



Grant Guidelines: 2026 Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification Grant

Applications Due: 5pm Eastern on February 23rd, 2026

Extensions **will not** be accepted, and incomplete applications **will not** be reviewed.

Overview

The Blue & Gold Star Memorial Beautification Program is a joint initiative of the National Garden Clubs's PLANT AMERICA program (NGC) and Keep America Beautiful (KAB). The program supports projects that remove litter, plant flowers and greenery, and beautify Blue Star and Gold Star Memorials nationwide, with a special emphasis on planting red, white, and blue flowers in celebration of America's 250th Anniversary on July 4, 2026.

We're excited to partner with Scotts Miracle-Gro to enhance the Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification Grant with the NGC by providing KAB affiliates an additional \$500 award to support these projects. This partnership strengthens our shared commitment to honoring service members while helping local affiliates create meaningful, lasting beautification improvements in their communities. By investing directly in these projects, we're helping affiliates expand their impact and further celebrate the Greatest American Cleanup.

We encourage affiliates to use this funding to expand the impact of their Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification projects in partnership with their local National Garden Club for the nation's 250th birthday celebration on July 4, 2026.

Funding Available

- \$25,000 in funding will be available.
- Up to \$500 per affiliate

Eligibility

- This grant is exclusive to Keep America Beautiful affiliates.
- Affiliates must be partnering with their local or state National Garden Club Inc on a Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification Project that has been awarded the NGC PLANT AMERICA grant.
- Applicants will be given priority in the grant review and consideration process if they successfully secured or plan to secure a signature for the Greatest American Cleanup pledge from their highest elected/paid local government official at
- Keep America Beautiful (KAB) state affiliates are welcome to apply either in partnership with local KAB affiliates in their state and/or as pass-through funding for affiliates in their state, provided projects and activities can be implemented within the grant activation timeline.
- No more than one (1) application per affiliate will be accepted.

Timeline

- Application Deadline: 5pm ET on February 23rd, 2026.
- Grant Evaluation & Notifications: February – March 2026
- Implementation Period: Activities must be implemented before July 1, 2026.
- Final Report Due: 5pm ET July 31, 2026.



Application Guidelines

- Applicants must partner and list their local or state NGC for the project. To find an NGC chapter, please contact jirby@kab.org
- Below are examples of eligible activities focused on existing Blue/Gold Star Memorials:
 - Removing litter
 - Planting flowers, bulbs, or trees
 - Educational materials and signage
- All proposals must clearly articulate how the proposed projects/activities will be measured for impact reporting. Outline which data you intend to collect. E.g. Number of flowers/bulbs/trees planted, Number of volunteers, Square feet of Memorial space improved, Location of activity, etc. This information will be necessary for the final report.
- Affiliates are also strongly encouraged to articulate how they will ensure the sustainability of their efforts with a detailed maintenance plan for any plant material.

Budget Guidelines

- Funds can be used to purchase plant materials, educational/beautification signage, litter clean-up supplies, or PPE.
- Grantees will be required to purchase signage to recognize sponsors during their Greatest American Cleanup activities.

Other Requirements

- As you plan your grant program activities, please keep in mind that grantees will receive 100% of the grant enhancement funds once the final report and invoice have been submitted to Keep America Beautiful.
- Grant recipients will be required to brand their projects and efforts as the Greatest American Cleanup.
- Grantees will be required to display signage to recognize sponsors during their Greatest American Cleanup activities. Signage may be purchased from KAB, or you may use your own, signage, with approval from KAB.

Grant Review Process and Consideration

- Applications will be reviewed by Keep America Beautiful staff and select external advisors and considered based on the following criteria:
 - Project selected for a National Garden Club Inc PLANT AMERICA Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification Grant.
 - How applicants plan to engage their community to contribute towards the Greatest American Cleanup initiative goals to do more
 - Clear articulation of project goals, activities and intended impact of project(s)
 - Innovation and lasting impact
 - Populations & communities served
 - Having secured or committed to secure a Greatest declaration from local elected/paid leader