



# **PLANT AMERICA**

## **Community Project Grants Guidelines and Application**



The *PLANT AMERICA* Community Project Grants Program is sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc. for new or existing club projects in their respective communities. Projects may be a joint venture with another organization/s. The scope of these projects may include but are not limited to:

- Beautification and/or restoration
- Food security/community gardens
- Youth gardening
- Habitat for Humanity landscaping
- Landscaping projects including tree planting
- Implementation of environmental practices
- A horticulture or environmental educational event for the public

**Grant Amount:** Up to **\$2,000.00** is available to be used for direct expenses of 2025 project.

### **Who May Apply:**

- Individual or near-garden clubs that are members of National Garden Clubs, Inc.
- **NOTE:** Recipients of previous *PLANT AMERICA* Community Project Grants are **NOT** eligible to apply. **Exception:** Clubs who received a grant for the inaugural 2018-2019 year.
- **How to Apply using this PDF form:**
  - Application is limited to a **TOTAL** of **two (2) pages**. (This page and application information do not count.)
    - **ONE (1) PAGE** - Application Form (Page 1)
    - **ONE (1) PAGE** - Budget (Page 2)
  - *Applications of more than two pages will **NOT** be considered. **NO PHOTOS/DIAGRAMS.***

• Save this form to your desktop and open it in Adobe Acrobat; it is not fillable with most internet browsers. Fill in, save the changes and email the completed 2-page **application form and budget** to: [PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org](mailto:PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org).

### **Application Deadline: October 15, 2024, midnight CDT.**

- Recipients of grants will be notified, and money will be awarded by **February, 2025**.
- Projects must be completed by **February 28, 2026**; final reports due by **April 1, 2026**.

### **Judging Criteria:**

In evaluating grant applications, judging is based on the following Scale of Points:

Benefits and visibility in community	35	Collaboration with other community groups	15
Impact and scope of project	30	Application form complete and accurate	5
Involvement & participation by club memers	15	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Funding Guidelines:**

Grants will not be provided for:

- Projects in which club does not directly participate in some aspect
- Purchase of Blue or Gold Star Markers
- Competitive Flower Shows
- Scout projects
- **Salaries or personnel benefits**
- Political action programs
- Capital drives and/or fund building
- Scholarships and/or endowments
- Private gardens
- Lawsuits and/or litigation
- Overhead costs
- **Projects completed before 2025.**

### **Final Report:**

1. **Deadline:** within two months after the completion of the project or by April 1, 2026.
2. Email the following:
  - A short two-to-three pages report describing the project including before and after photos
  - A copy of the final financial report including all income and expenses which must match
  - A copy of any publicity
3. Refer to the NGC Website for sample final reports.

**NOTE:** Permission must be given for use of photos of people used by NGC in print, website and social media. Photo release forms for adults and children can be found on the NGC website: <https://gardenclub.org/school/forms-library>.

**NOTE:** Read the Application Information attached to this application. You do not need to include it with this application. (You can omit this page as well when submitting.)

**PAGE 1 - APPLICATION**  
**DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15, 2024**

**Date of Application:**

**Name of State Garden Club:**

**Applicant** (Club/s):

**Contact:** (Name of individual representing club/s)

**Contact Email address**

**Phone**

**Club Treasurer's Name**

**Club Treasurer's Address**

**Club Treasurer's Email**

**Phone:**

**Check if New Project**

**Beginning Date:**

**Completion Date:**

**Number of Club Members:**

**Anticipated Number Members Involved in Project:**

**Amount Requested** (up to \$2,000):

**Total Project Budget:**

**Club EIN/Non-Profit Number**

**Description of Intended Project:**

**Brief description of how the funds will be used:** (type of plants, hardscape items, construction, etc.)

**Brief statement of any in-kind or volunteer services excluding club members:** (who, number of hours, function, etc.)

**PAGE 2 - BUDGET**  
**DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15, 2024**

Garden Club Name:

State:

**EXPENSES**

Plants (# X \$.00) (listed below)

\$

Soil amendments/mulch

\$

Other Purchases

\$

**\*TOTAL EXPENSES**

\$

**INCOME**

NGC Plant America Community  
Project Grant requested

\$

Approximate value of donated  
Supplies/products

\$

Club's Contribution

\$

Other Organizations' Donation

\$

Other (listed below)

\$

**\*TOTAL INCOME**

\$

**\*Totals for income and expenses must be equal.**

***SEE NGC WEBSITE (PLANT AMERICA COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANTS) FOR DEFINITION OF THESE CATEGORIES AND WHAT CAN BE INCLUDED.***

**Email APPLICATION and BUDGET (and Questions) TO:**

[PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org](mailto:PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org)

# Plant America Community Projects Grant Application Information

## INSTRUCTIONS (PAGE 1)

Things of note:

1. This is a fillable PDF. If you cannot fill it in, ask someone else in your club for help or go to your library. (Or ask a grandchild or neighborhood kid.) Adobe Acrobat is a free basic program to read and fill in PDFs. We will NOT accept anything but this PDF format. Do NOT take a picture of a printed document and send.
2. You can email this entire form, or just send the two fillable pages. You are not penalized if you send this instruction page. You ARE penalized if you send photos, diagrams, etc., or more than pages in this form. Your application is based only on the filled-out pages.
3. The NGC grant cannot (!) be used for labor costs. There is no leeway on this, due to IRS regulations. If you plan to pay someone for labor costs, it cannot come from NGC funds.
4. Deadline is midnight (11:59p) October 15, 2024. Central Daylight Time. But don't delay. If there are mistakes in an application, we will send it back and ask for corrections if time allows. However, if the application has errors and arrives on October 15, it won't be returned.

That being said, there are no extra credit points for early applications. But we sure do like those clubs!

5. Make sure to follow ALL the guidelines and provide the required information. There are usually between 150-200 applications; not following directions can mean the difference between being a recipient or not.

6. NEAR CLUBS. There isn't an absolute definition for Near Clubs, but we are referring to clubs in close to vicinity to each other. These are usually east of the Appalachians and in large cities. Sometimes they are called Councils. But they could be two or three clubs who have a city or county-wide project in mind. Near Clubs are NOT districts, nor the state federation. One club/person will need to be listed as the main contact and a treasurer's name must be included. However, NGC will give credit to the entire Near Clubs.

## **APPLICATION PAGE - INFORMATION**

1. Name of State Garden Club: This is the name of your state organization. For example, Garden Club of Illinois, Inc.; Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.; Georgia Garden Club. Each club must belong to a state federation before belonging to the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Make sure you put the correct name of your state organization.
2. Contact. This is the person we will contact if questions arise or to inform if the club is a grant recipient or not. It does not necessarily mean the club president or the person who submitted the grant application. Their email address and phone number are required.
3. Treasurer Information. NGC will submit recipient checks to the club/s treasurer and not to the club president or listed contact. The check will be made out to a club, even for Near Clubs projects.
4. Projects do not have to be "new", but NGC will NOT pay for work already finished. The Plant America Community Project Grant is for projects starting in 2025.
5. Number of club members: this is the total number of club members in the club or Near Clubs.
6. Anticipated Number Members Involved: "A guesstimate." Be honest. The Grant should be a club project, and not an individual member's

or members', but we realize that it doesn't necessarily mean the entire club has to be involved.

7. Amount requested: This should match the amount requested on the Budget page!
8. Total Project Budget: Should match the total amounts on the Budget page.
9. Club EIN/Non-Profit Number. NEW for 2024. Due to IRS regulations and rules, we must make sure the grant goes to a registered organization. If you are a registered non-profit, you have an EIN. If you are tax-exempt, you probably have one as well. Most banks require an EIN, though some clubs may be grandfathered in.

EINs are generally free in most states. Google "Getting an EIN." Check with your bank; you may already have one and don't know it, or they can help you get one. Don't wait until the last minute.

Contact [plantamericagrants@gardenclub.org](mailto:plantamericagrants@gardenclub.org) if you have additional questions.

10. Description of Intended Project. Tell us what you are planning to do. Be succinct. Tell us how your project fits into the Plant America Community Project goals. Avoid lots of history. We want to know what's "not there" and what you intend to do. There is a limit to how much you can write, but also space. The font is set at 10 pts. Sample: "There is a historic rose garden at XXXXX. It was planted in commemoration of YYYYY back in 1980, but many of the roses have died and not been replaced. Additionally, the beds are not well-defined and there is no seating. Our goal is to replace the roses with modern disease-free roses, provide paver edging and new mulch. Three benches will be constructed and placed around the rose garden to enjoy the flowers and fragrance." Well, the fragrance part probably isn't needed, but sometimes you can't help but put things like that in.

11. How Funds will be used: This may repeat some of the above but use this space to elaborate. Don't just say "we'll plant trees" but tell us what type of trees and their size. Don't say "edging will be installed" but what type. Give us numbers: "5 white oak trees at least six feet tall."
12. In-Kind volunteer service: DO NOT include club members as an in-kind contribution. Only employees who are actually paid by someone else, such as the local park district or a municipality, are classified as in-kind.

Also, include non-labor contributions such as mulch, edging, plants, hardscapes, watering, etc. provided by someone other than the Club.

It doesn't hurt, though, to mention other organizations who might help such as 4-Hers, scouts or football teams.

## **APPLICATION PAGE - BUDGET**

Include the Garden Club name/s at the top, as well as the state. You can use the state postal abbreviation. We don't need the state federation's name.

EXPENSES – these tend to be guestimates. That's okay. AND you may not have something in each blank. That's also okay.

1. There isn't much space to list the plants, or it doesn't appear there isn't. However, this is an area where it scrolls, so you can provide lots of information. We should be able to scroll along and read if you use this fillable PDF.
2. Soil amendments/mulch: estimated cost
3. Other purchases: lots more space for hardscape items such as benches, edging, watering hoses, etc.
4. TOTAL. The form will total the amount you fill in with each blank above, so you don't have to worry about this UNLESS you don't use the fillable form.

INCOME – these may also be guestimates, but not really; try to be accurate. WE WILL LOOK AT THE FINAL REPORT AND EXPECT TO SEE EVERYTHING LISTED AS INCOME IS INCLUDED.

1. NGC Plant America Community Project Grant request: what are you asking of NGC. This amount must match the item on the previous page.
2. If tangible items are being donated, list the estimated value. Remember, you listed those at the bottom of the first page of the fillable form.
3. **Club's Contribution. A club doesn't necessarily have to donate anything, but from past committee discussions, it's nice to see the club has "some skin in the game." This is especially important if the club is requesting more than \$1000. Again it's not necessary, and project dependent, but it is most definitely a committee consideration. This is an actual dollar amount contribution, and not considered "in-kind" such as labor.**
4. Other Organizations' Donations. Are other organizations or individuals providing some funds to help the project? List those amounts. These are actual dollars being contributed, and not in-kind.
5. Other. For anything else.

NOTE: DO NOT include volunteer hours or any labor contributions in expenses or income. These can be included in the final report. Including labor contributions and expenses can be problematic with IRS reporting. Again, NGC funds cannot be used for labor expenses.

6. TOTAL INCOME. The fillable form will automatically add the total income number. You don't need to do this.

This figure MUST match the TOTAL EXPENSES amount. If they don't, the application will be returned or not considered.



## FINAL REPORTS

By accepting the grant, you are committing to submitting a final report by April 1, 2026. We will ask nicely and remind you leading up to April 1. Reports are necessary for the IRS and NGC's non-profit status. Remember, this is a club project, so ask others to help.

Failure to submit a final report will necessitate NGC asking for the funds to be returned.

Final report: A final report will be posted on the NGC website. You can always email [PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org](mailto:PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org) and ask for more information.

In the final report:

- Before and after photos. We want to see photos of people working and the completed area. Group shots afterwards aren't necessary and will not be used by NGC. Action shots!!!
- A summary of what was done. Include things that were successful, and problems encountered.
- A final summary of the budget, including Income and Expenses. Hopefully, it is similar to what you submitted.
- We may ask for receipts, so keep them.

**If you have any questions regarding the form and filling it out, don't hesitate to contact us at [PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org](mailto:PlantAmericaGrants@gardenclub.org).**

**(However, don't wait until the last minute; please!)**