

INTRODUCTION

There are more than 5,000 local arts agencies (LAAs)—arts councils, arts commissions, service organizations, arts funds, and myriad other variations—operating in the United States today. These organizations, situated at the intersection of service, grantmaking, research, and advocacy, are as diverse in form as the approximately 115,000 arts organizations that they exist to support. At their core, they are the vanguard of a long-standing local movement to develop and perpetuate strong American communities through art.

The success of these local arts agencies is, as was noted in the introduction to the last salary report that Americans for the Arts published in 2001, “dependent upon the skill sets and perspectives brought by the people who operate them.” This statement and its crucial underpinnings in professionalism, diversity, equal access, and tenacious participation, rings as true today as it did 12 years ago. Finding and keeping top candidates who represent the quickly changing demographic reality of our country and who can serve as strong leaders to the arts field is of critical importance.

That is why we commissioned this report.

The *Local Arts Agencies Salaries 2013* research report benchmarks the vast and varied compensation levels of the most senior positions within the local arts agency field in America today. As the previous iteration of this report did when it was published in 2001, the 2013 report will assist LAA executives and employees in evaluating staffing and salary levels, setting pay rates, determining incremental compensation adjustments, and better understanding the varied benefit options and structures currently at play in the field.

According to this data, full-time employees earn an average annual salary of just over \$66,000. Eighty-six percent of the full-time respondents were white, and 72 percent were female. Full-time employees had an average approximate age of 52.5 years, and 91 percent of them had a college degree. Salaries of staff at city agencies averaged about \$5,000 more than at county agencies and about \$10,000 more than at multi-county agencies. Salaries increased by budget size, number of people in the service region, and number of employees.

Beyond being a comprehensive compendium of salary and benefits information, *Local Arts Agencies Salaries 2013* provides critical, data-based insight into two important issues that must be addressed if our field is to prosper in the coming decades: (1) extreme underrepresentation of all non-white racial/ethnic minorities across all positions, and (2) relatively high inequality in terms of both upper-level representation and salary of women in the LAA field.

From 1980 to 2010, the population of the United States shifted from 76 percent white to 63 percent white, according to the United States Census—a drop of 13 percent in 30 years. The next 30 years, if Census projections are accurate, will yield an acceleration of that trend, and whites will no longer be the majority of the population by 2043. In comparison, the overall respondents in this report are 86 percent white—a decrease of only one percent from 2001. Ninety-two percent of those that identified as Executive Directors or CEOs are white. Local arts agencies play a central role in shifting the demographics of their communities’ arts organizations and encouraging ongoing conversations about the relevance of the arts and their place in community development and ongoing sustainability.

Sheer numbers are not the problem regarding women in the local arts field. In fact, nearly three out of four of the people who answered the survey were women. Those women, however, are about six percent less likely to hold the top office in an LAA than men; and when they do hold the top office,

they are more likely to do so at smaller organizations. Overall, women in the study earn an average \$6,500 less than their male counterparts. Female executive directors earn an average of \$18,000 less per year than their male counterparts—in part because women are underrepresented in the lead role at the largest (and best-compensating) LAAs.

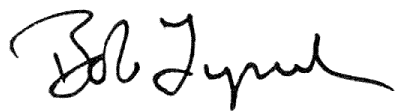
And yet, there are signs of positive change. Twelve out of the 14 non-CEO roles examined in this research have higher rates of racial/ethnic diversity than the CEO role—indicating a possible shift to come as leadership turns over. Women outnumber men in 12 out of the 15 roles examined in the research, and make more money than men in 8 of the 15. The local arts field continues to draw highly educated people (more than 44 percent with a graduate degree), regardless of demographics. Systemic change is a long process, but we are seeing indicators of success to come, at least in the more junior positions inside local arts agencies.

At Americans for the Arts, we are moving to amplify that forward momentum. Through both our private and public sector partnerships, we will continue our long-standing commitment to equity and diversity in many forms—race, economic status, gender, age, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, belief systems, and more. Through our programs—including the Business Volunteers in the Arts, the Arts & Business Council of New York, the Emerging Leaders Network, our Annual Convention, and our many other professional development programs—we will build upon more than 10 years of fostering a diverse next generation of leaders with mentorship, placement, and ongoing support. Through expanded field education and leadership training efforts and local and national gatherings, we will empower exemplary administrators within our field of all backgrounds, colors, and creeds.

We continue to provide high-quality field education, advocacy, and research with the hope that by providing both data and context we can spark conversation and make change. The world is moving fast, and the brightest emerging talents do not look the same as they did yesterday, do not exist in the same place as yesterday, and must be engaged in a new, inclusive way. We have much to learn, and much to give, if we can figure out how to make our hallways more inclusive.

Special thanks to Ben Davidson, Amanda Alef, and Randy Cohen in our research department who fielded this report, as well as the more than 700 individuals who took the time to respond to this survey, and the many people inside our office who helped edit and disseminate it. As always, Americans for the Arts is grateful to our members for your continued support of our shared mission and to the many businesses, foundations and individuals whose grants and donations help us help the arts sector move ever forward.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Lynch
President & CEO
Americans for the Arts



Clayton Lord
Vice President of Local Arts Advancement
Americans for the Arts

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