Roger Williams Park Zoo / Rhode Island Zoological Society

RI Zoological Society is a nonprofit entity dedicated to the development and enrichment of Roger Williams Park Zoo

Counselor-in-Training Volunteer Application

Complete Applications Include the Following:

Completion of Digital or Paper Application (Pages 1-2)

ZooCamp Lesson Plan (Page 3)

Application Questions (Page 3)

Availability (Page 4)

Parent/Guardian Agreement (Page 5)

To Submit Your Application:

Please email to:

bcaporelli@rwpzoo.org

OR

Please mail to:

Manager of Family Programs
Roger Williams Park Zoo
1000 Elmwood Avenue
Providence, RI 02907

Application Deadline: January 8th 2027

Next Steps

Selection and consideration for new Counselors-in-Training is a multistep process. After applications are submitted and the deadline has passed, applicants will be contacted to advance or not advance to group interviews.

Counselor-in-Training Volunteer Application

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Position Title: Counselor-in-Training (CIT)
Classification: Volunteer **Department:** Education
Reports To: ZooCamp Administrator, ZooCamp Counselors
Dues: $30 annual fee to cover I.D. badge, t-shirts, and appreciation events
Commitment: 4 weeks of summer ZooCamp, plus one week of either Winter (2/15-2/19) or Spring (4/19-4/23) ZooCamp as a second stage interview

Position Description

CITs are teen volunteers who assist in the ZooCamp experience and help maintain a safe, fun environment for campers (ages 4-10) by encouraging participation, modeling ZooCamp expectations and assisting campers with skills during activities or crafts. CITs are supervised by ZooCamp staff while a part of the ZooCamp team. In this program, teens will gain experience in the organization of camp programs, teamwork, leadership, public speaking, and classroom management.

Responsibilities:

1. Greet ZooCampers and families, assist campers in finding and using their cubbies and in acclimating to the ZooCamp environment, and encourage campers to participate in morning games and daily camp activities.
2. Model ZooCamp expectations for campers to encourage safe and respectful behavior.
3. Help foster a love of nature and learning in campers through maintaining an enthusiastic, positive attitude.
4. Help create and maintain a safe, welcoming, fun environment for ZooCampers, utilizing tools such as songs and group games when appropriate.
5. Facilitate a variety of Play Pod activities for campers during the lunch period.
6. Assist ZooCamp staff in maintaining camper safety while out on Zoo grounds, such as during a Zoo tour, and remain with campers and ZooCamp staff during the day.
7. Be present for both AM and PM meetings and occasional team building events on evenings or weekends.
8. Help ensure camp runs smoothly and efficiently by assisting with any related tasks, administrative or otherwise, as directed by ZooCamp counselors, Jr. Counselors, Assistant ZooCamp Administrator or ZooCamp Administrator.

Qualifications:

1. Must be a student in the 8th-12th grade. Grade verification may be required. If the teen's 18th birthday falls during the summer volunteer season (6/15-8/21) the applicant or current CIT will not be able to volunteer for that season. Teens age out of the Counselor-in-Training program at their 18th birthday.
2. Must commit to at least four full weeks of summer ZooCamp, Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm (5:00pm on Fridays).
3. Must commit to volunteering during either Winter Camp (2/15-2/19) or Spring Camp (4/19-4/23) as a second stage interview. See "ZooCamp Availability" page for information additional options during Zoo-Cation Day Camps.
4. Must commit to the following mandatory trainings (May 19th from 5:30-7:30pm, May 26th 5:30-7:30pm, June 6th from 1:30-5:30pm, and June 8th 4:30-7:30pm. Subject to change.)
5. Arrive on time and stay for the entire volunteer shift, with reliable transportation to and from the Zoo.
6. Enjoy engaging and interacting with children of all ages.
7. Interest in conservation and the natural world.
8. Ability to operate well in a team environment, as well as independently.
9. Must be flexible and willing to learn.
10. Effectively support the mission and priorities of Roger Williams Park Zoo, and adhere to all policies described in the Roger Williams Park Zoo's Volunteer Handbook.

Benefits:

1. Free year-round admission to Roger Williams Park Zoo for yourself.
2. Eight free passes per year to Roger Williams Park Zoo for your friends and family.
3. Good resume builder with potential opportunities for professional development.
4. Community service hours for school, sports teams, etc.
5. Meeting new people in a fun environment.
6. Supporting the Roger Williams Park Zoo's mission as leaders in conservation and animal care through creating engaging experiences that empower guests to join us in conserving wildlife and wild places.

Zoo Crew CIT Volunteer Application

Roger Williams Park Zoo / Rhode Island Zoological Society

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Applicants will receive consideration without discrimination based upon any legally protected class, including but not limited to race, age, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected impairment, military status, veteran status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or ancestry, or other legally protected status except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists.

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____ _____ _____ **Date:** _____

Last Name | First Name | M.I.

Address: _____ _____ _____ _____

Street Address | Apartment/Unit # | City | State | ZIP Code

Email: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

How did you hear about this volunteer program? _____

Have you worked/volunteered for this organization in the past? YES ☐ NO ☐ **If yes, when and in what capacity?** _____

Have you ever applied to work or volunteer for this organization in the past? YES ☐ NO ☐ **If yes, when and for what position?** _____

Are you a student currently in the 8th-12th grade? YES ☐ NO ☐ **Grade in Fall/Spring 2026:** _____

grade verification may be required

Do you have reliable transportation to bring you to and from the Zoo? YES ☐ NO ☐

Education

Education	School Name	# Yrs. Attended	Graduation Year
Middle School/ Jr. High			
High School			

Zoo Crew CIT
Volunteer Application

Academic / Professional References

Please list two professional or academic references. Please do not list relatives. By providing these references, you authorize Rhode Island Zoological Society to contact these individuals regarding your suitability for volunteering.

Full Name: ..... **Relationship:** ..... **Years Known:** .....

Company Name: ..... **Phone:** .....

Full Name: ..... **Relationship:** ..... **Years Known:** .....

Company Name: ..... **Phone:** .....

Disclaimer and Signature

I hereby certify that the information stated above is to the best of my knowledge true, correct and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation of facts or any false or incomplete statements in this application are sufficient cause for dismissal if I am accepted as a volunteer. I authorize the investigation of all statements contained in this application in return for being considered for a volunteer position. I know that my completion of this application form does not mean that any volunteer positions are available. I acknowledge that RIZS has not made any promise that I will be accepted as a volunteer. I understand that RIZS has no obligation to offer me a volunteer position, and that I have no right or entitlement to a volunteer position. I understand that any offer of a volunteer position by RIZS is for no definite period of time and that either RIZS or I may terminate the relationship at any time without prior notice and without any reason or cause. I have read the Zoo Crew Counselor-in-Training position description, and certify that I am able to perform the duties described therein with or without reasonable accommodations. I understand that I am applying for a volunteer position. No payment or remuneration will be given in exchange for volunteer service. I further certify that I am applying for this volunteer position out of a desire to further my personal education and development, as well as to further the civic and community benefits which the Zoo provides.

Applicant Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Parent/Guardian Name: .....

Parent/Guardian Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Next Steps

Selection and consideration for new Counselors-in-Training is a multistep process. After applications are submitted and the deadline has passed, applicants will be contacted to advance or not advance to group interviews. After group interviews are conducted, some candidates will advance onto a second stage interview, an “immersive interview”. Not all candidates advance through each stage of the interviewing process as positions are limited and competition is often high. If you are not accepted, we encourage applicants to apply again in the future.

Zoo Crew CIT
Volunteer Application

Please attach your lesson plan to your application.

Paper Application Questions

Please submit separate pages/documents with the Paper Interview Questions AND your ZooCamp Lesson.. Applications submitted without this information will not be considered.

1. **Why do you want to volunteer as a ZooCrew Counselor-in-Training at Roger Williams Park Zoo?**
2. **Please describe your previous camp experience (if any, including but not limited to ZooCamp).**
3. **Please describe any experiences or skills you have that would be useful as a CIT.**
4. **What do you think are the most important characteristics of a CIT?**
5. **Is there anything else you would like to tell us as to why you would be a great CIT?**

Design a ZooCamp Lesson

Show us your creativity and skills by designing a lesson for children 6-10 years old on a topic of your choice. You may use the example outline and tips below to help you.

Example Outline

Title: [Keep titles short and fun to spark the interest of campers]

Age: 6-10 year old ZooCampers

Objective: [What is the goal of your lesson? What do you hope the campers will learn?]

Area of the Zoo: [Do you want to include a trip to an exhibit? Why?]

Activity/Craft Idea: [Your lesson will be more effective if you use activities and/or crafts. Be sure to explain why you have included the activity/craft. Be creative!]

Materials Needed: [What supplies might you need? For the craft? Activity? To illustrate your point? Other materials?]

Background Info: [Include information on the topic so that other C.I.Ts or Counselors could teach your lesson in your absence]

Have fun with it!

Zoo Crew CIT
Volunteer Application

Availability

Please mark all times and weeks that you anticipate being available (we understand that schedules change but please try to provide us with your best estimation).

Full Name:

Second Stage "Immersive Interview"

All CIT applicants are required to assist with either Winter or Spring Camp as a second stage "immersive interview" if advanced from preliminary interview rounds. This will allow us to observe candidates with the campers, counselors, and other CITs. This process also provides candidates with an understanding of the ZooCamp environment, expectations, and allows candidates to ask questions.

Please indicate which camp you are available for.If you are available for both, please mark both.
CIT hours for camp are 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM M-Th, and 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM Fridays

Winter Camp 2/15-2/19

Spring Camp 4/19-4/23

Any Additional Notes on Availability:

If you are unavailable for BOTH Winter & Spring Camp, please complete this application and contact the ZooCamp Administrator by phone at (401) 785-3510 x394 for more information about a possible Day Camp option.

Training

All individuals selected for the CIT program must attend mandatory trainings:

Wednesday, May 19th 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM (parent attendance required)
Sunday, May 26th 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Wednesday, June 6th 1:30 PM – 5:30 PM
Tuesday, June, 8th 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM
***As a note, training dates are subject to change.*

Are you available to attend these mandatory trainings?

Yes

No

Any Additional Notes on Availability:

ZooCamp Summer Availability 2025

All CITs are required to volunteer four weeks of the summer.
Please mark all weeks that you anticipate being available, even if it is more than four.
CIT hours for camp are 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM M-Th and 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM Fridays

Week 1 June 14-18
Week 2 June 21-25
Week 3 June 28-July 2
Week 4 July 5-9
Week 5 July 12-16
Week 6 July 19-23
Week 7 July 26-30
Week 8 August 2-6
Week 9 August 9-13
Week 10 August 16-20

Any Additional Notes on Availability:

Zoo Crew CIT
Volunteer Application

Parent/ Guardian Agreement

I, _____, authorize my child, _____,

to be considered for the Roger Williams Park Zoo's Counselor-in-Training volunteer program. I am aware that they will be interviewed by the ZooCamp Administrator and that, if advanced from preliminary interview rounds, they will be required to commit to a second stage interview (see previous page for dates). If selected for the CIT program following the interview process, they will be required to volunteer for four weeks of Summer ZooCamp.

I understand that if my child is accepted as a CIT, they will be engaging and interacting with children ages 4 – 10. They will always be supervised by Zoo staff and will receive informal and formal feedback weekly.

I also understand that if my child is accepted as a CIT, they will be offered team building and field trip opportunities outside of the regular ZooCamp day. I allow my child to participate in these opportunities unless otherwise communicated to the ZooCamp Administrator.

My child has or I will provide reliable and on-time transportation to and from each day of camp.I will also make every effort to not schedule appointments/activities during camp hours. I understand that RWPZ ZooCamp relies heavily on support from CITs and their tardiness or absence may affect the quality of zoo campers' experiences.

If my child is selected for a CIT position at Roger Williams Park ZooCamp, I agree to complete a confidential medical information form for my child and to return this form to the ZooCamp Administrator prior to my child beginning as a CIT. I understand that my child's acceptance into the CIT program is contingent upon the receipt of this form.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____