



Volunteer Position Description

Project Leader

All South Dakota 4-H volunteers must complete the volunteer screening process, background check and training requirements. 4-H volunteers are committed in working in partnership with SDSU Extension to ensure a positive youth development environment and successful 4-H Program. All volunteers will support the positive growth and development of all youth in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Educational Amendments, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Volunteers will follow all civil rights policies set forth by the South Dakota Board of Regents, South Dakota State University, and SDSU Extension. 4-H volunteers will follow all guidelines and policies of SDSU Extension, South Dakota 4-H, and county 4-H programs.

Purpose:

- To work with youth and adults to offer a positive youth development experience for young people with specific shared interests.
 - Examples include: robotics, Food and Nutrition, Horticulture, Livestock etc.
- Create an environment that supports and nurtures Sparks of participants both youth and adult.
- Support 4-H professionals, volunteers, and members in conducting meaningful educational experiences to help youth grow and reach their fullest potential.

Time Required:

- Requires a minimum of one-year commitment (October - September – approximately 2-4 hours monthly)

Qualifications:

- Active status as a certified volunteer with SDSU Extension and South Dakota 4-H.
- Adults who are interested in working with youth and other adults.
- An appreciation of experiential learning and a desire to help youth learn by doing.
- Commitment to providing educational opportunities to diverse groups of youth and adults.
- Ability to share decision-making and responsibilities with youth leaders and adult volunteers, motivating individuals to assume leadership roles with minimal supervision from SD 4-H Professionals.
- Experience working with teams and creating capacity in others.

This role is ideal for people who have:

- Strong interest or knowledge of special interest project area.
- An interest in teaching and sharing knowledge and skills with youth.
- Firm understanding of SD 4-H program structure, calendar year, guidelines, policies, etc.
- An interest in working with other volunteers and professional staff.
- An ability to communicate effectively with youth, parents, and other adults volunteers and staff.

- An ability to organize and motivate youth with nurturing positive youth development, decision making, responsibility, and leadership.

Responsibilities:

- Conduct yourself in a responsible manner and serve as a positive role model.
- Developing and utilizing developmentally appropriate activities that meet 4-H project curriculum or other research-based resources.
- Encourage parents to provide proper project support, but not do the work for their youth.
- Supporting youth voice by involving youth in project decision-making
 - Encourage youth/adult partnerships
 - Involve youth in teaching or leadership roles.
 - Meet with the youth leadership team to plan project activities.
- Assist in supervising the completion of projects and preparation for local and state competitions. Informing members of evaluations and exhibit requirements, dates, exhibit classes, rules, record keeping, demonstrations, and other project requirements.
- Share knowledge and skills in mutual areas of interest with youth.
- Assist youth to be beyond ready to be their full, authentic selves both now and in the future. Help equip youth with skills for the future while meeting them where they are today.
- Recruit additional adult and youth volunteers and resource people as needed. Identify community resources and connections.
- Maintain open communication with 4-H club leaders and 4-H Professionals. .
- Provide support, resources, and guidance to the youth and adult volunteers serving in leadership roles.
- Work with the community to build understanding and support of 4-H, as well as assist the community with the development of service projects. .
- Maintain open communication with youth, adult volunteers, and parents/caregivers.
- Provide feedback for members, letting them know when they need to improve and praising for any progress they make.
- Participate in volunteer development opportunities and encourage others to participate as well.

Benefits:

- Personal skill development through supporting youth and contributing to the 4-H organization, including: acquiring leadership, strengthening communication skills, and gaining confidence.
- The opportunity to directly work with youth and observe them succeeding.
- Opportunity to build new relationships and strengthen community ties.
- Satisfaction of contributing to positive development of youth, families, and community
- Develop strategies to teach and lead effective meetings.
- Gain technical skills that are transferable to professional work environments.

SDSU Extension and South Dakota 4-H Agree to:

- Provide training opportunities and resources to help volunteer meet their needs.
- Provide appropriate manuals, pamphlets, audio-visual aids, newsletters, and other resource materials.

- Have professionals available to listen to leaders' ideas to help improve the 4-H program.
- Provide appropriate recognition and awards to leaders.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

First Adopted March 1, 2020

*Last Revised June 1, 2025**

**Based on the North Central Region 4-H Volunteer Impact Study conducted by the NCR Volunteer Extension Specialists and Evaluation specialists from MN and WI in January of 2024.*