



FUNdraising Your 4-H Club's Way to a Robot



If your county has decided to participate in 4-H Robotics, you are probably looking to purchase a robot and other equipment, such as a laptop or iPad.

Before you begin to raise funds, there are a few things you must do:

- The group raising the money must be a chartered 4-H Club. Click on this link to complete the form for creating a 4-H Charter Club: <http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/forms/application-for-4-h-club-charter>
- The bylaws of your club should state how any money obtained will be spent and what will happen to money that is not spent.
- The bylaws of your club should state who "owns" the robot if the club dissolves. This will most likely be the county Extension office.
- All fundraising activities must be approved by the Extension agent. Review page 5 of the 4-H Club Treasurer's Manual and Record Book for a sample submission form: <http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/forms/mississippi-4-h-club-treasurers-manual-and-record-book>
- You may not ask your local board of supervisors for donations unless first approved by your Extension agent.
- Work with your Extension agent to develop a clear outline of how money will be handled and accounted for; be prepared to write a report of yearly expenses.
- If money has been donated to your county through the MSU Foundation, you must submit original receipts to be reimbursed, and they must be submitted by the first working day of each month.

Getting Donors to Support Your Club

To begin the fundraising process, come together as a club and clearly identify the club's needs. These could be major needs, such as a robot or laptop, or they could be minor needs, such as batteries and snacks.

To see what is currently being used in 4-H Robotics clubs, visit our website: <http://4hrobotics.msucare.com/resources/support>. Write a list of needs and their approximate cost:

Item	Quantity	Cost
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Next, have each member contribute three to five names of potential donors and their contact information. Review the names carefully with your Extension

agent to ensure your club is permitted to contact specific donors.

Potential donor

Contact info

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now, decide whom each person will call. When calling prospective donors, be sure to introduce yourself and talk about how you know them. Ask if you can meet with them to discuss the 4-H Robotics program and its

benefits. Avoid asking for a donation over the phone if at all possible.

In the conversation bubbles below, write how you would introduce yourself to a potential donor:



What are some benefits of having a 4-H Robotics club? _____

Before meeting with prospective donors, be sure you understand and are ready to discuss the following:

1. Why you are passionate about 4-H robotics.
2. Why the donor should support it.
3. The specific items that are needed and their cost. ("We need \$300 to buy a robot so that we can learn to program.")

Here is a sample conversation-starter:

"I am passionate about 4-H Robotics because _____, _____, and _____. Supporting 4-H Robotics is important because _____. In order to make an impact, the club needs \$_____. Would you be able to give a gift to help toward meeting the club goal?"

Have 4-H'ers and parents role-play the parts of the donor and the 4-H'er asking for the donation. What

will you do if the potential donor says no? What if the donor says yes?

Yes	No	Maybe
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

When a donor commits to donating to your county club, or even the statewide effort, the next question is, "Where does the money go?" For accounting and tax reasons, a tax-exempt account for 4-H Robotics

has been created at the Mississippi State University Foundation.

Why have an account at the Foundation instead of at the county? The primary reason is that the Foundation

has a federal employer identification number (EIN), so the donated money can be used as a tax exemption. Many county offices do not have the necessary resources to qualify for a tax-exempt number. Any money donated and earmarked specifically for a

county robotics program will go to that county. Any money donated and earmarked specifically for the statewide robotics program efforts, which impact all of the counties, will be used to engage young people in 4-H Robotics statewide.

There are two easy ways to donate:

1. Write a check and, in the memo section, specify fund number #312935 and whether it is a donation for a county or a donation to statewide programming efforts.

a. Example for a county donation:

- i. In the memo section, write: #312935/Desoto 4-H Robotineers
- ii. Be sure to check the box next to "I am donating money to 4-H Robotics fund number 312935 for a specific county: _____" (write the county name).

b. Example for a statewide program donation:

- i. In the memo section, write: #312935/State
- ii. Be sure to check the box next to "I am donating money to the statewide 4-H Robotics program, 4-H Robotics fund number 312935."

2. Donate online!

- a. Visit <http://extension.msstate.edu/stemdonate>.
- b. Complete the required fields. Under Designations, select Other and specify either 4-H Robotics/Statewide or 4-H Robotics/County Name.

YES, I want to help young people!

Please accept my tax-deductible gift of \$ _____

Name: _____

Home address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Is this gift anonymous? Yes No

Home phone: _____

Email: _____

Payable as follows:

My check is enclosed, made payable to the MSU Foundation Inc.* List the 4-H Robotics fund number, 312935, on your check.

Please charge my credit card: Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

Enter Card Number Below: _____

Expiration date (month/year): _____

Security code: _____

I am donating money to 4-H Robotics fund number 312935 for a specific county: _____

I am donating to the statewide 4-H Robotics program, 4-H Robotics fund number 312935.

*Donations are distributed through the Mississippi State University Foundation for accounting and tax reasons. As long as your money is earmarked specifically to 4-H Robotics fund number 312935, it will be used for 4-H Robotics.

I want to contribute to:

Donation Amount: \$ _____

Is this gift anonymous?

If you are making a pledge payment, designations are not required.

Designations

- Mississippi State Fund ?
- Compass Scholarship Fund ?
- Other (Please specify below)
- College/School/Preferred Area

If you selected 'Other,' please indicate where you would like us to direct your gift:

What prompted you to give online?

Once the donation is processed, the donor will receive a notification letter that can be used for tax purposes. The county will be notified if money has been donated on their behalf. Extension agents can then purchase items for the club and be reimbursed from the 4-H Robotics Foundation account.

If you received a donation, it is important to recognize the donor's generosity. This means sending thank-you notes from the 4-H club members, calling to say "thank you," and mentioning donor sponsorship in county newsletters or social media posts, if appropriate. Be sure to include such things as number of young people reached, photos, or interesting anecdotes. Even if a person does not donate to your club, it is still important to follow up and thank them for their time. If you get a "maybe," keep thinking about how you can cultivate the relationship. Could the donor speak to your group about the role of technology in his or her business? Could the donor host a field trip? A

"maybe" answer is a potential "yes," and it may yield unexpected results that enhance the overall club.

Use the sample card below to draft a thank-you note to your donors, even if they said no!

Thank-you note

October 3, _____

Dear _____,

Sincerely,

Conducting Fundraising Activities

Typically, fundraising activities should focus on young people contributing time, effort, and energy to achieve a goal. The goal in this case is the purchase of a new robot or some other material to support the club. This investment makes 4-H'ers stakeholders in the club and gives them a sense of ownership. If at all possible, avoid raffles or fundraisers where 4-H'ers sit outside a store and ask for money. Instead, move 4-H'ers into leadership roles where they are the ones responsible for organizing and teaching. Not only is it a good learning opportunity for young people, but it also reflects well in 4-H record books, Congressional Award applications, and résumés.

Host a Camp

Your club may find it easier to conduct fundraising activities in order to purchase equipment. Many counties have had success in hosting robotics camps to raise money. Older 4-H club members serve as the camp leaders or counselors for younger participants, while adult 4-H volunteers provide overall guidance. Some materials such as robots and laptops can be borrowed from the MSU Extension Center for Technology Outreach on a case-by-case basis.

Organize a LEGO® Club STEM Party

Who doesn't love LEGOs? Use those tiny pieces of plastic scattered around the floor to raise money for your club. Have club members gather up all of the LEGOs they have at home, and use inexpensive supplies to make the most of your LEGO party fundraiser.

Consider resources such as:

LEGO® Chain Reactions: Design and Build Amazing Moving Machines by Pat Murphy and the Scientists of Klutz Labs

LEGO® Computer Coding STEM for Kids: <http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/lego-computer-coding-stem-activities-for-kids/>

PLAY LEGO® Building Ideas and Activities: <http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/lego-activities-steam-challenges-kids/>

Use Your Extension Resources and Knowledge

As a club, learn how to make jam with your local Extension agent. Turn ordinary fig preserves into Robot Jet Fuel Jam. All it takes is a little creative labeling to turn ordinary jam into something out of this world. Gather up old crayons and melt them down to make awesome robot crayons. Molds are readily available for purchase online, and a few can be checked out from the Center for Technology Outreach. Crank out the sewing machines and make robot pillowcases or robot tooth-fairy pillows. Build your skills while learning how to market what you make. Sell your creations at local farmers' markets or holiday fairs.

Grants

Grants are another way to fund your local club. Many businesses offer grants to local groups. If you need help filling out paperwork for a grant, contact the Extension Center for Technology Outreach.

Reference

Conrad, K. (2015). 4-H Fundraising PowerPoint Presentation [PowerPoint slides]. Mississippi 4-H Robotics Academy.

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