

2026 Zoo Crew Multimedia Journalist Leadership Position Description

GENERAL SUMMARY

The Zoo Crew Multimedia Journalist (*formerly known as Historian*) is an unpaid leadership position that supports the overall Zoo Crew Program by capturing, crafting and sharing the story and impact of Zoo Crew. This position will help grow Zoo Crew's online presence, document program activities, and share photos, videos, and written content through various media outlets.

The Multimedia Journalist will use the power of digital storytelling to highlight the experiences, achievements, and daily moments that make Zoo Crew unique. They will have opportunities to strengthen their photography, videography, and narrative-building skills as they chronicle activities across all areas of Zoo Crew, including Camp Mentor, Naturalist, Explorers during Conservation and Career Weeks, and Junior Zookeeper.

The Multimedia Journalist will have the opportunity to build leadership skills through active participation on our Leadership Council. They will also help shape the future of the Zoo Crew program by providing valuable feedback and insights. This role requires high energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and flexibility, as well as the ability to work effectively with groups of all ages in both indoor and outdoor settings.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Zoo Crew Multimedia Journalist is a leadership position within the Zoo Crew program.

Responsibilities include:

- Serving as a member of the Leadership Council and participating in meetings and activities to prepare for the summer program
- Collaborating with the Zoo's Marketing and Communications team to **develop social media content** that spotlights Zoo Crew, celebrates achievements and promotes wildlife conservation
- Taking **photos and short videos** of Zoo Crew participating as Camp Mentors, Naturalists, Junior Zookeepers, and Explorers in Conservation & Career Weeks and upload these regularly to SmugMug following guidelines from Teen Program Staff
- Creating **blog post(s)** for Houston Zoo Staff incorporating 10 standout photos that highlight how Zoo Crew contributes to the Zoo's mission
- Creating an **End of Session Video** that documents all aspects of Zoo Crew, ensuring memories are preserved in a fun, engaging and professional way. This should include short videos and music associated with Camp Mentor, Naturalist, Conservation and Career Weeks, and Returning Zoo Crew
- You may be asked to complete different projects based on the activities or events that occur during your session
- May be asked to act as a fill-in in other Zoo Crew sections as needed
- Will act as a go-to if questions arise for first-year Zoo Crew Explorers

SCHEDULE

Spring 2026 (Pre-Summer Planning)

These meetings are mandatory training to prepare for your role in the summer. The meetings are also an opportunity for the Teen Leadership Council to get to know each other and your session partners.

Mandatory Meeting Dates:

- Sunday, March 1, 2026: 9am-4pm
- Saturday, April 11, 2026: 9am-4pm

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- Sunday, May 3, 2026: 9am-4pm

Summer 2026

The following outline provides a general overview of the Summer 2026 schedule. Dates and tasks may shift before the program begins, and some minor duties are not listed. The schedule runs consecutively during **Session 1 (June 1–July 3)** or **Session 2 (July 6–August 7)**.

- **Daily Tasks:**
 - Check with Teen Programs Staff and Camp Staff to confirm activity schedule for programs needing photos and video (Conservation and Career Weeks, Camp, Naturalist, etc.)
 - Plan the types of photos and videos to capture based on the schedule
 - Upload daily photos to SmugMug
 - Complete any additional tasks as assigned
- **Weekly Tasks:**
 - **Week 1:** Draft social media posts in collaboration with the Zoo's Marketing and Communications team.
 - **Week 2:** Refine social media posts with feedback from Teen Programs Staff and Marketing team. Submit final versions for posting.
 - **Week 3:** Submit a blog post draft to Teen Programs Staff.
 - **Week 4:** Refine blog post based on feedback. Submit final version for posting.
 - **Week 5:** Submit End-of-Session Video.

Year-Round Zoo Crew

After the summer, Teen Leadership Council will have monthly mandatory meetings in the Fall and Spring. At these meetings TLC will be debriefing from the summer, planning for future events such as World Lemur Festival, and discussing future Zoo Crew projects.

Tentative Fall 2026 meeting schedule:

- September 12, 2026: 9am-4pm
- October 11, 2026: 9am-4pm
- November 8, 2026: 9am-4pm
- December 12, 2026: 9am-4pm

Beyond the monthly meetings, TLC members are expected to participate in Year-Round Zoo Crew events, either in a leadership capacity or as Zoo Crew. The minimum requirements are:

Fall (October – January)

- Three shifts of Naturalist or Camp Mentor

Spring (January – May)

- Three shifts of Naturalist

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Have one year of Zoo Crew completed
- Be in good standing in the Zoo Crew program
- Be 15 years old by May 31, 2026
- Be between the ages of 15 and 17 *through* the end of your summer session
- Be able and committed to attend **3 mandatory training meetings** in the Spring 2026

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- Be able to commit to **ALL** 5 weeks of one of the Zoo Crew Explorers sessions in the Summer 2026
- Be able to continue through the Year-Round Zoo Crew program and attend monthly meetings in the Fall 2026/Spring 2027

PREFERRED SKILLS

- Understanding of Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and other social media sites
- Knowledge of photo and video editing software, such as iMovie or Adobe Premiere Pro
- Experience in photography and videography

TO APPLY

Submit application by **Saturday, January 17th at 11:59pm**. Interviews will occur between January 31st - February 8th, 2026. Applicants will be chosen based on their application, interview, and previous evaluations.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Being part of the Teen Leadership Council is a significant commitment. We want to ensure that all TLC members and their parents/guardians understand and agree to commit to all required meetings/participation dates as outlined above.

FAQ

Can I participate in more than five weeks of TLC or Zoo Crew?

TLC members are scheduled for one five-week session. You may participate in additional weeks only if you are serving as a Naturalist, Camp Mentor, or Junior Zookeeper. In some cases, Teen Programs Staff may invite you to assist with Zoo Crew activities or allow you to work on a designated project or committee (e.g., the Bird or Snake Saving Campaign). To prevent burnout, total participation is limited to a maximum of eight weeks during the summer.

What if I can't attend a Spring mandatory meeting?

Spring training meetings are required, as they prepare you for the summer program and cover essential information and skills. Please make every effort to adjust your schedule so you can attend. Spring training dates are listed above.

If you are unable to attend a mandatory meeting, please notify Teen Programs Staff as soon as possible. We understand that emergencies or special circumstances may arise and appreciate your timely communication. The best way to reach us is by email at teenprograms@houstonzoo.org.

What is the attendance expectation for monthly meetings?

TLC is a collaborative leadership program, and every member's presence helps the group succeed. Members are expected to attend monthly meetings as regular participation is key to leadership growth and teamwork. While we understand that occasional conflicts may happen, members should aim to

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attend at least 75% of meetings to remain in good standing. Members who consistently miss meetings may be asked to meet with Teen Programs Staff to discuss their commitment to the program.