

## ARKANSAS FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS

### Guide to Apply for State, Regional and National Awards

June 2025

#### Introduction

The generosity of the many sponsors who share a love of gardening enable us to provide both recognition and a financial award for garden club activities that beautify our state and communities, improve the lives of our citizens, young and old, and instill a love for gardens in all of us. This guide has been developed to assist Arkansas Federation of Garden Club (AFGC) members in writing and submitting award applications at the state, regional and national level.

The AFGC is a member of both the South-Central Region (SCR) Garden Clubs and the National Garden Clubs (NGC). Each entity has their own award categories, time frames and score sheets. While this guide is a brief summary to assist clubs in submitting award applications, care should be taken to review award categories at the regional and national level. More details can be found at the following websites:

South-Central Region Garden Clubs <https://www.scrgardenclubs.org/awards>

National Garden Clubs <https://gardenclub.org/awards-and-grants>

[awards-handbook.pdf](#)

**Only 1st place winners scoring 90 or above on the scoring rubrics or Scoring Sheets are eligible to receive cash awards. The exception is “Yearbooks” which must have a score of 95 or above.**

#### Which Award Should We Apply For?

While not required, it may be helpful for a club to designate one individual that will write and submit award applications. As clubs perform various activities throughout the year, keep records that include photos, a description of activities, number of members participating, community involvement, funds used, etc. Review the list of more than 35 AFGC adult award categories and decide which award you want to submit. For example, perhaps your garden club included a workshop on floral design. You may want to apply for an award for “Best Program or Workshop on Floral Design by a General Garden Club.” Or you may want to apply for a “Membership Awareness” award for small, medium, and large clubs that “Increase Public Visibility or Increase Membership.”

Club size categories are applicable at the AFGC for Yearbook and Membership Awareness, but also apply to the SCR and NGC awards.

- Small 1-20 Members
- Medium 21-50 Members
- Large 51+ Members

### **Writing the Award Application**

Each award application includes a cover sheet. There are separate cover sheets for AFGC and NGC. SCR applications use the NGC cover sheet. Each application should include a description of activities that occurred from January 1 to December 31<sup>st</sup> (even if a continuing project) and limited to a total of three pages, one sided (there are exceptions, such as a yearbook).

**It is important to review the appropriate AFGC, SCR or NGC scoring rubric as you write the description for the award for which you are applying.** The person scoring the application will use this form to decide point totals. Even two points can make the difference between selecting one award winner over another.

**Scale of Points (Scoring Rubric):** This scale is used for both the AFGC, SCR and NGC. Exceptions: #10 Yearbook & #14 Membership Awareness.

**Presentation: 5 pts.:** Cover sheet included with all sections completed (2), adheres to page limit unless other size specified in award description (2), application neat and concise (1).

**Achievement: 65 pts.:** Meets NGC mission/goals (6), scope of project defined (4), need identified (7), benefit to target (members, recipients, community, etc.) (10), accomplishment of goals (8), comprehensiveness of work (6), activities to attain goals explained (8), evaluation of goals reached (4), educational (3), prior planning (4), very brief history if continuing project (give full credit if not a continuing project) (3), other (2).

**Participation: 15 pts.:** % of member participation from total size possible (may include any type of support given) (12), involvement of others (community, government agencies, professionals, youth, facility residents, others) (3).

**Record or Documentation: 15 pts.:** Clear, well-labeled, neatly attached photos when applicable (4), landscape plan when applicable (give full credit if plan not applicable) (4), financial report (5), other (letters of appreciation, community awards, publicity, etc.) (2).

### **Applying for an AFGC Award**

Refer to the AFGC Award Guidelines 2025-2026 for detailed information on the awards, scoring, deadlines, etc. in the President's Packet or on the AFGC website, <https://www.arkansasfgc.net/members-only>, password DeepRoots.

Entries:

- Must include significant work in the current award year (January – December), even if it is a Continuing Project.
- Projects with commercial work will not be considered. Donations are not considered projects.
- Must be submitted by hard copy and electronically, either by email or flash drive, to the AFGC awards chair by the January 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. There are some deadline exceptions depending on the award name. Refer to the section on Deadlines. Keep a copy for your club records.

#### Application Forms:

- Each AFGC entry requires its own AFGC Award Application Cover sheet, found in the President's packet or on the AFGC website, <https://www.arkansasfgc.net/members-only>, password DeepRoots.
- When the same project is eligible for various awards, emphasize the aspects of the project that meet the criteria of that particular award with each entry instead of submitting an exact duplicate of the application.
- All applications which include photographs of youth under the age of eighteen MUST be accompanied by a signed Publications Release Form <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/ngc-publication-release-fillable.pdf> for each person. NGC requires that before sharing a name, information, and/or photograph in one of NGC's publications or on the NGC website, a signed release form is required from all adults and from the parent or legal guardian of any youth under 18. Release Forms are not included in the three-page limit.
- Entries have a three-page limit and must be single sided. The Application Cover Form and any Publications Release Forms are NOT included in the three-page limit. The three page limit does not apply to Yearbook #10, Membership Awareness #14, and Flower Show #16.

Binders, folders, sheet protectors and staples are no longer allowed. Paper clips are acceptable.

#### **Applying for an SCR Award**

SCR Award categories usually follow the same categories as NGC, but the award numbers are different. All of the awards are eligible for both NGC and SCR **except those awards beginning with SCR and they are only available through the SCR.** An example is **SCR-5 OUTSTANDING YEARBOOK THEME.** Remember SCR does not send awards to NGC, only the AFGC Awards Chair sends awards to NGC.

**ENTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR BOTH NGC AND SCR AWARDS.** Use the NGC Award Application Cover Sheet, which should be used for all SCR Awards, found at <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/awards-app.pdf>.

**Write SCR in the upper right corner for SCR Awards.** SCR will only award one 1st place winner from each state in each Contest. The AFGC state awards chair submits the Judging sheets for the entry. Competing state entries will be judged for SCR using the NGC scale of points.

**LENGTH OF ENTRY:** An entry may not exceed 3 pages, using front of paper only. No plastic sheet protectors allowed. No loose materials. Keep a copy of the entry for your club records.

#### **Applying for an NGC Award**

**NGC divided the awards into 8 distinct categories to make it easier to identify available awards.** The **NGC Award Application Cover Sheet**, which should be used for both SCR and NGC Awards, can be found at [awards-app.pdf](https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/awards-app.pdf). Information about all the NGC awards can be found at <https://gardenclub.org/ngc-awards>.

For example, the first NGC Award Category is Community Enhancement. If you click on that link, <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/community-enhancements-awards.pdf>, you will see the nine awards associated with that category. A brief description is provided along with the monetary award amount. Each category uses the General Scoring Rubric, with the exception of Food Bank Donations, which uses the CE3 Specific Scoring Rubric. Again, it is important that your description addresses all the items listed in the Scoring Rubric to get the maximum score. If you click on "Eligibility and Exceptions" <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/CE-awards-eligibility-and-requirements.pdf> a chart describes who can apply.

The next section, "Forms" provides a link to the application cover and the applicable scoring rubric form.

### **Yearbooks**

- Yearbooks can only be submitted at the State and Regional level.
  - **AFGC**
    - **AFGC #10. YEARBOOK**, \$100 divided, may be presented to the winner in each of three size categories. Yearbooks may be stapled, spiral, or 3-ring binders. The Yearbook Scoring Rubric is used for this award. **In order to be considered, the scoring must total 95 points at a minimum.**
      - Small 1-20 Members
      - Medium 21-50 Members
      - Large 51+ Members
    - Consistent with SCR guidelines, Yearbooks may be accepted for competition **based on the calendar year (January – December) or the club year** (the same yearbook may be submitted only one time in an awards year). Check the Presidents' Packet or AFGC website for Yearbook Guidelines, Scoring Rubric (Scale of Points) and size categories.
    - Deadline for Submission to AFGC awards chair is January 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - **SCR Yearbook Categories (Reference SCR Guidelines)**  
<https://www.scrclub.org/awards>
    - **SCR-4 YEARBOOK AWARD:** The State Awards Chair sends one Yearbook winner from each club size to the SCR Awards Chair for judging. Judging will use the Yearbook Scoring Sheets that apply to your club size (small, medium, or large).
      - Small 1-20 Members
      - Medium 21-50 Members
      - Large 51+ Members
    - **SCR-5 OUTSTANDING YEARBOOK THEME:** Presented to a club for the most creative use of a theme carried throughout the programs for the year, incorporating the objectives of NGC. Yearbook must be submitted that was in effect for the

awards year. Creativity and originality of theme will be considered. Correlation between the theme and all club programs, projects, and activities should be evident.

- **SCR-7 OUTSTANDING JUNIOR GARDEN CLUB YEARBOOK THEME:** Presented to a club for the most creative use of a theme carried throughout the programs for the year, incorporating the objectives of NGC. Yearbook must be submitted that was in effect for the awards year. Creativity and originality of theme will be considered. Correlation between the theme and all club programs, projects, and activities should be evident.

▪ **SCR YEARBOOK AWARD SCORING SHEETS**

- **State will score each award submission and present awards according to Club Size and Rating (score).**
- **Only 1st place winners scoring 95 or above on the Scoring Sheets can receive cash awards.**

Awards may be given for outstanding yearbooks in each of the following categories, determined by the number of members, including Life Members, on whom NGC dues are paid. Yearbooks may be accepted for competition **during the calendar year or the club year** (the same yearbook may be submitted only one time in an awards year and must be in effect for the awards year).

Please include an NGC Application form (cover sheet) which can be found at

<https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/awards-app.pdf>.

In accordance with SCR guidelines, attach a 3x5 inch card with the following information to the yearbook cover sheet:

- Three by Five (3x5) inch card should contain: Award name, Name of Club, City, District, Club rating (size), Number of members, Name, address, telephone number and Email of current club President, and dates of State and District dues were paid.

The AFGC Awards Chair submits Yearbook winners in each category to South Central Regional Awards Chair by January 25th.

**SCALE OF POINTS**

**Book Structure:** Practical, convenient size for membership, durable, neat. Yearbooks may be stapled, spiral, or 3-ring binders. Material be well spaced with ample margins, and font size suitable for members to read.

**2 points.**

**Cover:** Include name of club, town, state organization, year, and an appealing design. If a 3-ring binder cover is used, substitute with paper cover and include required information listed above.

**2 points.**

**Title Page:** Include name of club, town, state organization, year, number of dues paying members, and affiliated organizations (district, region, NGC, other). If state and national dues are paid for associate/inactive/honorary members, they are counted in total membership.

**2 points.**

**Table of Contents:** Number the yearbook pages and list topics on Contents Page.  
**1 point.**

**Subsequent Pages:** In any order most useful to members and best fit for page placement. Information in a club yearbook should be in logical order. National and State information does not have to be in front.

- **Membership Roster:** Complete mailing addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses (if applicable). Avoid crowding.  
**2 points.**
- **List of Club Officers and committee Chairs.**  
**1 point.**
- **NGC Information:** Name of NGC President, the theme of the administration and a referral to the NGC website for further information. DO NOT add President's home address or phone number. (Located at [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org))  
**1 point.**
- **Other Information:** Name of State President, State District Director, and Council President (if applicable). List themes for State President. List website addresses for state and region if applicable.  
**2 points.**
- **Calendar of Events:** List dates and locations for the district/state/region/national meetings and events to encourage members to attend and to eliminate scheduling conflicting dates.  
**2 points.**
- **Programs:** Topics should cover a variety of NGC goals and objectives such as Birds, Blue Star Memorials, butterflies, Conservation, Environment, Floral Design, Horticulture therapy, Horticulture, Design, etc.
  1. **Meets minimum number of meetings required by state. (9 meetings). 4 points.**
  2. **List date and time of meeting, Location with address. 4 points.**
  3. **List name of speaker/s, qualifications (brief), program title. 4 points.**
  4. **Variety of program topics (theme not required). 14 points.**
    - a. **Variety of styles of programs (lecture, tours, etc.). 13 points.**
    - b. **Variety of speakers (specialists, members, etc.). 14 points.**
- **Projects:** Projects involve actual membership participation that benefits the community and furthers NGC Goals and Objectives. Some Ways and Means projects (sale of bulbs, bedding plants, Herbs, etc.) may help to beautify the community as well as produce revenue for clubs. Some Ways and Means projects may help promote NGC Member Services as well as publicize our organization and goals. Certain social activities may lead to membership increase as stated in descriptions.
  1. **List continuing and new projects (a club is not required to have new projects). 15 points**

**2. Give brief word description of projects: Include location, name of chair, how members participate, list of donations if applicable, in-kind donations if applicable, plans for maintenance if applicable, etc. 15 points**

**3. NGC Mission Statement.** List of Life Members, District, State, NGC awards won the previous year. **2 points**

**Options:** Clubs could fill available space. Some clubs include bylaws, budget, former Presidents, or Club Theme. If theme is used, it should be evident throughout the book. Themes may be interpreted with monthly program topics and or titles, graphics, quotes. Projects do not need to be limited to a theme.

**Total Points: 100**

There are other SCR yearbook awards for Green Rated Garden Clubs, Affiliate Garden Clubs, and Clubs of Judges, Council of Judges or Consultants. For more information regarding the award criteria for these groups, refer to <https://www.scrgardenclubs.org/awards>.

### **Deadlines**

Clubs must send award applications to the AFGC awards chair by January 1<sup>st</sup>. The AFGC awards chair will review, score, and submit all award applications to the SCR and the NGC. The deadline for the AFGC awards chair to submit awards applications to SCR and NGC is January 25<sup>th</sup>. NGC awards will be submitted via Dropbox.

The chart below lists deadlines other than January 1st and may not include all deadlines. *Note: The Arkansas AFGC Awards chair sends all awards to the SCR and NGC Awards chairs.*

<b>Award Name</b>	<b>Club Deadline to AFGC Chair</b>	<b>SCR Deadline</b>	<b>NGC Deadline</b>
Floral Design	May 30th		July 1st
Flower Show	January 1st		January 25
Service & Recognition SR 1, 2, 3	November 30th	January 1st	
Service & Recognition SR 4	January 20th	February 20th	
SCR Pollinator Partnerships	November 1st	December 1st	

Please study the NGC Award requirements on the NGC Website <https://gardenclub.org>. SCR requirements can be found at <https://www.scrgardenclubs.org/awards>.