



Extension

University of Missouri



State 4-H Program Leader (Senior Program Director) and Director of the 4-H Center for Youth Development (Associate/Full Professor or Extension Professor rank)

The University of Missouri (MU) is seeking a visionary leader passionate about unlocking the potential of young people and who believes in the power of community, education, and hands-on learning to transform lives. The State 4-H Program Leader, operating under the Senior Program Director title, is a dynamic role at the forefront of positive youth development across Missouri – a role guiding one of the state’s most impactful youth programs as it reaches over 50,000 young people annually. The Senior Program Director will report directly to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Extension and Engagement and will work alongside a dedicated team of campus and county-based Extension professionals and volunteers across all 114 counties and the City of St. Louis—building programs that help youth grow into confident, capable, and caring leaders.

Position Overview

The State 4-H Program Leader (Senior Program Director, hereafter “Director”) serves as the strategic and administrative head of Missouri 4-H, providing vision, leadership, and oversight to ensure high-quality and impactful youth development programming across the state. The Director is responsible for advancing statewide goals, securing and managing partnerships and funding, and fostering a culture of innovation and excellence among faculty, staff, and volunteers. The 4-H Center for Youth Development includes the Missouri Afterschool Network, with reach to 200 afterschool sites serving more than 18,000 youth annually, providing the opportunity to engage audiences not typically involved in 4-H.

About Missouri 4-H

Missouri 4-H is rooted in tradition and driven by innovation. It’s a network of young dreamers, doers, and leaders—and the adults who believe in them. As MU’s premier youth development program, Missouri 4-H reaches over 50,000 youth annually through hands-on, research-based programs that build life skills, promote civic engagement, and foster healthy development. With a professional team spanning all 114 counties and the City of St. Louis, and supported by more than 8,000 trained volunteers, Missouri 4-H offers programming in community clubs, schools, afterschool programs, SPIN clubs, and camps.

The program’s mission is to engage youth as contributing, valued members of their communities in partnership with caring adults. Missouri 4-H empowers youth to grow into leaders through project-based learning in key areas such as Civic Engagement, Healthy Living, STEM, Agriculture and Natural Resources.



Extension

University of Missouri



The Missouri 4-H Program Leader will:

- **Inspire and lead statewide 4-H efforts** with a bold vision and a deep commitment to youth thriving.
- **Champion academic excellence** by integrating research and best practices in Positive Youth Development (PYD).
- **Guide and support a vibrant statewide team** of educators, staff, and volunteers who deliver meaningful, hands-on learning to youth.
- **Grow strategic partnerships** that amplify our reach—from schools and nonprofits to government agencies and national 4-H leaders.
- **Secure and steward resources** that sustain innovation and program growth across all areas of Missouri.

This is a full-time, 12-month academic position with an administrative appointment. It is expected that the director be eligible for and approved for faculty appointment at the associate or full professor/ extension professor level within a college and academic department aligned with their educational and professional background. The faculty appointment may be tenured or non-tenure track, depending on approval of qualifications and experience. We anticipate this appointment will be made as early as Summer 2025 or another agreed upon date.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Provide visionary leadership for Missouri 4-H, aligned with MU Extension priorities, the 4-H Thriving Model, and the national 4-H mission.
- Increase 4-H membership by implementing enhanced staffing and program models.
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with federal and state agencies, educational institutions, community organizations, and the Missouri 4-H Foundation.
- Cultivate donor relationships and seek out grant and funding opportunities to support and sustain programming statewide.
- Collaborate with the Missouri 4-H Foundation to support fundraising efforts and donor stewardship.
- Cultivate innovative partnerships to elevate Missouri 4-H's presence and influence across the state and nation.

Administrative Leadership

- Oversee personnel, budgets and fiscal operations, compliance, and systems that support excellence in youth programming.
- Set program direction and ensure quality programming and impact statewide, overseeing all aspects of 4-H club, volunteer, and program management.



Extension

University of Missouri



Administrative Leadership (continued)

- Support professional growth for Missouri 4-H staff and volunteers through training and mentorship.
- Provide leadership and supervision for a dynamic team of over 100 youth development professionals, including tenure and non-tenure faculty, field specialists, educators, and support staff.
- Support professional development efforts including onboarding, mentoring, statewide conferences, and meetings.
- Ensure volunteers receive high-quality, research-based training in youth development, risk management, and program structure.
- Provide guidance to the Volunteer Advisory Committee and statewide volunteer initiatives.
- Serve on departmental, college, Extension, and university committees.

Academic Leadership

- Oversee design, delivery, and evaluation of educational programs to ensure developmental appropriateness, measurable outcomes, and alignment with Positive Youth Development (PYD) principles.
- Support interdisciplinary programming through collaboration with state specialists and educators in areas such as Leadership and Civic Engagement, Healthy Living, STEM, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Career Readiness, and Youth-Adult partnerships.
- Advance interdisciplinary research, teaching, and innovation in youth development.
- Foster a strong academic identity for 4-H through publications, professional development, and applied scholarship.
- Collaborate with other Extension programming units (Agriculture & Environment, Business and Community, Health and Human Sciences) and academic unit partners to develop, deliver, and evaluate interdisciplinary extension and engagement programs.

Minimum Qualifications for this role:

- A Ph.D., Ed.D., or other terminal degree in youth development, education, human development, agriculture, family and consumer sciences, or a closely related field.



Extension

University of Missouri



Additional criteria the candidates will be evaluated upon:

- Five or more years of professional experience in youth-serving programs, including designing, conducting, and evaluating educational programs for youth and/or volunteer leaders—preferably within Extension 4-H Youth Development programs.
- Demonstrated excellence in personnel and fiscal management, including a proven track record of securing and managing extramural funding from both public and private sources.
- Proven leadership in managing complex programs and large teams with different backgrounds by building trust, empowering staff, fostering a culture of accountability, and leading with transparency and authenticity.
- Strong experience in communication, collaboration, and community engagement, with the ability to build external partnerships and work effectively with a variety of groups to support daily operations, strategic planning, and long-term initiatives.
- Demonstrated adaptability and success in navigating and leading change in dynamic, fast-paced environments, while maintaining a clear vision and overseeing budget and evaluation strategies.
- Understanding of land-grant university systems and Cooperative Extension models, along with in-depth knowledge of 4-H's mission, structure, and national frameworks such as the 4-H Thriving Model.
- Experience in volunteer management and development, with the ability to support and grow volunteer-led programming.

Application Materials and Process:

Applications must be submitted through the [University's website](#). Job posting ID is 55519. Interested candidates may [apply here](#).

Candidates should include a cover letter outlining qualifications and a detailed curriculum vitae. A total of five references will be requested during the final phase of the interview process. Candidates will be notified before references are contacted.

Applications will be accepted until June 1st, 2025.

To nominate a colleague, or for questions about the application process or role, please contact Marilyn Green at mnw266@missouri.edu.

Candidates must demonstrate they are authorized to work in the United States at time of hire. Sponsorship of U.S. temporary employment visas will not be offered for this position.

**Handling of Application Materials**

After initial review by the committee all uploaded materials may be shared with all faculty in the prospective home department. For affiliations and joint appointments materials may be shared with all faculty in all departments involved.

Benefit Eligibility

This position is eligible for University benefits. The University offers a comprehensive benefits package, including medical, dental and vision plans, retirement, and educational fee discounts. For additional information on University benefits, please visit the Faculty & Staff Benefits website at <http://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits>.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The University of Missouri is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

To request ADA accommodations, please call the Director of Accessibility and ADA at 573-884-7278.