



Columbia County 4-H

Key Award – Application Packet

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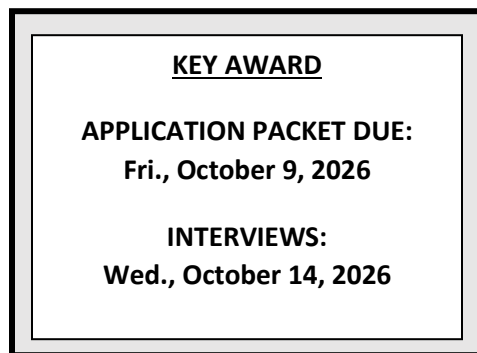
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A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET REQUIRES ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- 4-H Key Award Application Cover Page
- Cover letter with Your Signature
- Resume
- 3 Letters of Recommendation (using attached form)
- Essay
- 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 the Key Award

The 4-H Key Award is the most prestigious award that a 4-H member can receive in Wisconsin 4-H. It recognizes a select group of 4-H participants who have demonstrated consistent growth in their 4-H involvement, developed and applied their leadership skills, and actively participated in the functions of their 4-H club and community. To be eligible, candidates for this award must be in 9th grade or older and must have completed at least three years of 4-H and one year of youth leadership.

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- Cover letter with Your Signature
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Applying for the 4-H Key Award is a two-part process:

Part 1 – Application: Candidates must submit a written application that consists of a cover letter, a resume, 3 letters of recommendation, and an essay. Applicants should write about their 4-H experience in a way that highlights the skills they have developed. 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: Candidates 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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Columbia County 4-H

4-H Key Award Application Cover Page

4-H Member's Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

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

4-H Member's Signature _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

4-H Club Leader's Signature _____

Return this form with your completed application packet to:

Electronically to: Becky Pfile at becky.pfile@wisc.edu

Or via mail to:

Becky Pfile

Columbia County Extension

112 E. Edgewater St. Rm 212, Portage, WI 53901



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Columbia County 4-H

Cover Letter Outline (note use 12 pt. font)

DATE

UW-Extension
4-H Award / 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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Columbia County 4-H

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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Essay Question

Include in your application packet a 150-300 word response to the following essay question:

4-H youth learn important life skills through involvement in their 4-H clubs, projects, and groups, such as problem-solving, responsibility, empathy and leadership. What life skills has 4-H enabled you to learn and practice? How will these skills help you in the future, whether in school or work?

Tips for completing your essay response:

- Choose a common and professional font, such as Arial or Calibri. Use 12 point font size. Use the same font throughout the entire document. Single spaced.
- Include your name, grade, and 4-H club at the top of the page.
- Use 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides of the page.
- Be thoughtful and honest in your response.
- Proofread your response and have someone else proofread it for accuracy in grammar and spelling.
- Evaluators will be reviewing for depth of thought and clear communication.



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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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Columbia County 4-H

Interviews

All 4-H members applying for a key award will be interviewed.

Candidates 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. How do you describe 4-H to someone who does not know about 4-H?
6. What are the most significant projects you have done during your 4-H career, and how long have you done them?
7. What are the most important life skills you have mastered as a result of your 4-H work?
8. 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?
9. How has 4-H helped you develop your leadership skills? Give us a specific example of a situation where you were a leader.
10. How have the experiences and learning skills developed through 4-H influenced your future goals and plans?
11. If chosen, how would you share what you learned during this opportunity with your club, county, or state?



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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. Provide alternate dates and times and we will try to accommodate your schedule. Thank you.

Name: _____

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.

Please return this form with your application packet.



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RECOMMENDATION FROM AN ADULT

(NOT A PARENT OR RELATIVE)

Name of 4-H Member: _____

As part of the selection process for the Columbia County 4-H Key Award, the selection committee is seeking recommendation and information for candidates. Please provide your input regarding the following areas:

	Unknown	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Leadership Qualities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maturity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participation in the 4-H Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responsibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Positive Attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please provide additional comments in the space below:

Print Your Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Recommendations should be sent by mail to Becky Pfile, Columbia County Extension, 112 E. Edgewater St. Rm 212, Portage, WI 53901 or electronically to becky.pfile@wisc.edu.



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