



# Board Development Initiative

**Primary Objective:** Increase Council’s fundraising power to maximize financial support of Cooperative Extension’s goal to reach 10M 4-H youth by 2025.

**Rationale:** Council’s Board of Trustees is contemplating changes to its own composition and construction in order to attract additional “heavy hitters” with access to significant resources that will support the growth of Extension 4-H programs.

**Changes Contemplated:** Council Trustees met in March and April 2016 to discuss how the Board can more effectively fulfill its mission to increase investment and participation in 4-H—specifically, to maximize its ability to bring additional resources to Extension and execute its unique role. Trustees were supported by Russell Reynolds & Associates, a national board development specialist and executive recruiter. The following recommendations were a result of those discussions:

Category	Preliminary Recommendations
<b>Clarify the Board’s Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus 80% of the Board’s time &amp; resources on fundraising, remaining time on overseeing Council operations; Council’s Board is NOT involved in 4-H programmatic policy or implementation.</li> </ul>
<b>Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the size of the Board to 20 Trustees or less to improve effectiveness</li> </ul>
<b>Membership Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each Trustee will be required to meet personal giving as well as separate fundraising goals</li> </ul>
<b>Membership Composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C-Suite executives across key industries; philanthropists; media decision makers; digital marketing experts</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Stakeholder Advisory groups (or connect to existing groups) for Extension, Youth and Agri-business that support and inform the National 4-H Council Board with representatives from each group having voting seats</li> </ul>

**Stakeholder Feedback Request.** Council’s Board of Trustees is proactively seeking input from Extension leadership as it contemplates changes:

- How do we ensure we maintain alignment and accountability?
- What system priorities do we need to take into consideration?
- What steps will we need to take to maintain strong relationships?
- How can we best create clarity around the overall benefit to 4-H of these changes?



## **FAQs:**

### **How will National 4-H Council ensure that its fundraising efforts are informed by Cooperative Extension priorities?**

Council will continue to coordinate and align its long term strategic direction with Extension through engagement with the ECOP 4-H National Leadership Committee. Currently, the CEO sits as an ex-officio liaison on the Committee, but it is envisioned that a closer and more formal relationship, including a seat or seats on the Council Board for representatives of that policy-making group, be institutionalized.

For example, Council could seek input from the Committee to inform its annual fundraising plan. Relationships with Extension leadership groups—and any mutual accountability—would be written into Council by-laws and voted on by the present Board of Trustees.

### **How will these changes impact the roles and responsibilities of the three partners (Extension, USDA and Council) as outlined in the MOU?**

The changes envisioned will strengthen Council's focus on its unique responsibilities in the MOU: providing resources to Extension (marketing, fundraising) as well as operating the Conference Center and the Supply Service. The expected outcomes of the changes are consistent with the MOU signed by ECOP, USDA/NIFA and Council on May 8, 2014, as well as National 4-H Council's 2016-2018 strategic plan.

### **How will Council's relationship with USDA/NIFA be affected?**

No change to the current relationship between USDA and the Board of Trustees is envisioned. USDA/NIFA currently has 2, non-voting, liaisons to the Board. Council will continue to invest in a strong and collaborative relationship with USDA leadership.

### **Will Extension and Youth have a voice in Council strategy if these changes are implemented?**

Each advisory group will have a voting seat on the full Board. Current Extension and Youth Trustees will be actively involved in planning and implementing changes to Board construction, as well as the design and operating norms for new groups.

### **When will changes to the Board's composition and construction take place?**

Potentially, in the first six months of 2017. Council's Board will ensure appropriate time to make changes to the Board Development Initiative based on stakeholder feedback. Council Trustees and staff will be engaging Extension leadership at regional and national meetings to gather input, ideas and concerns from June through November 2016. The extent and nature of the feedback will determine the timing of a transition plan. Any changes to Council's by-laws will be voted on by the Board in either December 2016 or March 2017 and implementation will follow soon after.