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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## INTRODUCTION

The *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2016-2017 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 2016-2017 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.

The same information is also provided in this book. The survey results are contained in two publications, the *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2016–2017 Edition*, and the *Greater Washington Area Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2016–2017 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 March 2016, the ASAE research department sent survey invitations via email to survey contacts at 4,701 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 2016. Data cleaning and follow-up with organizations missing information was continued until analysis began in July 2016.

All data reported in the *ASAE Association Compensation & Benefits Study, 2016–2017 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 4,107 invited organizations, 411 submitted completed surveys for an overall completion rate of 8.7%.



## 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

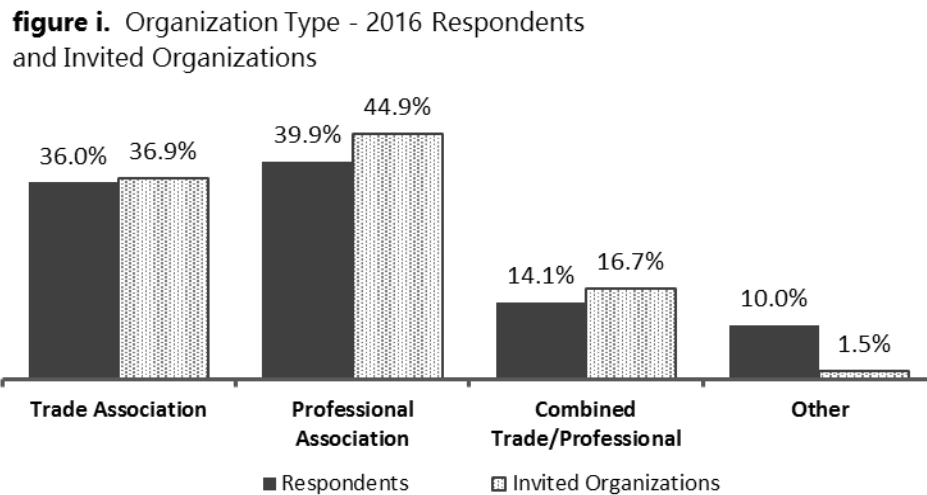
For purposes of confidentiality, if the number of respondents in a category is less than 5, no data are reported. An asterisk (\*) is used to indicate instances where insufficient data is available. However, even without data, the number of organizations in a category in these occurrences can still provide 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, IRS tax status, total annual budget, total organization staff size, geographic scope, geographic region, and industry/interest area.

### Organization Type

As illustrated in figure i, the two largest responding groups were trade associations at 36%, and professional organizations at 39.9%. Professional organizations are comprised primarily of individual members, and trade association members are mainly made up of organizations. The report also includes data from combined trade and professional organizations, which made up 14.1% of respondents. The remaining 10% did not fit into these three categories and classified themselves as “other.” Professional associations responded at a slightly lower rate than were invited, “other” organizations at a higher rate, and both trade and combined trade and professional association response rates were closely aligned to rates of invitation.



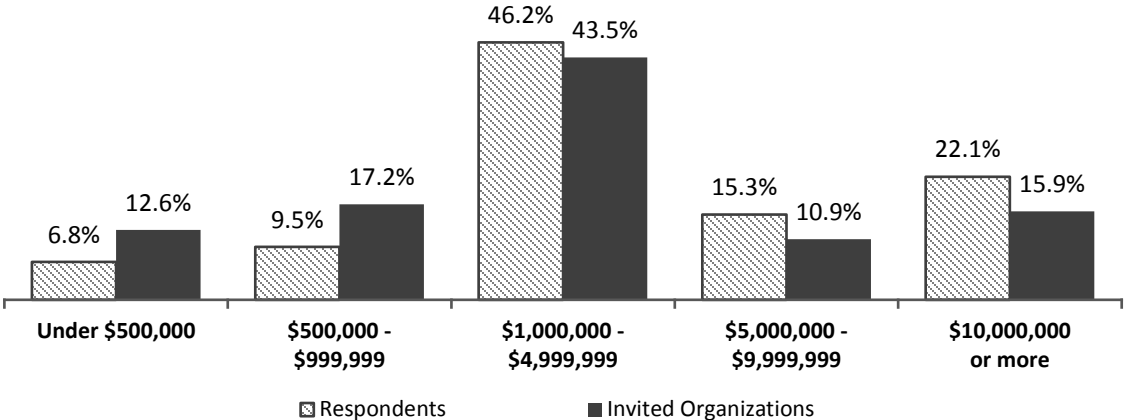
### IRS Tax Status

The majority of participating organizations (59.1%) are 501(c)(6) organizations, a tax-exempt status that allows them to engage in lobbying and political activities. On the other hand, organizations that have a 501(c)(3) IRS tax-exempt status generally have 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 over one-third (34.5%) of the responding organizations are classified as 501(c)(3) organizations. The remaining survey respondents have some other tax status.

Total Annual Budget

Consistent with previous ASAE compensation surveys, larger organizations respond at a higher rate than smaller ones, therefore, the typical survey respondent is larger than the typical invited organization.

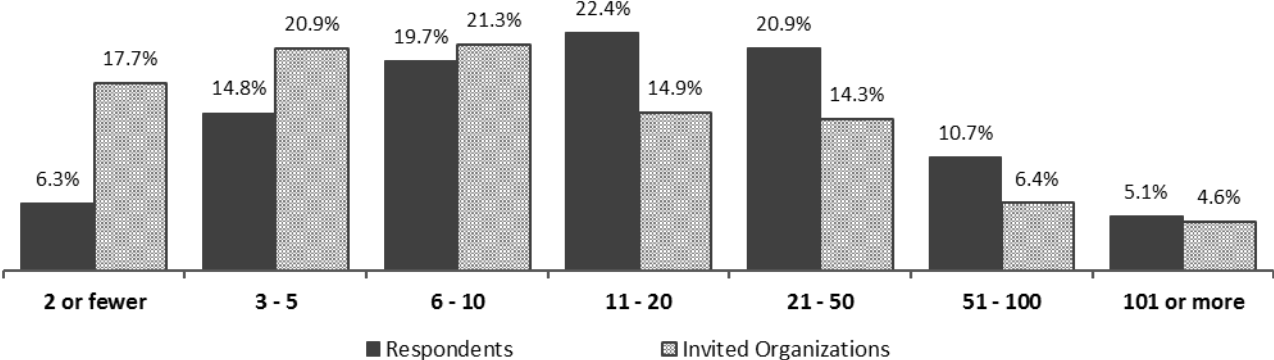
**figure ii.** Annual Budget - 2016 Respondents and Invited Organizations



Total Staff Size

More than a third of respondents and a quarter of invitees reported having 21 or more employees (36.7% and 25.3% respectively). Organizations with 20 or fewer employees comprised 40.8% of responding organizations and made up 59.9% of invited organizations. The lowest number of respondents were among organizations with a staff of five or less.

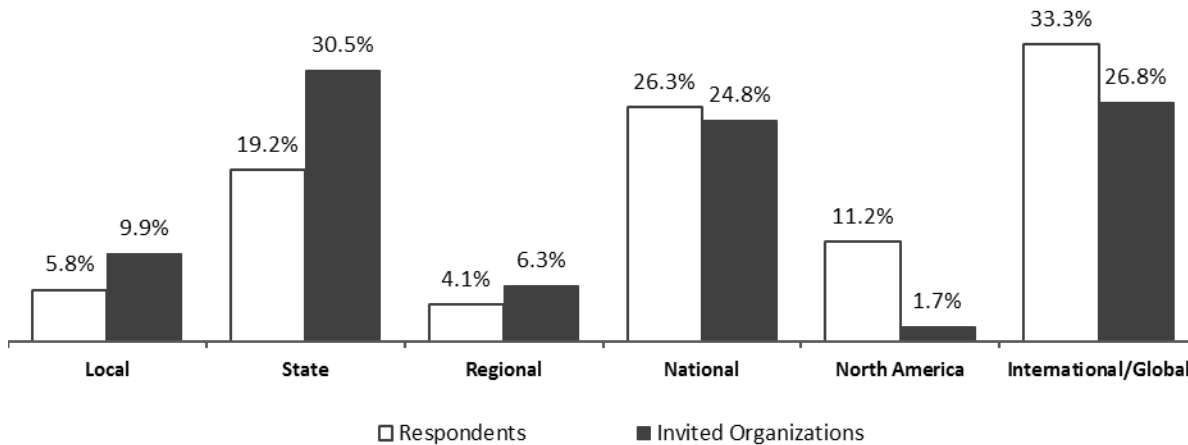
**figure iii.** Staff Size - 2016 Respondents and Invited Organizations



Geographic Scope

Respondents with international, national, and state members comprised the highest number of respondents, with fewer organizations reporting North American, regional, and local memberships.

**figure iv.** Geographic Scope - 2016 Respondents and Invited Organizations



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 2016.

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

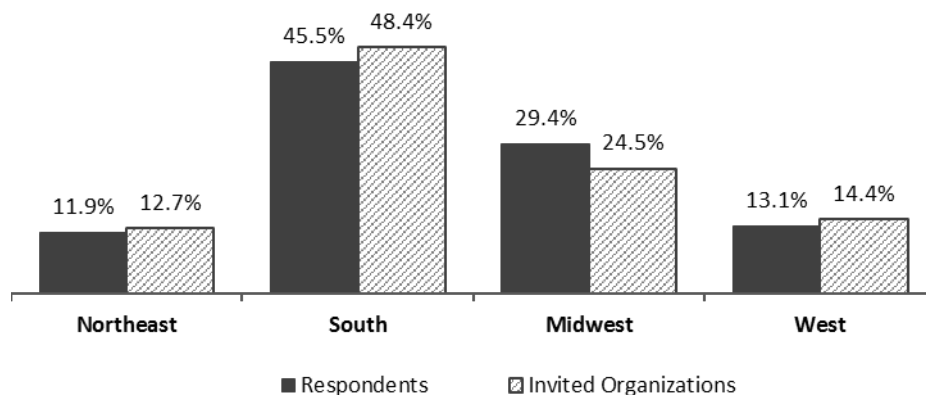
South Region

- 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

**figure v.** Geographic Region - 2016 Respondents and Invited Organizations by Census Region



**table I.** Geographic Region - 2016 Respondents and Invited Organizations by Census Division

	Respondents	Invited Organizations
East North Central	20.4%	16.9%
East South Central	2.2%	3.9%
Middle Atlantic	9.2%	9.0%
Mountain	5.8%	5.9%
New England	2.7%	3.7%
Pacific	7.3%	8.5%
South Atlantic	38.0%	37.1%
West North Central	9.0%	7.7%
West South Central	5.4%	7.3%

### Affiliated Entities

Over a third (36.6%) 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 II.** Affiliated Entities – 2016 Respondents

	<b>Respondents</b>
At least one for-profit subsidiary	16.8%
A Foundation	45.3%
Chapters/Components	31.7%
None of the above	36.6%

### 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.

**table III.** Industry/Interest Area - Percentage of 2016 Respondents

<b>Industry/Interest Area</b>	<b>2016 Respondents</b>
Healthcare	22.10%
Education	13.90%
Construction/Housing	10.90%
Manufacturing	4.90%
Science	4.90%
Financial	4.10%
Engineering	3.20%
Legal	2.90%
Environment	2.70%
Utilities/Energy	2.40%
Entertainment/Art	2.20%
Food/Restaurant	1.90%
Government	1.70%
Insurance	1.50%
Retail	1.50%
IT	1.20%
Clubs	0.70%
Automotive	0.50%
Communications	0.50%
Management	0.50%
Charity/Underserved	0.20%
Other	15.60%