Product White Paper:
Workflows

Understanding, Configuring, Processing, and Managing Workflows in GE NXT

Last Updated July 2022

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Overview

Grant Edge NXT (GE NXT) enables nonprofit organizations to track their grantmaking business processes with its powerful integrated Workflow functionality. Record processing tasks (including itemized diligence tasks) can all be managed with record workflows.

This document discusses how to configure and use workflows in GE NXT, including how-to guides and best practices. Covered topics include:

- Understanding workflows in GE NXT
- Configuring workflow templates
- Status and amount changes via workflow
- Managing diligence steps in workflow
- Creating grants through workflow
- Processing workflow steps
- Alerts and email notifications
- Managing Spectrum supplemental pages with workflow

Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this document:

- **Task** – a function to be completed, such as a Staff Review, IRS Verification, etc.
- **Outcome** – the result of a completed Task, such as Approved, Declined, Completed, Cancelled, etc.
- **Step** – a Task and all its possible outcomes, such as a Staff Review task configured with possible Outcomes of Approved or Declined.
- **Template** – an ordered collection of steps to be applied to a record

Understanding Workflow in GE NXT

Nonprofits have unique practices for approving and processing Grant records, Proposal records, and Scholarship Application records which are specific to their organizations. These business processes can be managed through the workflow steps on each of these records. Each step can have a due date and can be assigned to a user, and as users complete these steps they update the record's workflow tasks with a Date Completed and an Outcome.

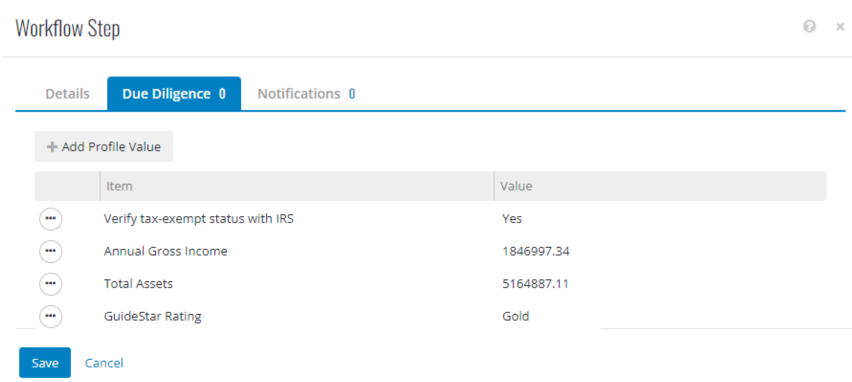
Nonprofits can configure workflow templates for each of these three core record types. For example, a "Standard Proposal" template could be created with steps for Staff Review, IRS Status Verification, and Create Grant. But if those steps do not cover all the tasks required for a particular proposal, the organization could set up additional Proposal workflow templates. For example, a "New Applicant" template could be created, which may include additional diligence steps. Another "Expedited Proposal" template could be created with only steps for Staff Review and Create Grant.

Each Grant, Proposal, or Scholarship Application record can be assigned a workflow template. These templates can be manually assigned on the appropriate record screen in GE NXT, and they can also be configured to be assigned automatically based on a record type (i.e., Grants of type “D” may get a default workflow template of “Designated Grant”). When a record is assigned a template, the template’s workflow steps are automatically created on the record. If applicable, step due dates are calculated, users are assigned, and email notifications are scheduled.

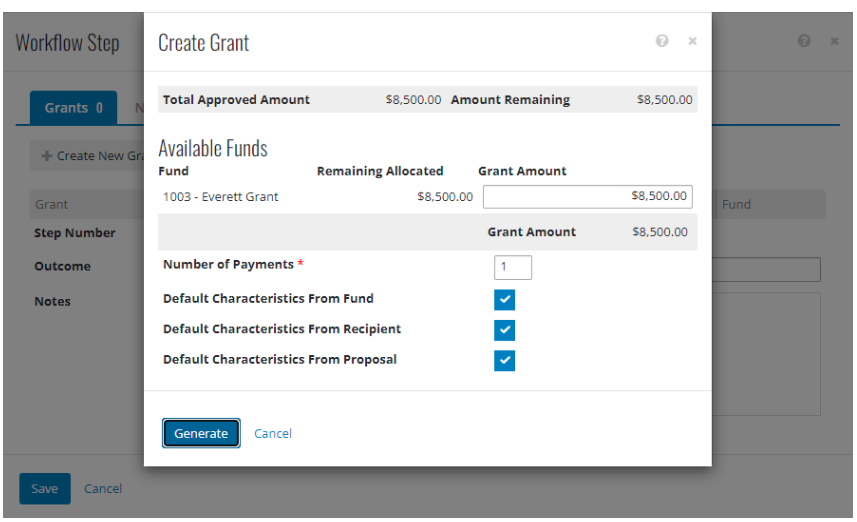
Special Step Types (Diligence & Create Grant)

Workflow Steps are used to track completion dates, outcomes, and other details. Some steps have additional built-in functionality for special purposes. These include “Diligence” and “Create Grant” steps.

- ***Diligence*** Steps are designed for itemized tracking of due diligence tasks. For example, a “New Applicant Verification” step may require a user to validate the organization’s charity status with the IRS, visit the organization's website, call the organization, create or update a CRM constituent record, etc. Each of these steps can be configured for the user to complete and track individually.



- ***Create Grant*** Steps are for Proposal and Scholarship Application workflow templates. Once a Proposal or Scholarship Application is approved, a Create Grant step should be executed to create the new grant record. This new grant can be treated like any other grant and added to a check run for financial processing.

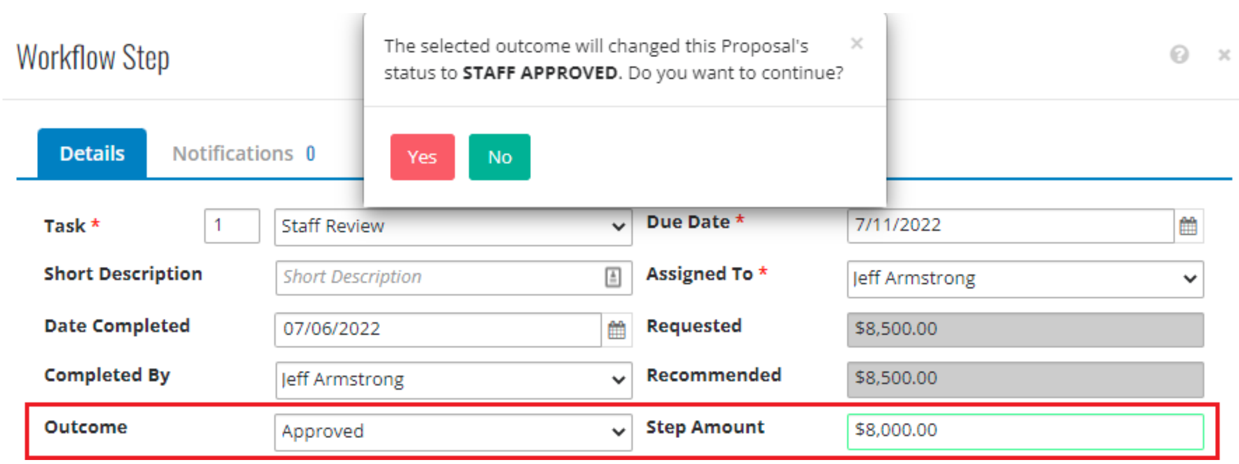


Recommended Amounts and Status Changes

As workflow steps gets marked as Completed and Outcomes are selected, GE NXT can be configured to automatically update the amount and the record status of the Proposal or Scholarship Application record. (Grant records are unaffected by these functions).

- Each step has a Step Amount field. On a Proposal, this value stores the current “Recommended Amount”. On a Scholarship Application, this stores the current “Approved Amount”. If this Step amount is set to a different amount than the current Recommended/Approved amount, GE NXT will update the Proposal or Scholarship Application’s Recommend/Approved amount accordingly.
- Each Workflow Outcome can be optionally configured with an associated record status, and when the workflow step is completed and that Outcome has as associated status, GE NXT will update the Proposal or Scholarship Application’s Recommend/Approved record status accordingly.

For example, a new Proposal record may have a Requested Amount of $8,500.00, and by default it will have an initial Recommended Amount of $0.00. In this scenario, the first workflow step is a Staff Review, with possible outcomes of “Approved” (linked to a proposal status called “STAFF APPROVED”) and “Declined” (linked to a proposal status called “DECLINED”). When the staff reviews the proposal and decides to only fund $8,000 of the requested amount, the GE user to whom the Staff Review workflow step is assigned will mark the step as Complete by setting the step’s Outcome to “Approved” and the Step Amount to $8,000. This action will cause the Proposal’s Recommend Amount to be changed from $0.00 to $8,000.00, and it will cause the Proposal’s status to change from “New” to “STAFF APPROVED”.



Email Notifications

Each workflow step can be configured to notify GE NXT users when the step is approaching its due date, when it gets completed, or when it becomes overdue. For example, if a Proposal has been awarded and the grant has been paid, there may be a final workflow step in the proposal for a "6 Month Followup" with a due date set six months after the grant was awarded, and a GE user may want to get a notification in 6 months to follow up on the workflow step.

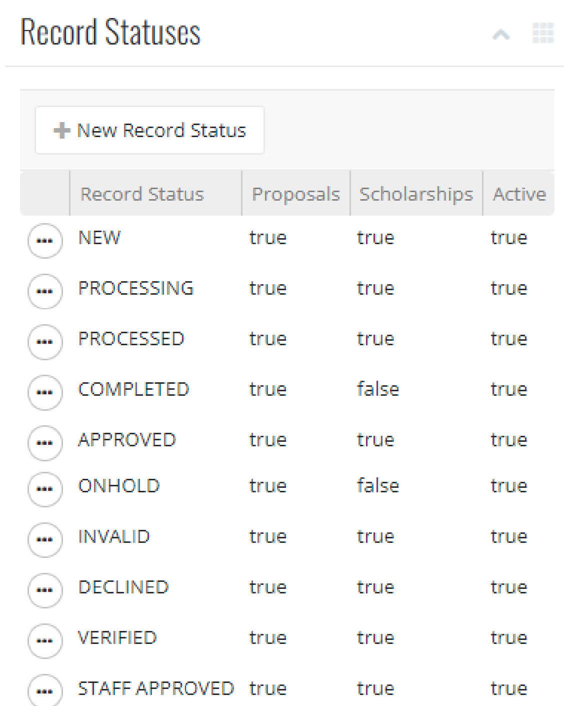
Configuring Templates

Components – Statuses, Outcomes, and Steps

The building blocks of Templates are Record Statuses, Outcomes, and Steps.

Record Statuses

When a Proposal or Scholarship Application workflow task is completed with a particular Outcome, GE NXT can be configured to cause the Proposal Status or Scholarship Application Status to change. These Record Statuses are defined and managed in the Record Statuses tile. Each status is configured to be either a Proposal status, a Scholarship Application status, or both.



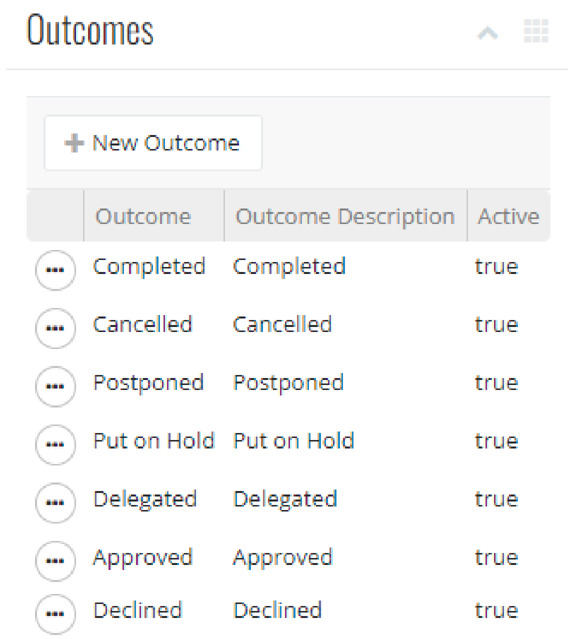
Record Statuses

+ New Record Status

Record Status	Proposals	Scholarships	Active
NEW	true	true	true
PROCESSING	true	true	true
PROCESSED	true	true	true
COMPLETED	true	false	true
APPROVED	true	true	true
ONHOLD	true	false	true
INVALID	true	true	true
DECLINED	true	true	true
VERIFIED	true	true	true
STAFF APPROVED	true	true	true

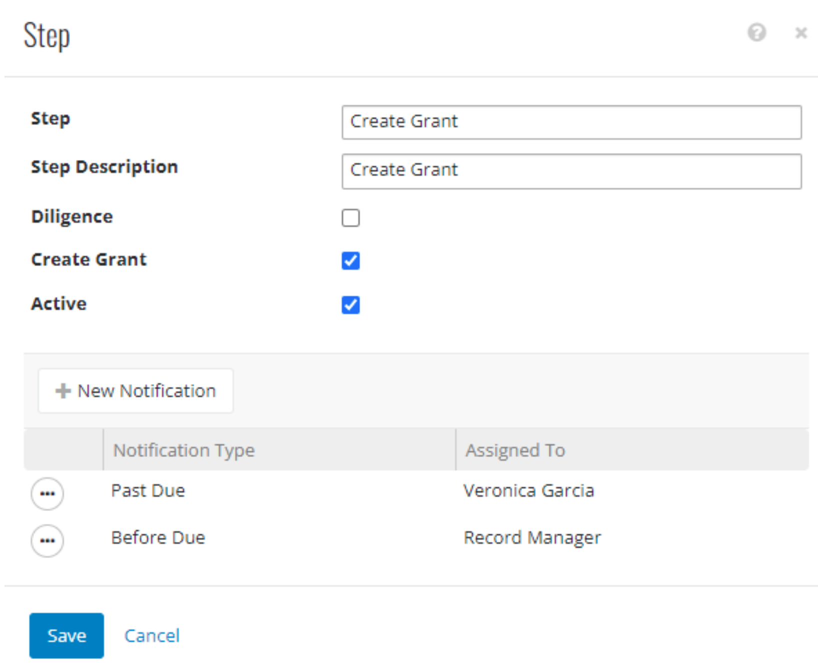
Outcomes

Workflow Step Outcomes are set when completing a workflow step, and they are intended to easily identify what the result of a step is. Examples include, Approved, Declined, Completed, Cancelled, etc.



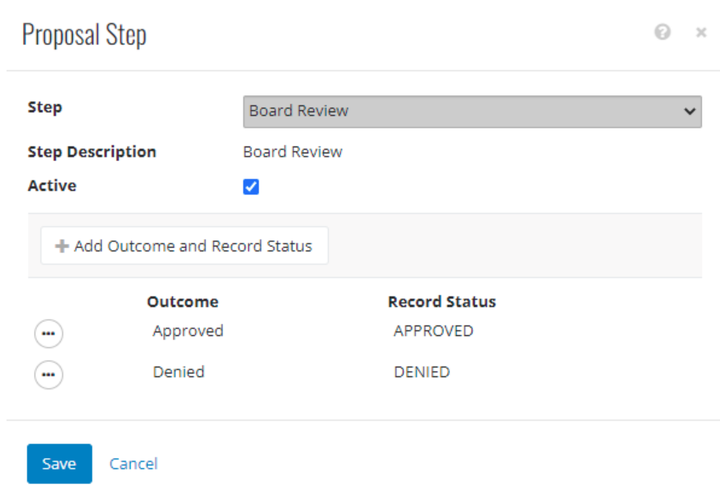
Steps

Workflow Steps are individual tasks or functions to be completed for processing a record. Step definitions include the Name, Description, Diligence, and Create Grant indicators, along with Email Notifications.



Steps by Record Type

Once Record Statuses, Outcomes, and Steps are defined, they can be used to create Workflow Steps for a specific record type. The "Steps" tab of the Workflow Config screen allows users to manage steps for Grants, Proposals, and Scholarship Applications. Each Record Workflow Step is linked to a Step, and then its available Outcomes are defined (and each Outcome can be linked to a Record Status if desired).



Templates

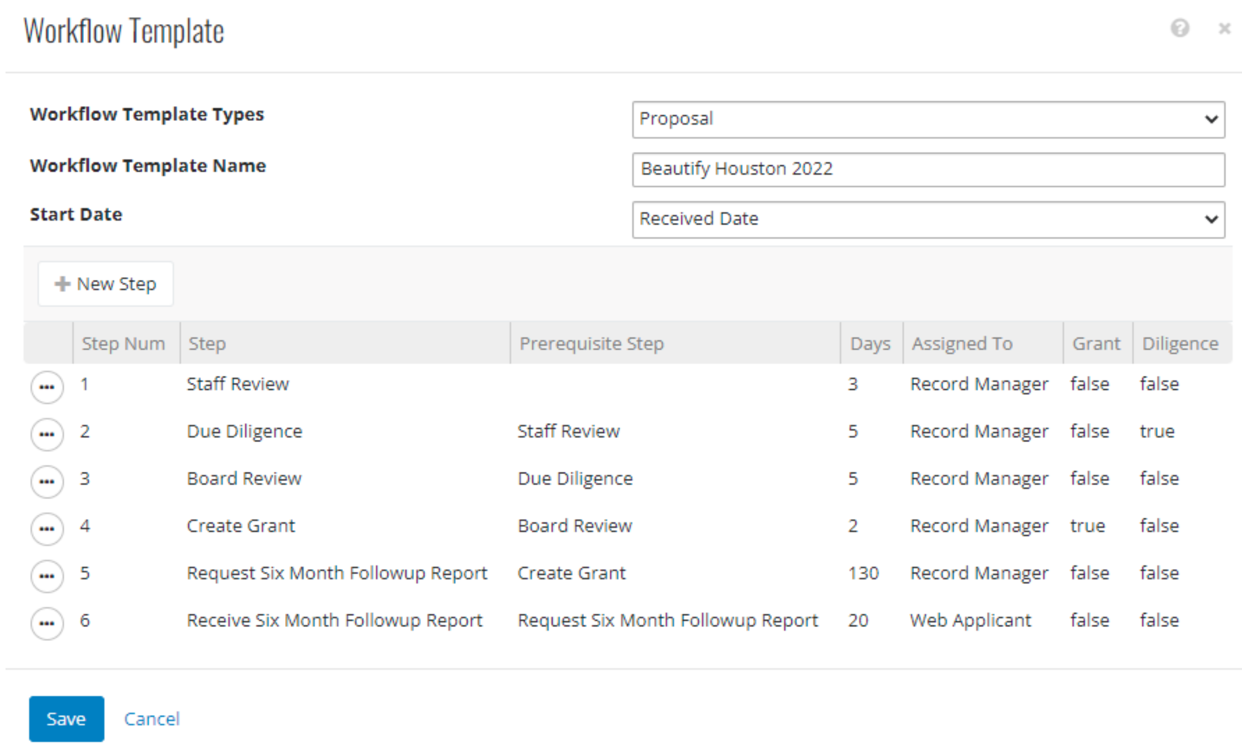
The pieces all come together in Templates. A Workflow Template is a set of Workflow Steps for a particular record type, listed in the desired order for processing, and are each configured with default user assignments, task duration in days, and prerequisite steps.

When a record gets a workflow template assigned, the Due Dates for the individual steps are calculated based on when the previous prerequisite step was due, and these calculations all start with a Start Date, which is defined here in the workflow template. For a Grant record, users can choose the Grant Date, the Received Date, or the First Payment Date. For Proposals, the Receive Date is used. For Scholarship Applications, the Date Submitted is used.

For each workflow step in the template, the following fields are configurable:

- **Step Number** – these should be sequential, starting at 1.
- **Step** – the Record Workflow Step
- **Prerequisite Step** – a prior task which must be completed before this step is completed. When set, this causes the Due Date to be calculated based on the projected Due Date of the prerequisite step plus the number of Days assigned.
- **Days** – the number of *business* days until the task is due, starting at the end date of the prerequisite task or the template start date. Business days are calculated at 5 days per week, and holidays are not factored in. For example, a task due in 6 months would be 26 weeks times 5 days per week, which is 130 business days.
- **Assigned To** – the GE user to whom the task is assigned. This can be configured with one of these values:
    - "Current User" – whichever GE NXT user is signed in and assigns the Template to a record

- “Record Manager” – the GE NXT user assigned to the record as its Manager (owner)
- “Program Area Personnel” – the first GE NXT user listed in the record’s associated Program Area Personnel tile.
- “Web Applicant” – this is a built-in GE user account which is used by the Spectrum Web Portal when updating a workflow step which controls a supplemental page
- Any specific GE User



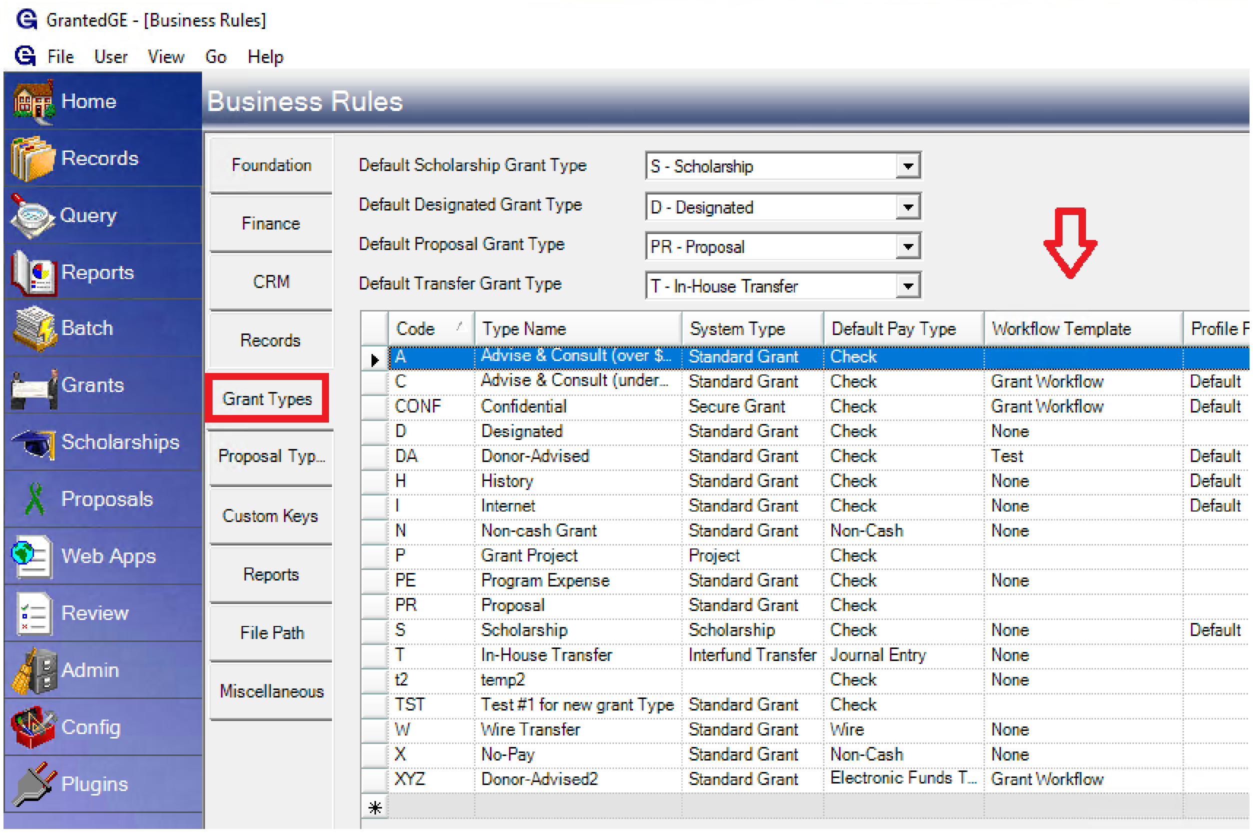
Default Templates for Record Types

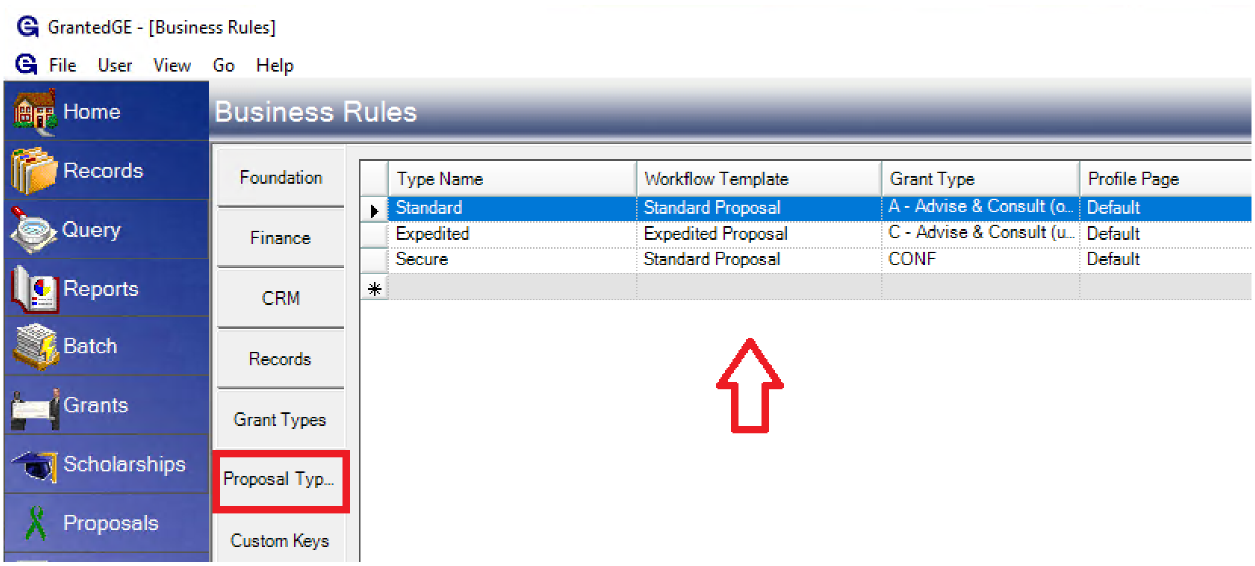
GE NXT can be configured to automatically assign Workflow Templates to Grants, Proposals, and Scholarship Applications. As a best practice, it is recommended that organizations think through standard processes for Grants, Proposals, and Scholarships, and then create Workflow Templates for each unique business process. Separate Grant and Proposal record types should be created and configured with these default workflow templates.

Grants and Proposals

Grant Types and Proposal Types can be configured with default workflow templates. For example, all new Grant records of type “D” (Designated) can be configured with “Designated Grant Workflow” as their default workflow template, and this will cause new Grants of type “D” to automatically get this workflow template assigned with the appropriate due dates calculated, users assigned, notifications scheduled, etc.

As of GE NXT 1.7, Grant Types and Proposal Types are still managed in the GE Admin View (GE Classic through Citrix). In the Config Menu, the Business Rules screen tabs labelled “Grant Types” and “Proposal Types” for managing default workflow templates by record type.

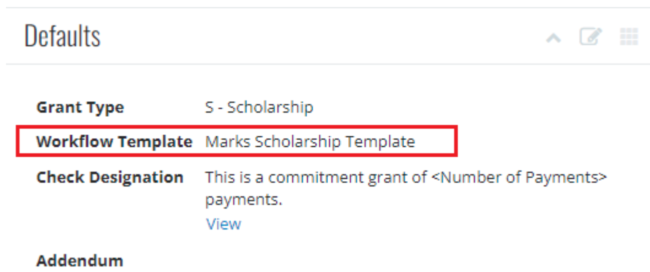




Scholarship Applications

Scholarship Application default Workflow Templates are driven by an application's Scholarship Fund. For example, all new Scholarship Applications assigned to the "Dallas Cowboys Scholarship Fund" can be configured with "Dallas Cowboys Scholarship Workflow" as their default workflow template, and this will cause Scholarship Applications to automatically get this workflow template assigned with the appropriate due dates calculated, users assigned, notifications scheduled, etc.

In the GE NXT Scholarship Fund record screen, the "Defaults" tile is where the default Workflow Template is defined.



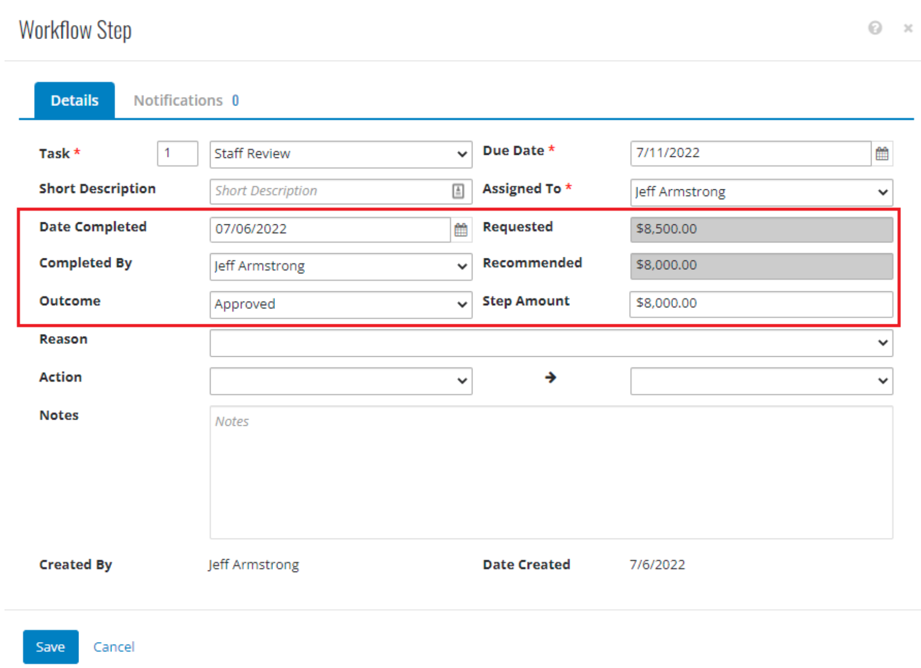
Processing Workflow Steps

Record Screens

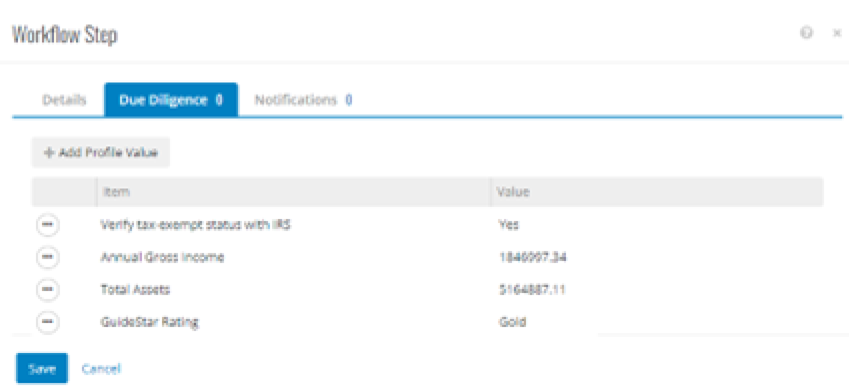
Grant, Proposal, and Scholarship Application record screens all have a “Workflow” tile, which lists all of the workflow steps to be completed. The steps come from the selected Workflow Template, which can also be set from the editor.

To complete a workflow step, open the editor and set a few key fields:

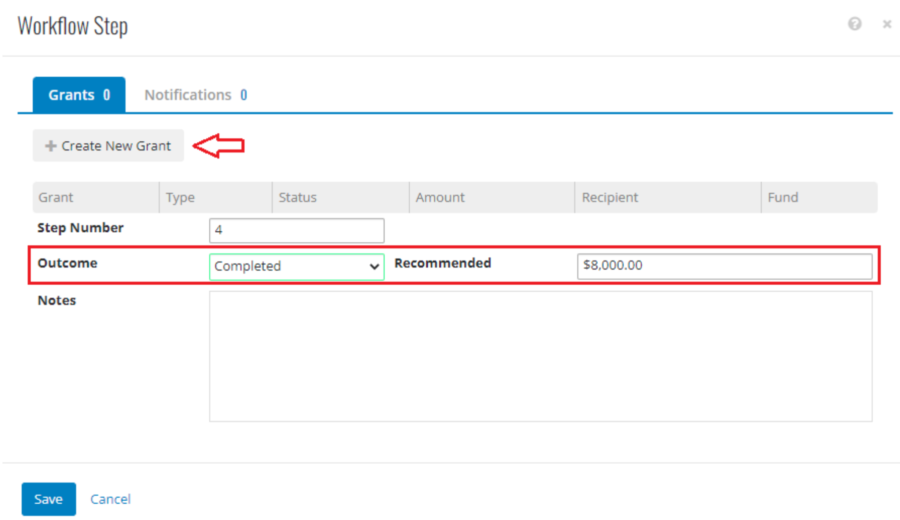
- Completed By (your username)
- Date Completed
- Outcome
- Step Amount – if approving, set this to the approved amount, but if declining, set this to zero

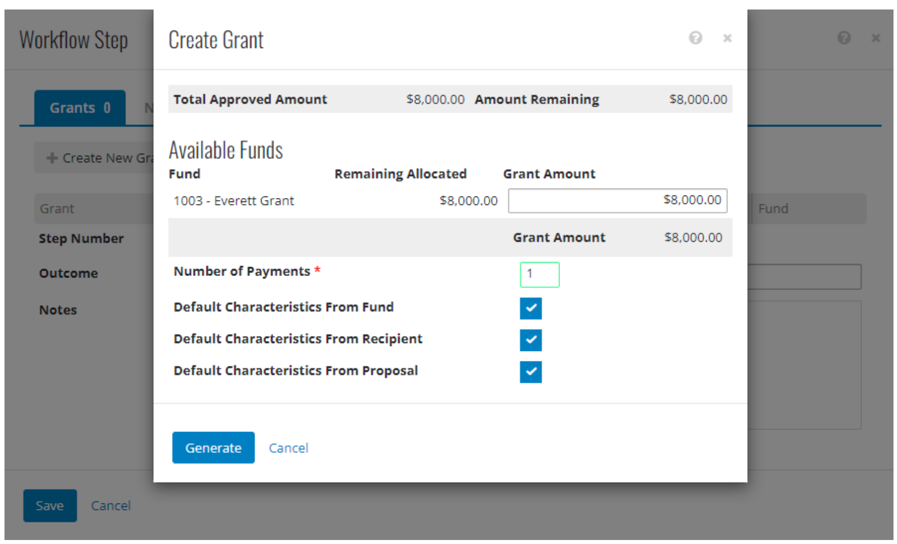


If the workflow step is a ***Diligence*** task, the diligence questions should be filled out.



If the workflow step is a ***Create Grant*** task, the same key fields listed above should be filled out, and then the “Create New Grant” button will open a new window to create the grant record.

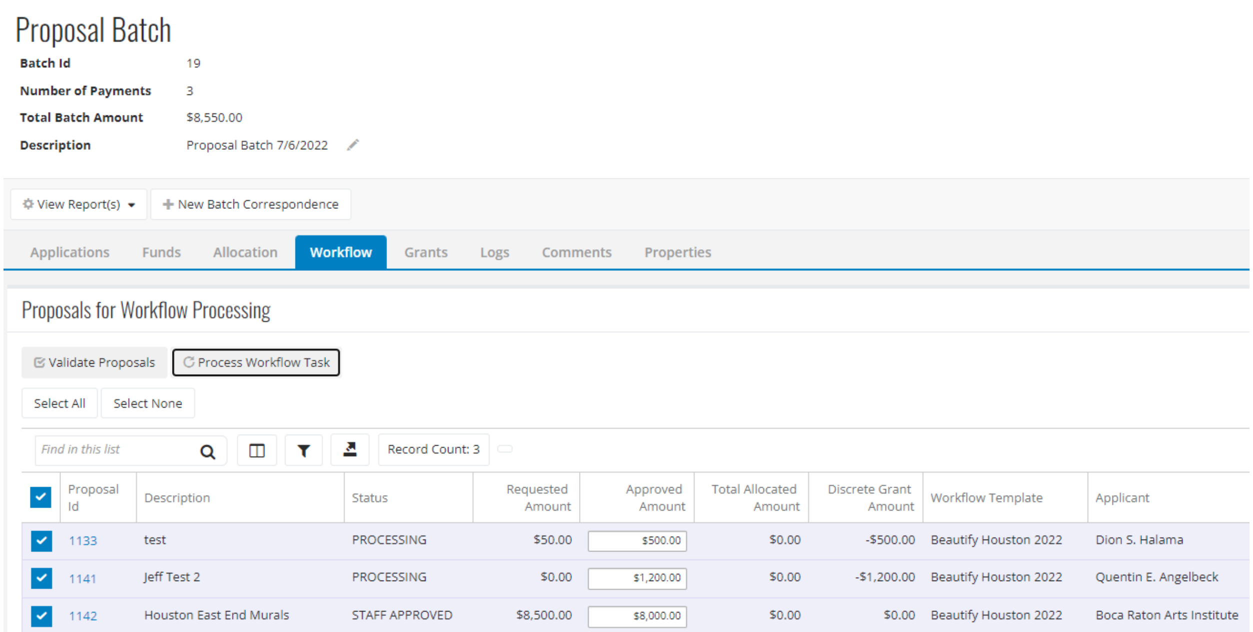


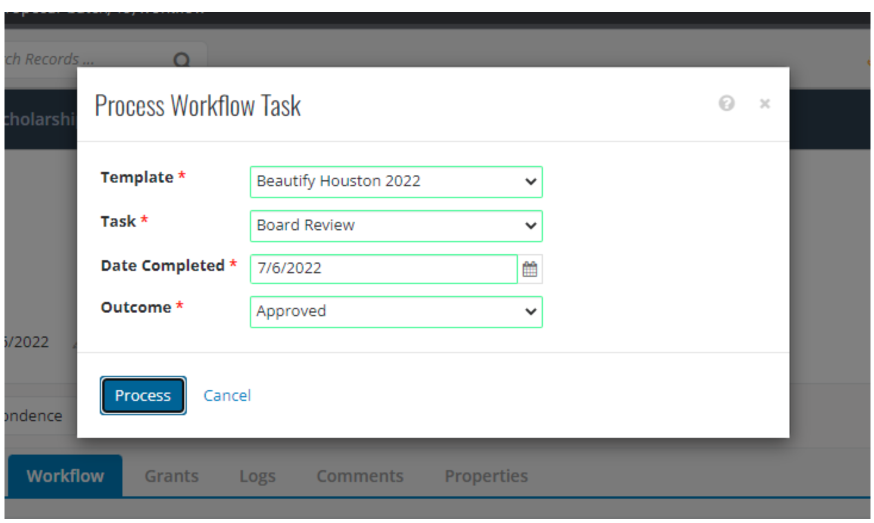


Batch Functions

GE NXT users can create Grant Batches, Proposal Batches, and Scholarship Application Batches for managing groups of records. These batch functions allow for Workflow tasks to be completed for multiple records in the batch at the same time.

For example, to process workflow steps for Proposals in a batch, open a Proposal Batch record and navigate to the Workflow tab. Select the proposal records to process, update the "Approved Amount" values as needed, and then click the "Process Workflow Task" button.

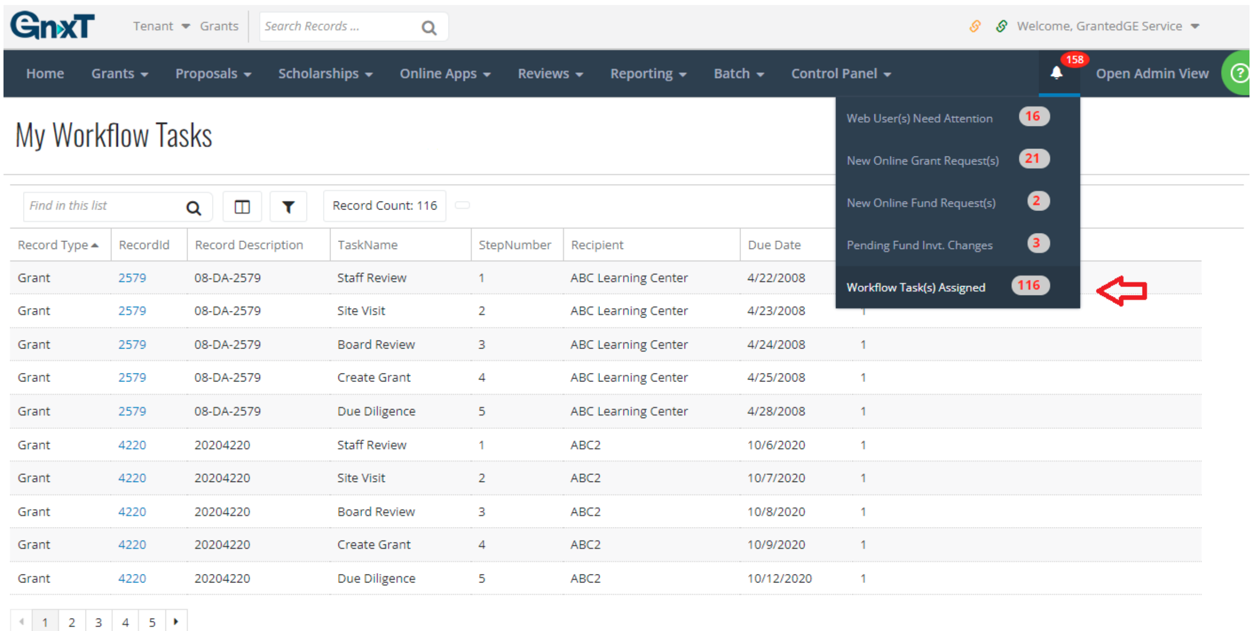




Managing Assigned Workflow Tasks

GE NXT Alerts

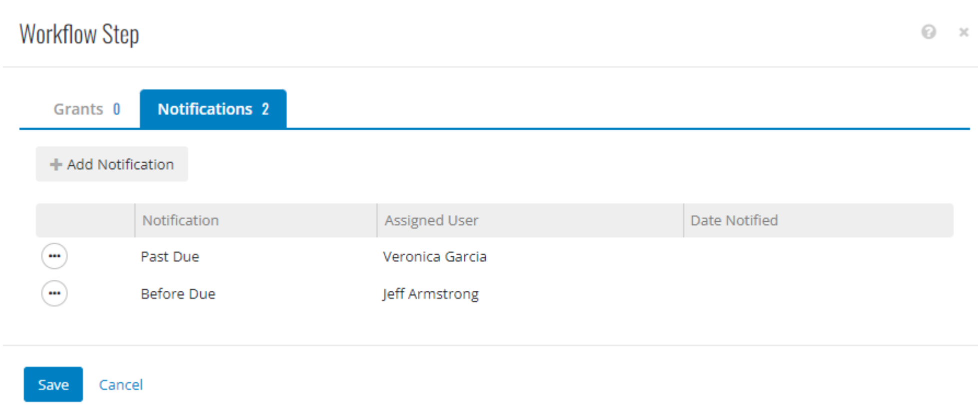
Users can see their assigned workflow tasks in the GE NXT Alerts toolbar and can click through to view a detailed list of tasks. This screen can be used by GE NXT users as a “To Do” list for record processing.



Email Notifications

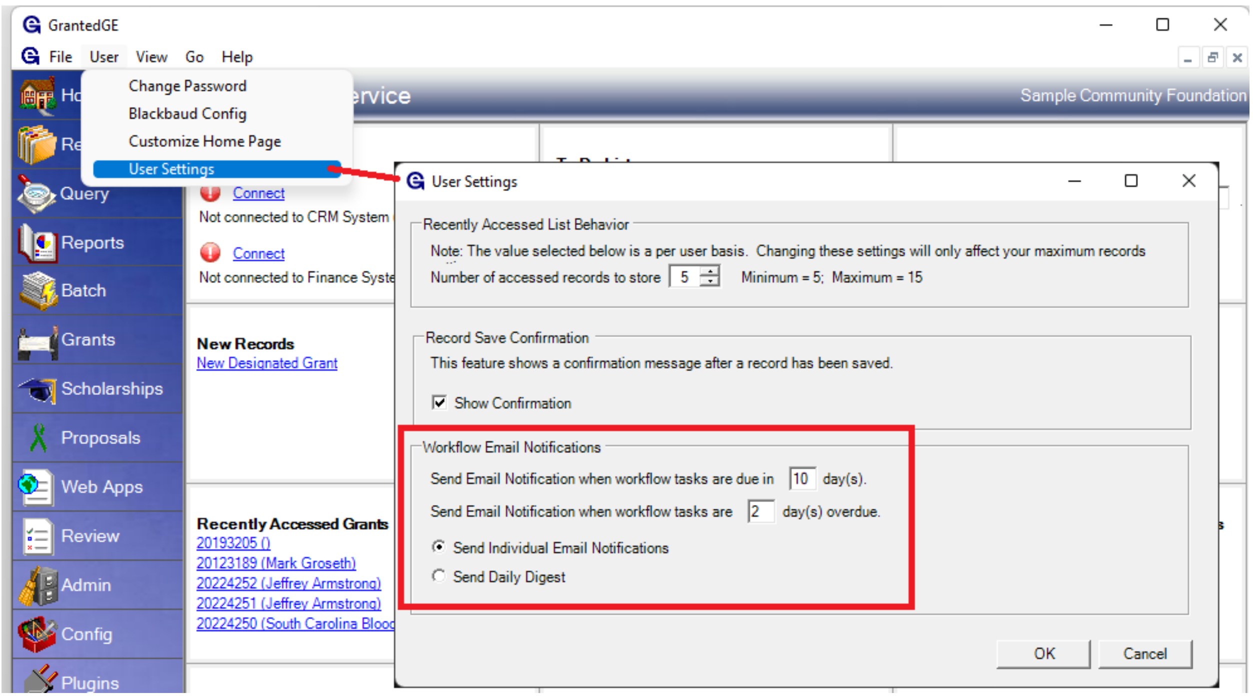
Each workflow step can be configured to notify users when the step is nearing its due date, when it gets completed, or when it becomes overdue. NPact runs a server process to look for notifications to be sent, and it emails each user their workflow task notifications. (No email is sent if there are no notifications to make). The record workflow notification records are then updated to show when the notification was sent (so that the notification is only sent once).

To set up a notification for one of a record’s workflow steps, open the step and select the “Notifications” tab. A notification can be configured for a specific user, for a specific event.



Users can customize their individual Email Notification settings. This will soon be available in GE NXT, but for now this is configured in Admin View (GE Classic). From the top “User” menu, the “User Settings” screen has a “Workflow Email Notification” section. Each user can set the number of days before and after a due date to be notified.

Users can currently choose between “Individual Notifications” (one email per workflow step per record) and a “Daily Digest” (which is one summary email per day, listing all notifications for the day). However, the “Individual Email Notifications” option will be discontinued in GE NXT soon. As a best practice, users should select the “Daily Digest” option to reduce the number of emails sent.



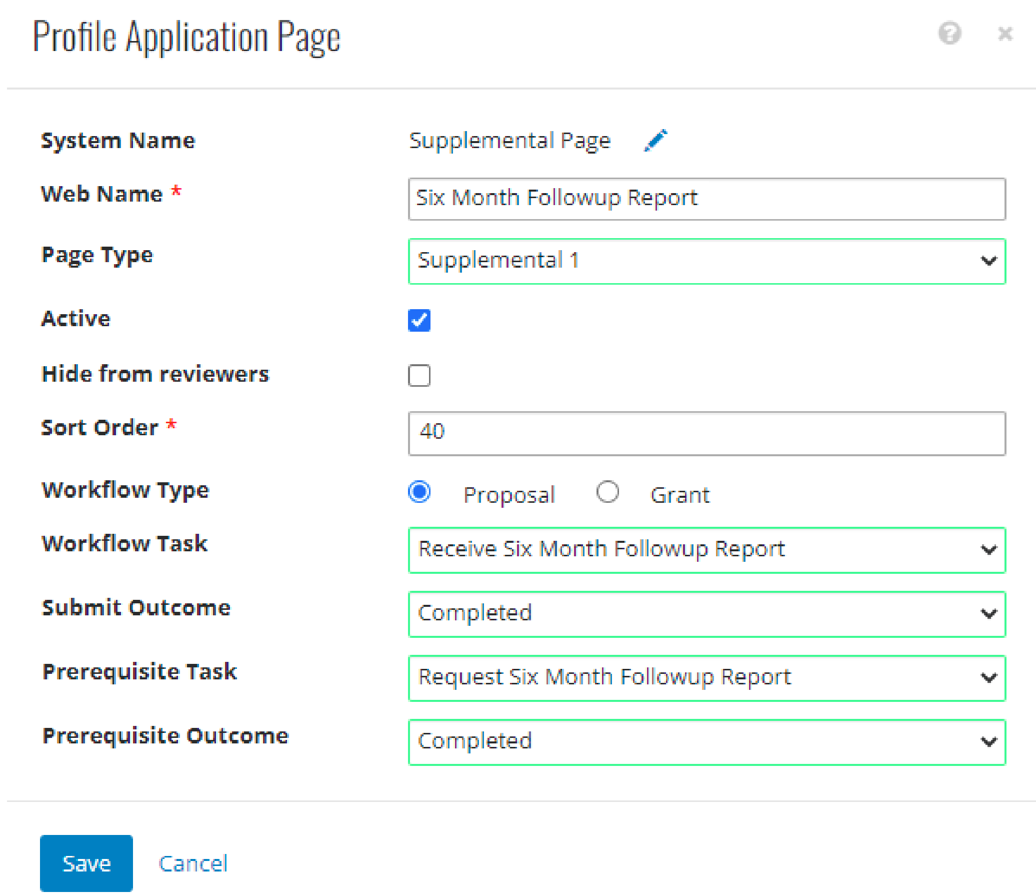
Supplemental Pages in Spectrum

Scholarship Applications and Grant/Proposal Applications in the Spectrum Web Portal can be configured with additional application pages to be completed after a Scholarship or Grant has been awarded. For example, a Scholarship Web Application can be configured with 5 pages of initial application questions, and then award recipients can be asked to return and fill out a 6th “End of Semester Report” Supplemental page after their first semester. Supplemental pages are opened for web applicants by completing a Workflow Task in GE NXT, and the applicant submissions are tracked in GE NXT using another Workflow Task.

Web Application Page Configuration

Each Supplemental web page requires two Workflow tasks to be used – a Prerequisite Task used by staff members to open the Supplemental page for the applicant to fill out, and the main Workflow Task used by Spectrum for tracking the applicant’s submission of the Supplemental page. These workflow tasks can be selected from the Proposal or Scholarship Application record, or from the linked Grant record.

Here's how a Proposal Web Application's "Six Month Followup Report" page configuration might be configured:

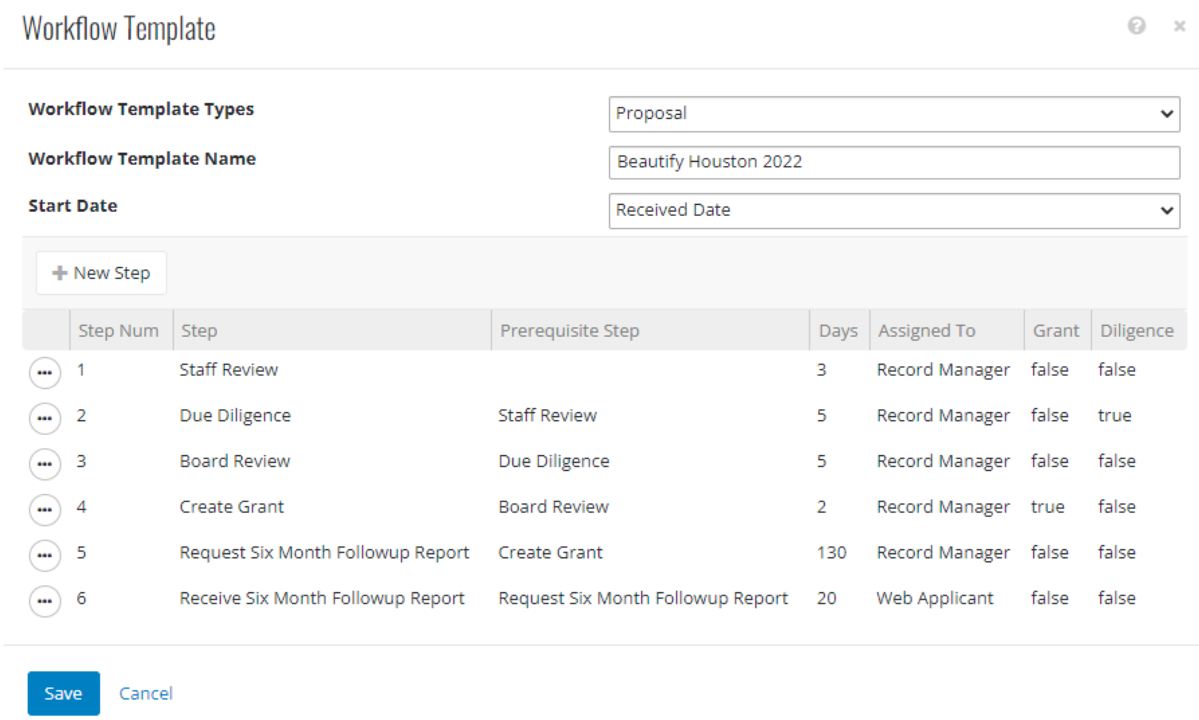

Profile Application Page

System Name	Supplemental Page
Web Name *	Six Month Followup Report
Page Type	Supplemental 1
Active	☑
Hide from reviewers	☐
Sort Order *	40
Workflow Type	◉ Proposal ○ Grant
Workflow Task	Receive Six Month Followup Report
Submit Outcome	Completed
Prerequisite Task	Request Six Month Followup Report
Prerequisite Outcome	Completed

Save Cancel

For the above Web App, its Submitted Proposal Apps would be processed to become Proposal records in GE. The Workflow Template used by the Proposal records might include these steps:

1. Staff Review
2. Due Diligence
3. Board Review
4. Create Grant
5. Request Six Month Followup Report (this gets processed by staff to open the page online)
6. Receive Six Month Followup Report (this gets automatically processed by Spectrum when the page gets submitted by the Applicant)



Workflow Template

Workflow Template Types	Proposal
Workflow Template Name	Beautify Houston 2022
Start Date	Received Date

+ New Step

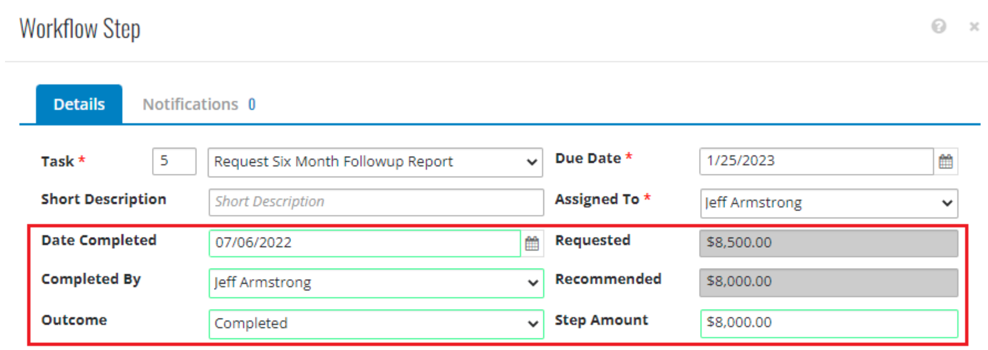
	Step Num	Step	Prerequisite Step	Days	Assigned To	Grant	Diligence
...	1	Staff Review		3	Record Manager	false	false
...	2	Due Diligence	Staff Review	5	Record Manager	false	true
...	3	Board Review	Due Diligence	5	Record Manager	false	false
...	4	Create Grant	Board Review	2	Record Manager	true	false
...	5	Request Six Month Followup Report	Create Grant	130	Record Manager	false	false
...	6	Receive Six Month Followup Report	Request Six Month Followup Report	20	Web Applicant	false	false

Save Cancel

As a best practice, NPact recommends naming the Workflow Task and its Prerequisite Task with names which clearly indicate their purpose, such as “Request Report” and “Receive Report”.

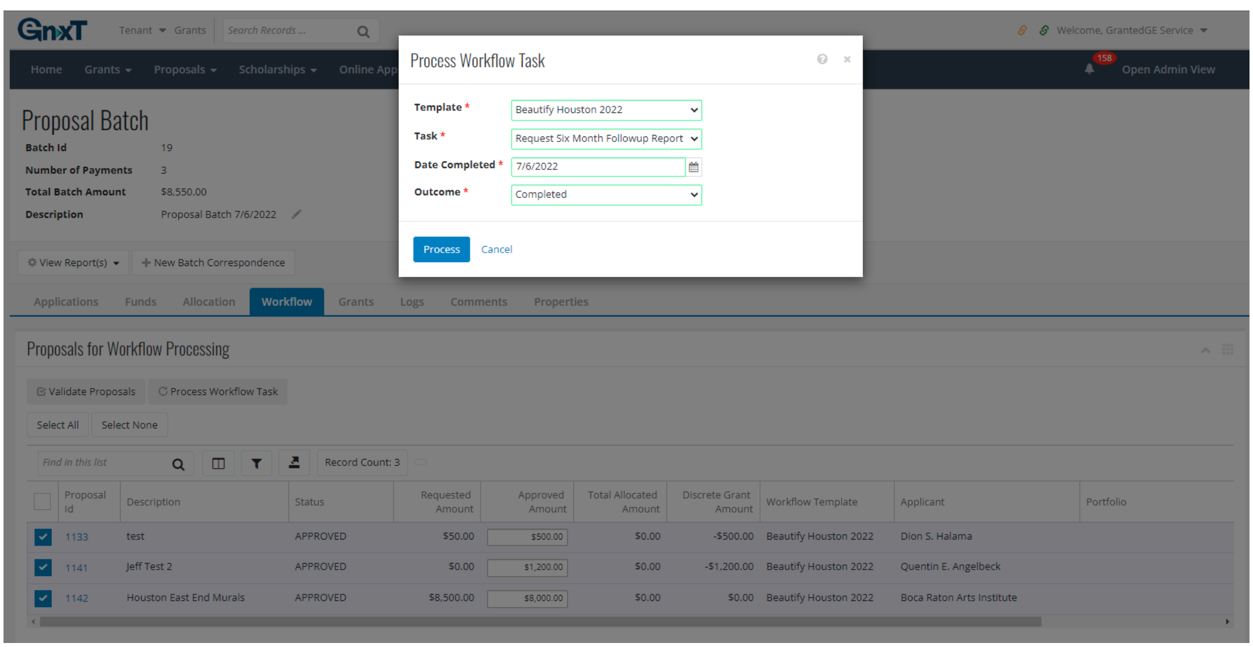
Managing Supplemental Pages for Individual Submitted Web Applications

When a GE NXT user is ready to open a supplemental page for a specific application, this is done by completing the configured Prerequisite Task with the expected outcome. In the example above, a user would open the Proposal record and complete the "Request Six Month Followup Report" step, setting its outcome to "Completed". This will immediately make the supplemental page available for the web applicant in Spectrum. Users should email the applicant at this point, informing them that their supplemental page is online and ready for them to fill out.



Managing Supplemental Pages for Submitted Web Applications in Batches

The process of opening supplemental pages for specific web applications by completing the Prerequisite Workflow Task can also be done from the Grant Batch, Proposal Batch, and Scholarship Batch screens in GENXT. Users can open a batch record and use the Workflow tab to process the Prerequisite Task for multiple records at the same time.



Troubleshooting

Supplemental Pages Are Not Available in Spectrum

If you've completed the Prerequisite Workflow Task associated with a Web App's Supplemental page, and the applicant can see their application and its original page(s), but the Supplemental page is still not open for the applicant to fill out, the problem could be with the web app's supplemental page configuration. From GE NXT's Online Apps menu, click the "Config" button for the appropriate web app to edit its configuration. In the "Pages" tile, locate the Supplemental page in question, and use its ellipsis menu to "Edit" the page. The five fields at the bottom of this Profile Application Page editor are the ones which drive supplemental page availability.

- The **Workflow Type** field indicates which record's workflow will handle the supplemental page (either the Grant record or the Proposal/Scholarship record). If you've completed a Prerequisite Workflow Task on the record, make sure that you updated the task on the appropriate record based on this setting (either the Grant record or the Proposal/Scholarship record).
- **Workflow Task** gets updated by Spectrum when the supplemental page is submitted, and the step gets the Outcome defined in the **Submit Outcome** field. This field should be assigned to the "Web Applicant" user and should not be completed in GE NXT.
- **Prerequisite Task** is the task which must be completed for the supplemental page to be available to the applicant, and this task on the record **must** be set to the Outcome defined the **Prerequisite Outcome** setting.

Notification Emails Are Not Being Sent

Notification emails are sent via unattended server jobs in NPact's hosting environment, so it is likely that the organization's jobs are not running properly. Please open a ticket using the instructions in the "Additional Resources" section below.

Additional Resources

NPact has created training videos for "Workflow Basics" and "Completing Workflow Steps", which are available on our Thinkific training website:

https://npact.thinkific.com/courses/workflow-correspondence-and-characteristics

To open a new support case with NPact, please enter the relevant information on our website:

https://www.npact.com/support