

NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLAN

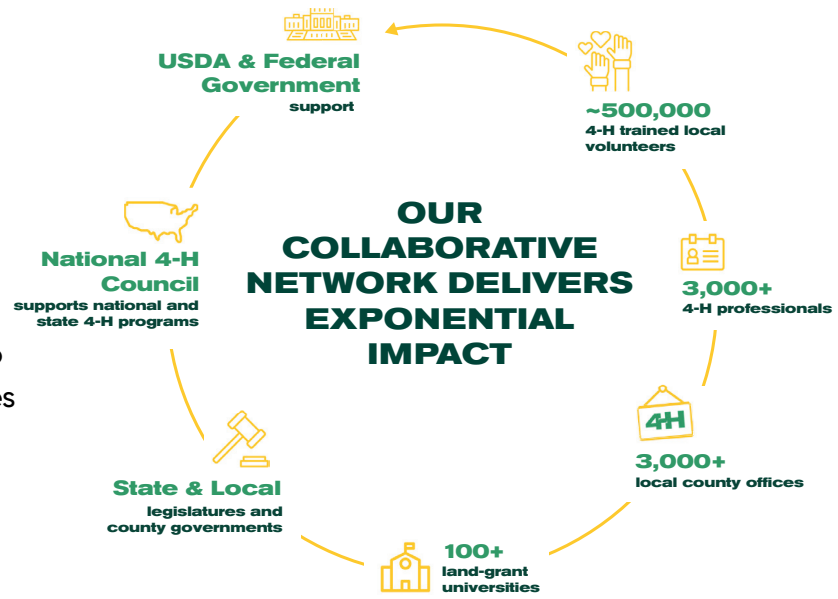
FISCAL YEARS 25-27

WE BELIEVE POWER OF Y

Every young person has valuable strengths and real influence to improve the world around them. They are curious, confident, collaborative and persistent. 4-H's hands-on approach unlocks their potential and puts young people in the driver's seat to make great things happen—today and tomorrow. Together with our partners and supporters, 4-H is creating ready leaders with the skills to lead within their families, schools, communities and the workforce.

Part of a vast network of federal, state and local partners, National 4-H Council works to align with Cooperative Extension priorities—including to provide ALL youth with access to opportunities and experiences that develop the skills they need to succeed in work and in life.

The pandemic brought to light opportunities for a reimagined Council—prioritizing a digitally-enabled brand that engages kids and families, a more data-driven business model and a people-first culture that values entrepreneurial spirit.





IN THE YOUTH.

20 YEARS OF PROVEN RESEARCH

Independent research proves the unparalleled impact of the 4-H experience—with lasting effects into adulthood.

4-H IMPROVES PARTICIPANTS' LIVES

4-H'ers are*

4X more likely to make a positive contribution to their communities

2X more likely to make healthier choices

2X more likely to feel positive about their well-being

4-H IMPACT LASTS

Adults who participated in 4-H during their youth are**

3X more likely to participate in community service

2X more likely to report living life with intentionality and purpose

2X more likely to have the goal of being a leader

THE POWER OF PYD



Richard Lerner, Director, Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development, Tufts University

Tufts UNIVERSITY

* 2001-2011 Tufts University Study of Positive Youth Development

** 2021 Tufts Reconnection Study

Young people engaged in 4-H are thriving compared to their peers, while millions of young people today do not have that advantage. They need support and opportunities to meet today's challenges.

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE AT RISK.

We've all seen the headlines about the challenges young people and teens face today. They're experiencing alarming levels of negativity about themselves, their confidence in the future and their ability to find contentment. Mental health disorders abound. Teens' math and reading scores are dropping and absenteeism is rising. Today's struggles are real and the consequences could be long-term.

At the same time, our country is not preparing young people with the competencies and real-world skills they'll need in the future. Rapid changes in career and academic pathways make it hard for our K-12 schools to keep up with today's needs and prepare kids for tomorrow. **Our country's future depends on a talent pipeline to solve society's greatest challenges. Growing these leaders demands new approaches and partnerships.**

** Dell Technologies and the Institute for the Future (IFTF)*
*** Kauffman Foundation - To find career success, students need more real-world skills (kauffman.org)*
**** World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report 2023*

KIDS NEED NEW SKILLS TO MEET THE JOBS OF THE FUTURE

85% of the jobs that will exist in 2030 haven't been invented yet.*

77% of employers say: focus less on traditional school subjects, more on real-world skills.**

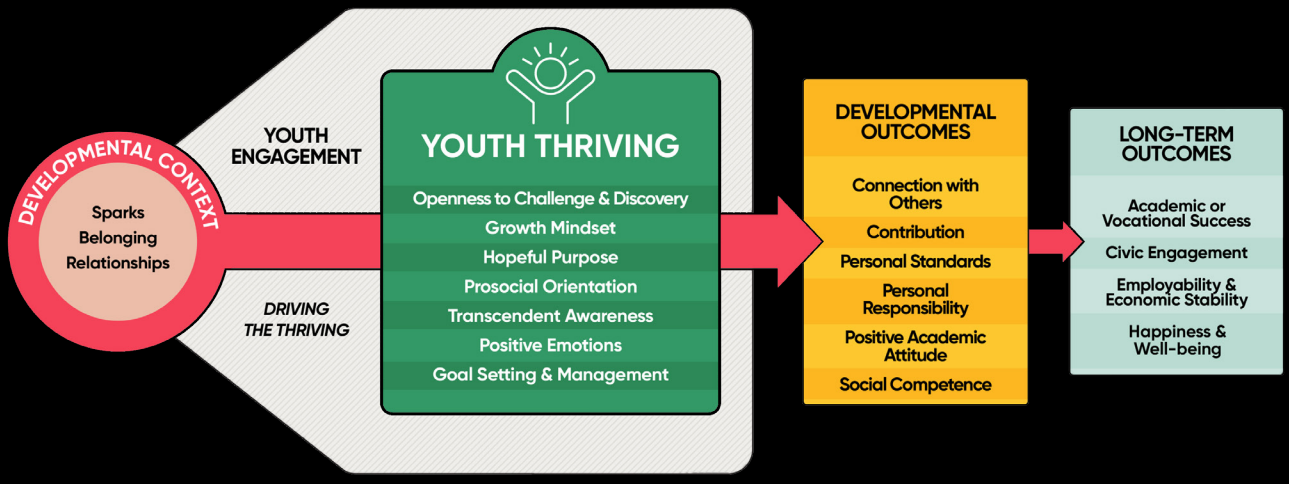
Skills like analytical thinking, creative thinking, resilience, flexibility and adaptability are key.***

BECOMING BEYOND READY



Dr. Lisa Diaz, Assistant Dean & Director, Illinois 4-H, University of Illinois.

OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPING YOUNG PEOPLE IS GROUNDED IN SCIENCE.





4-H IS EMPOWERING A READY GENERATION.

Now is the time to empower millions more youth with the foundational skills to be ready to lead within their families, schools, workplaces and communities. **4-H is uniquely positioned to prepare this generation.**

- 4-H has been inspiring kids for more than 120 years.
- Young people experience 4-H in every county and parish across the country.
- The 4-H network has unparalleled reach, spanning:
  - federal and local government;
  - 100+ land-grant universities;
  - 3,000+ 4-H Extension offices;
  - ~500,000 4-H trained local volunteers; and
  - thousands of community organizations.

We've come a long way, but we know we can do even more. We believe 4-H has the power to shape a generation.

A ready generation.

OUR BOLD GOAL IS TO PREPARE

10M **READY YOUTH TO BE HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND ENGAGED.**

HARNESSING OUR COLLECTIVE POWER TO GROW FROM 6M TO 10M.

Reaching 10-20% of all youth ages 5-18 is a tipping point that can create a movement of youth who are healthy, productive and engaged. The result: a generation that is prepared with the resources and skills to meet any challenge.

2030 VISION
A READY GE



REACH
10M KIDS

RAISE $300M
FOR COUNCIL TO SERVE EXTENSION

4-H NETWORK MOBILIZATION:
$100M+ INVESTED FROM STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS

TO REACH 10M READY YOUTH, COUNCIL HAS IDENTIFIED THREE KEY INITIATIVES.

National 4-H Council is investing in Extension's ability to meet the moment for our nation's youth and tomorrow's workforce. The plan builds on a century of innovation at 4-H, holding firm to our belief in the power of young people and adapting our programming to meet the moment.

A focus on teens is especially important. While we reach nearly one million teens, we lose 40% of participants between the 11-13 age group and the 14-18 age group. We cannot empower ready youth without increasing teen retention rates because this is such a critical stage in their development.



EXPAND ACADEMIC AND WORK READINESS

Increasing teen retention rates and ensuring our programming is best suited for today's challenges and tomorrow's needs:

- Increasing programming by teens, for teens
- Expanding credentialling and college credit programs
- Integrating social-emotional well-being into programming

INVEST IN AMERICA'S EDUCATORS

Ensuring that educators have the skills and tools they need to keep up with rapid landscape changes:

- Providing robust training with a focus on retaining educators in our pipeline
- Developing skills to better serve and retain older youth
- Deepening our focus on workforce readiness

MOBILIZE THE 4-H NETWORK TO ACCELERATE IMPACT

Leveraging our strengths and building capacity to reach more youth and help us go bigger, faster together:

- Setting the standards and evaluation for "ready" youth
- Elevating peer innovators
- Scaling promising practices
- Deepening partnerships with stakeholders to scale reach

HOW WE GET THERE.

Phase I: FY 25-27 Operational Framework

FY 25-27 core strategies are aligned with Cooperative Extension priorities and represent Council's unique assets and structure. Each strategic initiative is an area of focus for Council revenue teams—supported by Council infrastructure that continues to prioritize a digital-friendly brand; direct engagement with kids, families and stakeholders; an efficient, tech savvy and data-driven operating approach; and a people-first culture that values entrepreneurial spirit and a service mindset.

$100M IN FU

KEY INITIATIVE	EXPAND ACADEMIC AND WORK READINESS	INVEST IN AMER
CORE STRATEGIES	**Create meaningful leadership & recognition opportunities:** • Deliver national youth events that create a sense of community. • Build a national teen recognition platform that demonstrates the accomplishments and value of 4-H'ers to external audiences. • Invest in content developed by teens, for teens. **Support teen-focused programming:** • Pilot, promote and scale dual credit programs, college credentials and apprenticeship programs to create pathways for every youth. **Create venues for in-person and online connection:** • Combat loneliness and isolation through local and national programming.	**Prepare 4-H educat** • Create an on-dem • Update work and l • Infuse the 4-H Thri **Retain a pipeline of** • Focus on professio • Create a communi thought leadership **Extend the capacity through technology** • Develop CLOVER c teachers, voluntee
KPIs	• 5K in-person participants at national events • 250K CLOVER users	• Train 1,500 educa with 30% annual g • 85% of PYD Acade • 50% increase in fi
ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	• **Modernize finance systems.** • **Fully implement new ERP automation.** • **Transition to long-term scenario planning.** • **Ensure 70% expenses to programmatic support.** • **Leverage information technology.** Modernize systems to leverage advancement in cloud c 100% data, analytics and BI implementation. • **Improve the employee experience**. Employee value proposition to attract and retain talen • **Invest in stakeholder relations.** Realign communications with Council value proposition. Bu	



UNDS RAISED

ICA'S EDUCATORS	MOBILIZE THE 4-H NETWORK TO ACCELERATE IMPACT
tors for the new workplace and new youth: nand new employee orientation. ife fundamental training tools. ving Model throughout programming. **educators:** nal preparation to drive retention. ty of PYD cohorts that support o. **y of educators and volunteers** **:** as an indispensable resource for teen rs and educators.	**Galvanize the network around "work readiness":** • Develop a campaign to rally every 4-H program across the country to impact 10M youth with a framework for implementation and evaluation to measure impact. **Identify and incentivize peer innovators:** • Mine, replicate and scale the best in programming, fund development and communications. • Create an innovation fund to fuel pioneering work. **Deepen partnerships with key stakeholders:** • Leverage federal support through 4-H Advocacy Day and the 4-H caucus. • Convene cross-state partnerships for scaling promising practices. • Build local coalitions to drive programmatic implementation with new audiences.
tors through the PYD Academy in 2025, growth emy attendees feel more prepared nancial reporting efficiencies	• 90% LGU plans developed for scaling implementation • Up to 80% adoption of the 4-H Youth Readiness Index

and AI technologies. Practice data-driven decision-making. Diversify IT capabilities and competencies.

nt in a competitive labor market. Employee retention rate > 80%.

uild an extension-savvy mindset among Associates. Develop work readiness federal funding opportunities.

OUR VISION

National 4-H Council remains dedicated to a future in which millions more young people are engaged in Cooperative Extension's high quality 4-H youth development programs, and where 4-H youth, volunteers and staff are representative of the diversity of our nation.

NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL MISSION

To expand opportunities for all of America's youth through increased investment and participation in 4-H positive youth development.

WHO WE SERVE AND HOW

National 4-H Council is the private sector, non-profit partner of Cooperative Extension and the United States Department of Agriculture. 4-H programs are implemented by the nation's 100+ land-grant colleges and universities through Cooperative Extension's 3,000+ local offices across the country

NATIONAL 4-H
COUNCIL

4-H is the youth development organization of our nation's Cooperative Extension System and USDA.