

## **Introduction**

The *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2018-2019 Edition* (ACBS) compares salaries and employment benefits for 75 positions at associations and other nonprofit organizations. This study is an important source of compensation information for chief executive officers, association personnel, and consultants in the association industry.

As with any research study, it is important to use the ACBS in conjunction with other similar resources. The number and characteristics of survey respondents as well as survey methodologies can differ significantly from one study to another, causing variation in the results. Using composite results from multiple sources can help account for some of these differences. Numerous such studies are currently available. It is useful to consult data from more than one source because different studies will draw from varied populations and use a range of research methodologies.

## **Methodology**

### **Survey Instrument**

The 2018 Association Compensation & Benefits Survey asked respondents questions about organizational characteristics, as well as information regarding compensation, salary administration, and staff and retirement benefits. Survey participants were also asked about CEO employment agreements, performance, and salary review practices.

Information from the survey is used for this book, the *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2018-2019 Edition*, and the *Greater Washington Area Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2018-2019 Edition* (GWACBS). All data reported within the GWACBS are a special subset of Washington, DC metropolitan area organizations that participated in the survey. Results are also available through ASAE's online interactive benchmarking platform, AssociaMetrics.

### **Data Collection**

In April 2018, the ASAE research department sent survey invitations via email to survey contacts at 4,648 organizations. These contacts included member and nonmember CEOs, human resources, finance, administration, and operations staff. This group also included past survey participants and those who had previously purchased an ACBS product. The study was conducted using an online survey system that allowed multiple staff members from each organization to access the same survey instrument. All participants were required to register with the survey site to prevent unauthorized entry by any staff other than those designated as appropriate survey contacts.

Follow-up emails were sent to non-respondents throughout the survey period. The survey closed in June 2018. Data cleaning and follow-up with organizations missing information continued until analysis began in July 2018.

All data reported in the *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2018-2019 Edition* reflect information reported by participants. When the accuracy of data appeared to be contradictory or unlikely, it was verified, when possible, by contacting the reporting organizations for clarification.

### **Response Rate**

Of the 4,648 invited organizations, 599 submitted partial or completed surveys for an overall response rate of 12.9 percent.

## **Other Notes**

### **Calculations with “Employee Benefits”**

The term *employee benefits* is challenging to define as it varies across organizations due to the range of methods used to calculate the value of benefits provided. Summary data on employee benefits in this study are based on the best estimates of these organizations.

### **Definitions and Position Descriptions**

Appendix A includes definitions of many of the terms found in this study. This clarification of terminology is meant to improve the understanding of and interpretation of data. Appendix B contains full descriptions of each of the 75 positions assessed in this study. Since job titles vary across organizations, the position descriptions will provide the most accurate basis for comparison.

### **Minimum Responses for Summary Calculations**

For purposes of confidentiality, if the number of respondents in a category is less than five, no data are reported. An asterisk (\*) is used to indicate instances where insufficient data is available. However, even without data, the number of organizations in a category in these occurrences can still provide information about the prevalence of specific positions.

## **Profile of Responding Organizations**

This study benchmarks compensation and benefits offered to full-time employees in the association community. The responding organizations represent and serve many different groups of individuals, professionals, companies, institutions, and organizations. This section gives a demographic overview of responding organizations by organization type, total annual budget, total staff size, geographic scope, IRS classification, and industry/interest area.

### **Organization Type**

As illustrated in Table I, the two largest responding groups were trade associations at 42.9 percent, and professional organizations at 48.9 percent. Professional organizations are comprised primarily of individual members, and trade association members are mainly made up of organizations. Organizations which defined themselves as neither a trade nor a professional organization made up the remaining 8.2 percent of respondents.

**Table I** 2018 Respondents by Organization Type

		N	Percent	
<b>Organization Type</b>	Trade Association	257	42.9%	
	Professional Association	293	48.9%	
	Other	49	8.2%	
<b>Total Annual Budget</b>	Under \$500,000	27	4.5%	
	\$500,000–\$999,999	68	11.4%	
	\$1,000,000–\$4,999,999	262	43.7%	
	\$5,000,000–\$9,999,999	117	19.5%	
	\$10,000,000–\$24,999,999	87	14.5%	
	\$25,000,000 or more	38	6.3%	
<b>Total Staff Size</b>	10 or fewer	270	45.1%	
	11–20	123	20.5%	
	21–50	123	20.5%	
	51–100	61	10.2%	
	101 or more	22	3.7%	
<b>Geographic Scope of Membership</b>	Local	37	6.2%	
	State	124	20.7%	
	Regional	23	3.8%	
	National	146	24.4%	
	North America	70	11.7%	
	International/Global	199	33.2%	
		<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
<b>IRS Classification</b>	501 (c)(3)	190	31.7%	
	501 (c)(6)	370	61.8%	
	Other	39	6.5%	
<b>Industry/Interest Area</b>	Healthcare	130	21.7%	
	Education	90	15.0%	
	Construction/Housing	60	10.0%	
	Manufacturing	39	6.5%	
	Science	28	4.7%	
	Financial	23	3.8%	
	Food/Restaurant	22	3.7%	
	Legal	21	3.5%	
	Government	19	3.2%	
	Environment	17	2.8%	
	Insurance	16	2.7%	
	Engineering	14	2.3%	
	Entertainment/Art	12	2.0%	
	Utilities/Energy	10	1.7%	
	Hospitality	9	1.5%	
	IT	6	1.0%	
	Other	83	13.9%	

## **Total Annual Budget and Total Staff Size**

Unlike previous years, where larger organizations responded at the highest rates, the highest concentration of responding organizations were in the middle budget range, one million to less than ten million.

Respondents were most likely to have a staff of 10 or fewer (45.1 percent). Organizations with staff sizes of 11-20 and 21-50 each comprised 20.5 percent of the respondent pool. The remaining 13.9 percent had staffs of more than 50.

## **IRS Classification**

The majority of participating organizations (61.8 percent) are 501(c)(6) organizations, a tax-exempt status that allows them to engage in lobbying and political activities. This distinguishes them from 501(c)(3) organizations, which have an IRS tax-exempt status, and generally serve an educational, research, professional, or philanthropic purpose. Although informative and educational briefings are allowed, these organizations typically do not lobby legislators on issues that affect their areas of concern. Just under one third (31.7 percent) of the responding organizations are classified as 501(c)(3) organizations. The remaining survey respondents have another IRS classification.

## **Industry/Interest Area**

Consistent with ASAE's overall membership, the largest percentage of survey respondents were from associations that served healthcare professionals and organizations. Associations serving the education and the construction/housing industries had the second and third highest percentages of respondents.

## **Geographic Region**

The following geographic category definitions, by region and division, are from the U.S. Census Bureau. Of note is that the South Atlantic Division includes the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, which constitute the largest concentration of associations in the United States as well as the highest percentage of survey respondents in 2018.

### **Northeast Region**

- **New England Division:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont
- **Middle Atlantic Division:** New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania

### **Midwest Region**

- **East North Central Division:** Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin
- **West North Central Division:** Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota

### **South Region**

- **South Atlantic Division:** Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia
- **East South Central Division:** Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee
- **West South Central Division:** Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas

## West Region

- **Mountain Division:** Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming
- **Pacific Division:** Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington

**Table II** Respondents by Geographic Region

		N	Percent
<b>Census Region</b>	South	272	45.4%
	Midwest	182	30.4%
	West	93	15.5%
	Northeast	52	8.7%
<b>Census Division</b>	South Atlantic	219	36.6%
	East North Central	126	21.0%
	West North Central	56	9.3%
	Pacific	50	8.3%
	Mountain	43	7.2%
	West South Central	39	6.5%
	Middle Atlantic	38	6.3%
	East South Central	14	2.3%
	New England	14	2.3%

## Affiliated Entities

More than a third (36.6 percent) of responding organizations reported having no affiliated entities; many of the rest had more than one, including foundations, chapters/components, or at least one for-profit subsidiary.

**Table III** Affiliated Entities

	% of Respondents
At least one for-profit subsidiary	15.6%
A foundation	47.1%
Chapters/Components	27.1%
None of the above	36.6%