

# National 4-H Conference Selection Process and Competition Guide

## Purpose

National Conference interviews are a formal interview experience for competitors. 4-H'ers are judged on leadership, engagement, diversity of experience, knowledge of state/local issues, 4-H advocacy, communication skills, as well as their application.

## Objectives of National 4-H Conference

4-H'ers participating in National 4-H Conference will:

- Learn – Provide youth a broad-based learning experience in which they will acquire practical knowledge and skills to reinforce the attitudes and motivation that will give them a heightened sense of responsibility and capacity to connect as active members of their communities, nation, and world.
- Practice – Engage youth in hands-on educational activities in which they explore, practice, and master existing and newly developed skills/knowledge in civic engagement, civic education, and personal development.
- Apply – Facilitate direct opportunities for youth to apply what was learned in real world experiences in which they develop leadership skills using their voices, work, ideas, and/or behavior to make a difference in their community, country, and world.

National 4-H Conference is the pinnacle experience in 4-H civic engagement, providing the opportunity for young people to connect, learn, engage, lead, and impact their communities, their nation, and their world.

## Scoring

### *Application Scoring*

Application scoring is the first part of the National Conference selection process. A total of twelve applicants will be invited to participate in interviews during Fall Forum as follows: the top three highest scoring applications from each 4-H district will be invited to interview. An Excel scoresheet is provided to each judge. The criterion for selection is also noted on the sheet. 4-H'ers are judged on 4 areas:

- **Leadership (30%)** considers the 4-H'ers evidence of having developed leadership skills and gained experience serving as a leader through projects, club activities, community service coordination, etc.
- **4-H Advocacy (30%)** considers the 4-H'ers demonstrated ability to communicate specific ways in which they have benefited from their involvement in 4-H and how 4-H has had a positive impact on youth and their community as a whole. Also, the extent to which their application reflects any history of serving as a representative of or ambassador for the Georgia 4-H program.
- **Community & Civic Engagement (30%)** considers 4-H'ers evidence of having worked as a participant in positive activities and community projects. Leadership and

coordination of activities reflects even higher levels of engagement.

- **Diversity of Experience (10%)** considers 4-H'ers exhibited willingness to work with, discover, and understand people, events, and situations different from his/her "normal" environment. Does the applicant seem to be well-rounded?

In the event of tied application scores for an interview position, those tied-scoring applications would be invited to interview.

In the event, a district has less than three applicants, any unfulfilled interview slots originally allocated to that district would be filled by the next highest-scoring applicant(s), regardless of their 4-H district.

### **Interview /Overall Scoring**

A scoresheet is provided to all judges. Judges fill out the scoresheet completely. The criterion for selection is listed on the scoresheet. 4-H'ers will be asked questions from their application. 4-H'ers are evaluated in seven areas:

- **Leadership (up to 20 points)** considers the 4-H'ers ability to demonstrate evidence of having worked as a leader in the development and implementation of community projects.
- **Engagement (up to 15 points)** considers 4-H'ers evidence of having worked as a participant in positive activities and community projects.
- **Diversity of Experience (up to 10 points)** considers 4-H'ers exhibited willingness to work with, discover, and understand people, events, and situations different from their "normal" environment.
- **Awareness of State & Local Issues (up to 15 points)** considers the 4-H'ers exhibited knowledge of state and/or local issues and to offer ideas on how to address them.
- **4-H Advocacy (up to 20 points)** considers the 4-H'ers demonstrated ability to verbalize specific ways in which they have benefited from their involvement in 4-H and how 4-H has had a positive impact on youth and their community as a whole.
- **Communication Skills (up to 10 points)** considers the 4-H'ers demonstrated skill in general verbal communication.
- **Application (up to 10 points)** considers the 4-H'ers application and its quality. The application should be complete, and errors in spelling, grammar, and formatting should be minimal.

Judges assign scores to the seven scoring categories as they deem appropriate. The final combined totals are figured through a computer program. An individual judge's scoring will not be made public-only combined totals will be shared. The placing order of the selected participants is not announced.

Final scores will be used to select a total of six delegates to attend National 4-H Conference as follows: one high scoring winner from each of the four 4-H districts along with two additional high-scoring winners, regardless of their district. Furthermore, a first and second

alternate will be chosen based on overall high score, regardless of their district. Alternates will attend National 4-H Conference if one of the six selected delegates is unable to do so. These six selected delegates should reflect the diversity of 4-H with regards to gender, urban/suburban/rural, ethnicity, interests, and background.

In the event of a tie – Tie scores will be broken by the overall high score in Leadership. If this does not break the tie, the overall high score for 4-H Advocacy will be considered. If this does not break the tie, the overall high score for Engagement and Issue Awareness combined will be determinant. This process will allow for the breaking of ties if the need arises.

### **Interview Question Examples**

Below are questions that are provided as examples or starting points for conversation during the interview. Judges may use these questions or create their own questions. The idea is to lead the conversation towards the scoring criteria.

1. Tell us about your involvement in 4-H or other youth organizations. What have you participated in?
2. In what leadership roles have you served? What responsibilities did these roles entail?
3. Do you enjoy meeting and working with new people? How has 4-H broadened your horizons?
4. What is the most important youth issue in your community or region of the state? What can you and other youth do to have a positive impact on the problem?
5. How has 4-H benefitted you and how does it benefit your community and the world in general?
6. What are your greatest strengths or assets as a leader? As a team member?