SPIN CLUB
Leaders Manual

Growing the Future

The University of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer committed to community, equity, and diversity and to the principles of affirmative action.
# SPIN Club Volunteer Role Description

## You are needed!
Share your experience and knowledge with young people to help youth gain skills through a 4-H special interest (SPIN) club.

## You can have a positive impact on young people
- Teach young people valuable life skills
- Provide hands-on learning to members of a 4-H SPIN club
- Share your expertise with members and mentor them through their learning experiences
- Create a place where each young person feels valued and accepted
- Help youth demonstrate their understanding of the topic
- Support members as they give back to the community

## Your time commitment
- Participate in volunteer orientation and training
- Coordinate a minimum of six meetings based on your availability
- Plan learning activities and identify needed supplies
- Discuss your SPIN club experience with 4-H staff

## Your responsibility as a 4-H volunteer
- Decide what skills the club members should learn
- Identify safety issues and make plans to keep members safe
- Provide leadership/decision-making opportunities within the club
- Guide members as they learn new knowledge and skills
- Be a role model by accepting and valuing all members
- Work with the members to plan an event so they can show others what they have learned
- Help youth identify ways to give back to their community
- Maintain communication with the 4-H office
- Submit required paperwork for club membership

## How to get started
- Complete the volunteer application forms, which includes permission for background checks and contact information for references
- Schedule an orientation with Extension Staff

## We will help you help youth
Extension staff will provide:
- Face-to-face and online training to prepare you for your volunteer experience
- Assistance planning learning activities
- Insurance to cover liability and accidents
- Materials, supplies, or equipment needed

## If you have any questions
Contact:
Check List for SPIN Club Leaders:

Have You...

YES  No  1.  Completed and submitted the 4-H Volunteer Application & Background Form

2.  Recruited other adult assistant leaders to help you with the club? Must complete Volunteer and Background forms

3.  Attended a 4-H Volunteer Orientation Program; received a new 4-H Volunteer Packet?

4.  Decided on a SPIN Club Topic

5.  Recruited 4-H Members in the geographic area of your club, including start-up publicity (Make a public notice, keep a waiting list); completed the New Club Formation form?

6.  Set the club meeting schedule: date, time, place, and agendas.

7.  Requested 4-H materials as needed.

At the first meeting:

8.  Talked about what 4-H is. Provide a meeting schedule with leader contact information.

9.  Completed enrollment forms for members and volunteers. Send these to the 4-H Office as soon as possible. A computer printout of your club memberships will be sent back to you.

10. Decided on the method(s) to be used by Club Members to evaluate their progress in their 4-H projects and to show to others what they have learned. This can be done through 4-H public presentations, exhibits, fitting and showmanship, teaching someone else how to do the project,…

Throughout the Project:

11. Publicized your 4-H activities in your community- newspapers, radio, club presentations to civic groups, city officials, schools; exhibits; parade floats.

12. Contacted 4-H Staff about questions or concerns, as often as you need to!

End of the Project:

13. At the end of the project, recognize the youth with completion certificates that you make yourself or acquire from the 4-h office.

14. Educate members and parents about the many opportunities to continue to participate in 4-H.

15. Consider organizing another SPIN Club 😊
THIS IS 4-H

RHODE ISLAND 4-H MISSION: To empower youth to develop life skills, to maximize their potential, and to become responsible, proactive citizens of a changing, diverse, and global society.

4-H is the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System. This informal educational program is conducted by the US Department of Agriculture, State Land Grant Universities, and Local Governments, and combines the work of federal, state, and local Cooperative Extension staff and volunteer leaders. In Rhode Island, 4-H is the Youth Development Program of the University of Rhode Island, College of the Environment & Life Sciences, Cooperative Extension. Private support also comes from National 4-H Council and the RI 4-H Club Foundation.

Participation in the 4-H Program is open to all interested youth, regardless of race, color, sex or preference, religion, creed, national origin, or disability. Members are between the ages of 5 and 19, and reside in every RI demographic area – rural, suburban, and urban. There is a small yearly fee to participate in the URI/CELS 4-H Program.
Youth may participate in 4-H through organized 4-H clubs, 4-H special interest groups (SPIN Clubs or short-term clubs), 4-H school enrichment programs, agency-based clubs, 4-H after-school groups or as individual 4-H members.

4-H members complete projects, individually or in groups, ranging from science and technology to theatre arts; animal science to public presentations; and environmental science to foods and nutrition. Members focus on learning by doing, applying leadership skills, making a difference in RI communities, and learning to respect and get along with people. They learn life skills like responsibility, decision-making, communication skills, problem solving, commitment, leadership, and teamwork.

4-H Volunteers are the key to the success of the RI 4-H Program. Many serve as 4-H Club Leaders working directly with youth in Clubs or Special Interest Groups. Others recruit, train, and help other volunteers or coordinate 4-H events. (Refer to the section on Volunteers)

**SYMBOLS of 4-H**

**Slogan:** Learn by doing

**Motto:** To make the best better

**Colors:** Green and White

**Emblem:** The 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with and “H” on each leaf. The letters stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health – the foundation of all 4-H programs.

**4-H PLEDGE**

I pledge:

My HEAD to clearer thinking
My HEART to greater loyalty
My HANDS to larger service
My HEALTH to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world.
Five Reasons Why 4-H is UNIQUE

1. Supported BY Curriculum, staff and research from URI and Land Grant Universities from across the country.

2. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
   4-H members “learn by doing.” Educational programs and curricula focus on the Experiential Learning Model and hands-on activities.
3. A focus on LIFE SKILLS Development.

4. YOUTH DRIVEN

4-H is youth driven. 4-H empowers youth at all levels and ages to determine group or club operations, set goals, make group decisions, learn parliamentary procedures, develop youth/adult partnerships, build leadership and citizenship skills, advise and determine policies and procedures, to “take control”....

5. FUN For the Whole Family in One Club

4-H is fun! 4-H believes that learning should be FUNdamental! 4-H is a non-formal, educational program. It uses a variety of methods, materials and delivery modes to challenge, excite, motivate, and teach. 4-H is a FAMILY AFFAIR. 4-H is for boys and girls ages 5 to 18. All ages participate in the same club. Older members serve as teachers and mentors to the younger ones. Adults serve as the club leaders. Everyone can participate together.
Recruiting Members

4-H is open to all youth, 5-18 years of age, regardless of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex or preference, or disability. To meet our Affirmative Action Plan (AAP), some type of public notice for obtaining members must be made through local, weekly or daily newspaper, radio, school, personal contacts, flyers, and posters in public places. A report of the steps taken must be submitted. Once, a club has reached capacity for membership, a waiting list must be kept. If an opening becomes available in the club, the first person on the list will be allowed to join. Hand picking members from the waiting list is not allowed.

Boys and Girls

One uniqueness of 4-H is that the 4-H program is for both sexes. All 4-H groups must be open and accessible to both. Projects are available to all youth. You can help by encouraging both boys and girls to participate in projects that they may not usually think of as one that their sex would be interested in. Many family and consumer science projects provide skills that males can use. Mechanical projects are just as valuable to females.

4-H is a unique opportunity to allow boys and girls to work together on subjects in which they have common interests. Therefore, both sexes are to be provided with equal opportunity for:

- Membership in any 4-H club
- Selection of any 4-H project
- Election to any office, committee, or leadership position
- Volunteer adult leadership positions

Ages (as of January 1)

A youngster must be at least 5 years old to join as a clover bud and will be a full 4-H member when they are at least 8 years old. A member is too old to start the 4-H year in October if he or she will turn 19 before the coming January 1.

Minimum Club Requirements

Each club must meet the following criteria to be recognized as an official 4-H club:

- Have at least five (5) members in the club, from three families.
- Hold a minimum of 6 program sessions
- Register the club with the RI 4-H office
- Officially enroll all members and volunteers
- Have at least two unrelated registered adult volunteers present at each meeting. To apply to be a registered volunteer: adults must be 18 years of age or older and submit a completed volunteer application & background check. Following a satisfactory background check and three written positive references on file in the 4-H office, the volunteer will be registered and attend a volunteer training.
How Many Club Members

At least five (5) members are needed to form a club. The size of a club is determined by the group, meeting space, and leadership available. Studies indicate that clubs with 10 to 20 4-H members provide the best growth experience.

Where to Meet

Space needed for meetings will depend upon project interest and club size:
- A community building (library, church, community center, school, etc.)
- A leader or volunteer’s home
- A member’s home (a good way to encourage other parents to be involved)

How Often Should A Club Meet?

This will be determined by several factors; the SPIN Club Project Leader and Assistant Leader’s schedules, the meeting place availability, and the type of project. The club could meet once a week for 6 weeks or 3 days for 2 weeks.

Dues

There is a small state enrollment fee of $5, per member for the entire year. This means a youth can belong to multiple SPIN clubs and only pay the $5 fee once during the 4-H year (Oct 1 to Sept 30). If a club requires supplies for the project activities, a materials fee can be collected (e.g. Drawing club fee to enroll in 4-H is $5 and an additional $15 can be collected for the project supplies). Additional program supply fees must be stated in the registration information. Money should never be an issue for a youth not to be able to join 4-H. All fees can be waived for those youth who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. SPIN leaders should contact the 4-H staff for a fee waiver form in this case.

CLUB PROGRAM

Although the bulk of the meeting is the project subject matter, it’s still 4-H, and 4-H should figure prominently from beginning to end, such as:
- Saying the 4-H pledge at each meeting;
- Using the experiential “Learn by Doing” learning model;
- Providing opportunities to show off what they know by speaking or making an exhibit;
- Using their interests to conduct community service projects;
- Returning to the club year after year to continue their learning and take on leadership roles.

TIMING

Timing is everything for SPIN clubs. The shorter nature of SPIN clubs lets leaders and members have greater flexibility to find “the best time” to hold meetings.

Some subject matter clubs lend themselves naturally to certain times of year. For example, a club geared to baseball fits naturally during the summer months. December is a great time for a cookie-baking club. Learning about agriculture may fit naturally in the fall.

Children often look for things to do during the summer.
Children often look for things to do over the Christmas / Spring holiday.
Younger children who aren’t involved in sports often have time right after school.

Who plans the program for the club?

In Short-term clubs, often the leader plans the majority of the project work. However, allowing members of the club to plan part of the program with guidance from the leaders, will give the youth ownership and continuing
interest in the club topic area. If the club is small, this might be done at a meeting of the whole group. If the club is large, they get ideas from everyone and let a committee put together a club program from these ideas.

What are 4-H projects?

4-H projects are learning experiences for 4-H members. 4-H members set goals about what they want to learn in a specific project (subject area). Many project guides are available from the University of Rhode Island without charge to 4-H volunteers.

Projects vary in cost. A member enrolled in first aid might use supplies from around the house to practice skills being learned. A member who buys and keeps a saddle horse might invest hundreds of dollars. Discuss costs with members and their parents and then select a project. It should be realistic to the family situation.

4-H members perform their own project work with help as needed. 4-H is a “learn by doing” program. Adult leaders, junior leaders, or parents may tell or show a member how, but members are expected to learn how to do things themselves.

4-H projects can be done as a group or as an individual. Some projects such as training a dog are more fun if done as a group. Others, such as dog care, will be done individually by each member of the group. Or if your group is not doing all the projects that you are interested, you can study a project on your own.

Parent Participation

Keep parents informed – they will be more interested and willing to help their child and the club if they understand what you are trying to do.

This can be accomplished by:

- Inviting them to meetings, especially the first one
- Visiting with parents about their child’s projects and their development through 4-H
- Helping them understand your job as a volunteer
- Finding what their interests are and what they would like to do to help the club – agree on what they will do and when they will do it.

Enrollment Requirements

A Club is not officially enrolled until forms are returned to the State 4-H Office and membership fees paid. Please make sure that all forms are clearly and completely presented. RI 4-H VOLUNTEER APPLICATION and NEW MEMBER ENROLLMENT FORM are available at web.uri.edu/4h or call the State 4-H office for paper copies.

Protection of 4-H Youth

When working with youth in 4-H, you are responsible for their care and safety. You need to carry out this responsibility in terms of your own actions as well as actions of those who you allow to come in contact with youth.

In protecting the welfare of your 4-H members, you should:
• Keep copies of the completed member enrollment forms with you at all meetings for emergency contact information.
• Be aware of any health or behavior issues that have been listed on the member enrollment form.
• Establish rules that are fair and consistently enforced.
• Be sensitive to the effects of rules on youth in different situations.
• Follow the rules yourself. Be a good role model.
• Be flexible in enforcing rules (sometimes exceptions must be made).
• Do not touch youth in any way that might be considered offensive to them or misinterpreted by them or others.
• Make a point to know who is picking up members from a meeting.
• Avoid situations where you or other adults are alone with one youth.
• Encourage parents to make unannounced visits to 4-H meetings and events.
• REPORT INCIDENCES OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT TO 1-800-742-4453 ALSO KNOWN AS 1-800-RI-CHILD. ALL persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL 40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect.

Volunteers and Others Who Work with Members

With the good of the club and the welfare of its members in mind, please be sure you are confident about others who work with club members.

• Insure that those you recruit to help the club are known by you or are referred by someone you trust. Have them complete the 4-H Volunteer Application form and submit it to the 4-H State Office.
• Insure that unauthorized individuals do not have access to youth.
• If an allegation of abuse if made against a volunteer or parent, that person should be restricted from having contact with children until the matter is resolved.
• Listen to youngsters who come forward with allegations and take the matter seriously.

4-H Mailing Lists

Names and addresses of 4-H members or volunteers are released to no one beyond the 4-H office. They will only be used for purposes for which the individuals intend when they enrolled. Parents have the option on the member enrollment form to allow the state 4-H office to share their address with the RI 4-H Club Foundation, the fundraising entity for 4-H programs in the state.

The intent of this policy is to protect 4-H members and volunteers from any solicitations, including commercial and political ventures. On those occasions when it is appropriate for 4-H volunteers to make use of these lists to carry out their 4-H volunteer responsibilities, lists will be released to their “guardianship”. Violation of this trust is cause for termination of that volunteer relationship with 4-H.

Handling of Club Funds

Since SPIN clubs are short term and funds may be minimal, the RI 4-H Club Foundation can be contacted in the case you need a place to safely keep funds until needed. Contact the the 4-H staff for information.
Money left over from a SPIN club at the conclusion of the 6 session program should be donated to the RI 4-H Foundation or used for an appropriate purpose voted on by the membership.

Insurance for 4-H Club Members

Medical: Low-cost supplemental medical insurance is available to cover all participants in 4-H events and programs. One-day policies may be purchased to cover short-term events and activities, or year-round coverage for each 4-H member and volunteer may be purchased. Forms are available from the State 4-H Office. While these are not liability policies, it greatly reduces the possibility of you being sued since within the limits expenses are covered without dispute. Payment to the Insurance Company for the premium is usually made from the club treasury or by assessing each member.

Insurance for Volunteers

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 provides that volunteers will be relieved of liability for harm caused if:
1. The volunteer was acting within the scope of his/her responsibilities
2. Was properly authorized
3. The harm was not caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or conscious flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer.

Liability Insurance

4-H Volunteers, while conducting programs and activities in support of the 4-H program of the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension, are covered by the University Liability Policy as university volunteers.

Tax Deductions for Volunteers

4-H volunteers are entitled to certain tax deductions. Generally, out-of-pocket expenses, such as amounts spent for fees, materials, meals, travel, lodging, awards, etc., and a mileage fee for use of a privately owned vehicle are deductible as contributions if you itemize. Keep an accurate record of your out-of-pocket expenses and consult with a qualified tax person or visit the IRS website for what is allowable as a deduction for that tax year.

Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs

The abuse of any drugs runs counter to the healthy development of youth. Thus, 4-H will not condone the sale of alcohol in the name of 4-H. Alcohol should not served or available at any 4-H function where minors are present.
SPIN CLUB MEMBER INFO SHEET

Name of Club ______________________
Meeting Place_______________________
Meeting Place Phone_________________
Meeting days, time and dates__________
Project Leader:_______________________
Phone _____________________________
Email ______________________________
Assistant Leader(s)__________________
Phone______________________________
Email_______________________________
Club Project Plan ____________________
Community Informational Project Planned :
____________________________________
Other:______________________________

SPIN CLUB MEMBER INFO SHEET

Name of Club ______________________
Meeting Place_______________________
Meeting Place Phone_________________
Meeting days, time and dates__________
Project Leader:_______________________
Phone _____________________________
Email ______________________________
Assistant Leader(s)__________________
Phone______________________________
Email_______________________________
Assistant Leader(s)__________________
Phone______________________________
Email_______________________________
Club Project Plan ____________________
Community Informational Project Planned :
____________________________________
Other:______________________________
Checklist of Supplies Needed:
4-H SPIN Club

4-H Organizational Leader ___________________________ Tel. __________________________
Address_________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

___ 4-H Curriculum or resource materials. Topic?_______________________________

___ 4-H Member Enrollment Forms #______ (available at www.uri.edu/4h)

___ 4-H Volunteer Application Forms#______ (available at www.uri.edu/4h)

___ RI 4-H Recordbooks #_______ (available at www.uri.edu/4h)

___ 4-H Livestock Record Form #_______ (available at www.uri.edu/4h)

___ Goal Setting Forms ”Making a Plan and Carrying Out” #_______________

___ Insurance Form ($1/member optional accident insurance)

___ 4-H Promotional Brochures #______________

___ 4-H Parent Surveys #______________

___ RI 4-H Awards Program Resource Packet

___ 4-H Project Completion Certificates

Email, Fax or Mail to:

State 4-H Program
75 Peckham Farm/URI
Kingston, RI 02881

Fax: 401-874-2435

Email: heidi_wright@mail.uri.edu or kstone@uri.edu

The University of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer committed to community, equity, and diversity and to the principles of affirmative action.
New 4-H Club Promotion Form

4-H Club Name: _________________________________________________________________

Date 4-H Club was started: ____________________________

4-H Organizational Leader: ____________________________ Tel. ___________________
Mailing Address: __________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________ Zip: ___________________

In the space below, please describe the method(s) of advertising which was used in the formation of your 4-H Club. If possible, attach copies of news articles, posters, announcements,…

4-H, as part of the University of Rhode Island's Cooperative Extension, provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. To comply with the University’s Affirmative Action Plan, we need a signed statement from each 4-H Club that no person is excluded from participating in the 4-H Club on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or preference, creed or disability.

In accordance with the nondiscriminatory policies of the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension, we affirm that no one will be excluded from membership in our 4-H club on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or preference, creed or disability.

4-H Club: ____________________________ Signed: ____________________________

4-H Leader

Date: ____________________________

Forward this form to:
State 4-H Office, 75 Peckham Farm/URI, Kingston, RI 02881
**NEW 4-H SPIN CLUB Starting Soon!**

---Insert Club Name/ Topic Here---

**What is SPIN?** A 4-H SPIN Club is a SPecial INterest club where five or more young people learn about a topic of interest. Topics vary and include interests such as nature, heritage arts, science, engineering, gardening, technology, and more. SPIN clubs are led by volunteers who have a passion and want to share their knowledge with young people. SPIN club members enjoy the full membership benefits as community club members: receive all email and written correspondence from the Extension office, and are allowed to participate in all awards and recognition programs as community club members. **4-H is open to all youth, 5-18 years.**

**Meeting Place:**

**Meeting Dates:**

**Meeting Time:**

*Fee: $5 enrollment, plus ___ for materials

**Contact Information for Registering:**

**Leader:**

**Email:**

**Phone:**

* Fees can be waived for any youth qualifying for the free or reduced lunch program

---

**THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND**

**COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE SCIENCES**

Cooperative Extension, Rhode Island 4-H Program
P: 401.874.9412  F: 401.874.2435  www.uri.edu/4h

The University of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer committed to community, equity, and diversity and to the principles of affirmative action.