ages 11 and up	$975	$488 plus assistance with travel expenses
***NEW** **State Judging Teams (Dairy, Meats, Livestock)** Youth on these teams may apply for sponsorship to attend national events out of WI.			Up to $1500

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Recommended to apply for sponsorship during spring 2027:

Trip Info	Age Eligibility	Total Cost (estimated)	Your Cost (approx.)
WI 4-H Arts Ambassadors – June 2027 **Arts Team, Drama Company, and Photo Fanatics** Arts Ambassadors will learn leadership, interpersonal skill,s and how to promote the 4-H Expressive Arts, while focusing on your art spark. State Arts Ambassadors – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 9-13	$700	$350
American Spirit East – June 25 – July 3, 2027 Learn about America's heritage and build awareness of the many steps taken to gain US independence and freedom by visiting historical site in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and more. American Spirit – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 8-10	$3000	$1500
Summer Academy – June 13 – 17, 2027 at UW-Madison Campus Discover career pathways. Participants learn about having a career in Ag, STEM, service, leadership, arts, trades, and more. Summer Academy – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 8-11	$150	$75
Columbia County 4-H Discovers: Chicago! – Summer 2027 (Dates TBD) Experience one of America's most exciting cities on this 3-day, 2-night adventure to Chicago! Youth participants will help design the itinerary and choose the attractions, experiences, and destinations that interest them most. Potential stops may include the Art Institute of Chicago, Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago Theatre, and much more. Build the trip, then experience it together!	Grades 6-12	$600	$300
National 4-H Congress - November 2027 Dates TBD in Atlanta, GA Travel by plane to GA where attendees will spend Thanksgiving weekend being motivated and inspired as they celebrate accomplishments they and others have made in 4-H. National 4-H Congress – Wisconsin 4-H	Grades 9-12	$1500	$750
***NEW** State Judging Teams (Dairy, Meats, Livestock)** Youth on these teams may apply for sponsorship to attend national events out of WI.			Up to $1500

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Columbia County 4-H

Cover Letter Outline (note use 12 pt. font)

DATE

UW-Extension
Educational Travel Opportunity Selection Committee
% Columbia County 4-H
112 E. Edgewater St., Room 212
Portage, WI 53901

Dear Selection Committee:

PARAGRAPH 1:

This is the "who are you?" section. Provide a 1-3 sentence introduction. Include a list of the travel experiences for which you want to be considered.

PARAGRAPHS 2 – 3:

This is the "why me?" section. Explain in no more than two paragraphs why you are well-qualified to represent Columbia County 4-H. Share why you are interested in attending the education travel opportunity. Include what skills you have gained through 4-H and how you will use those skills during the opportunity or when sharing about your experiences after you return. Give examples to help explain your statements.

FINAL PARAGRAPH:

Close the letter. Thank the committee for considering your application.

Sincerely,

Type your name here and hand-write your signature above.
(Don't forget to sign your letter!)

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Resume Outline

NAME
ADDRESS LINE 1
ADDRESS LINE 2
PHONE NUMBER
E-MAIL

EDUCATION	School name and current grade
4-H SUMMARY	4-H club name, years in 4-H (do not count years as a Cloverbud). List the major projects in which you are or have been enrolled and include the number of years.
4-H ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT	Summarize the 4-H activities in which you have participated and the number of years you participated. Include leadership and community service involvement, on the club, county, and state levels.
SKILL DEVELOPMENT	Translate what you have learned as a result of participation in 4-H projects and activities into skills you have developed.
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	Translate what you have learned as a result of participation in 4-H projects and activities into personal attributes.
OTHER	In this section, include school activities, work experience, extracurricular activities, etc. and the number of years you participated.

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Interviews

All 4-H members applying for an educational travel opportunity will be interviewed.

Members should be prepared to answer the following questions in their interview:

1. What are your leadership goals? Accomplishments? Leadership experiences/programs? Be prepared to show variety and depth.

2. For the projects and activities that you have been involved in, what goals have you set and/or accomplished? How have you grown? Be prepared to discuss the knowledge and skills you have gained, as well as your accomplishments. Finally, what leadership roles or teaching activities have you taken part in?

3. Based upon your experiences in 4-H, what is an important concern of yours that you feel 4-H has helped you deal with positively? What has 4-H specifically done to help you in dealing with this concern?

4. What changes could be made for 4-H to improve the opportunities or education for members? How would your proposed change help? (Show evidence of thought and insight.)

5. Why do you want to participate in one of the educational travel opportunities? Why do you feel you would be a good representative of Columbia County 4-H?

6. How do you describe 4-H to someone who does not know about 4-H?

7. What are the most significant projects you have done during your 4-H career, and how long have you done them?

8. What are the most important life skills you have mastered as a result of your 4-H work?

9. How has 4-H encouraged you to do service within your club, school or community? How has community service made a difference in your life and/or the lives of others?

10. How has 4-H helped you develop your leadership skills? Give us a specific example of a situation where you were a leader.

11. How have the experiences and learning skills developed through 4-H influenced your future goals and plans?

12. If chosen, how would you share what you learned during this opportunity with your club, county or state when you return?

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Educational Travel Opportunity Selection Form

4-H Member's Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

4-H Club _____ Grade (at time of application) _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

By signing this form, I recommend the member for these opportunities and feel they would be a good representative of Columbia County 4-H:

4-H Club Leader's Signature _____

Please mark an X next to the educational experience you are applying for.

2026-2027 Educational Travel Opportunities:

☐	Fall Forum (November 2026)	☐	WI 4-H Arts Ambassadors (June 2027)
☐	Youth as Partners In Civic Leadership (November 2026)	☐	American Spirit East (June/July 2027)
☐	4-H Zoo Apprentice Camp (December 2026)	☐	Summer Academy (June 2027)
☐	Beyond Wisconsin: Exploring the Midwest (February 2027)	☐	Columbia County 4-H Discovers: Chicago! (Summer 2027)
☐	Ignite by 4-H (March 2027)	☐	National 4-H Congress (November 2027)
☐	Citizen Washington Focus at Ignite by 4-H (March 2027)	☐	State Judging Team 2026-27 4-H Year List team and event details below:
☐	Space Camp (April 2027)	☐	
☐	National 4-H Conference (2027 Date TBD)	☐	

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Application Reflection – What do you think?

Please complete the following reflection and submit with your application materials.

1. As a result of constructing my cover letter and resume, I: (check all that apply)

   ☐ Learned more about myself (If checked, list at least one thing that you have learned):

   _____

   ☐ Better understand why I am in 4-H

   ☐ Better understand what skills I have gained while in 4-H

   ☐ Better understand how to develop a resume

   ☐ Will take on a new 4-H challenge this year (If checked, list at least one new challenge you plan to take on this year):

   _____

2. What was the most helpful or valuable part of this application process?

3. What ideas do you have for improving this application process?

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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE PREFERENCE SHEET

Please identify your top four preferences for interview times (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th). Face-to-face interviews are required (either in person or via zoom).

Also, please indicate if there is a time that you are definitely NOT available to interview. Thank you.

Name: _____

Fall Interviews: Wed., Oct., 14, 2026

_____ 5:30 p.m.

_____ 5:45 p.m.

_____ 6:00 p.m.

_____ 6:15 p.m.

_____ 6:30 p.m.

Spring Interviews: Wed., Feb. 24, 2027

_____ 5:30 p.m.

_____ 5:45 p.m.

_____ 6:00 p.m.

_____ 6:15 p.m.

_____ 6:30 p.m.

Please return this form with your application packet.

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