

HR Intervals - Salary Surveys

Benchmarked salary ranges help organizations to ensure they are paying their employees fairly and appropriately. It is important that nonprofits have a rationale for why they pay their employees at a certain rate. Salary surveys are a means to collect information about employee compensation (salary and benefits) to help determine appropriate salary ranges and benchmark pay rates to the external market.

Surveys are generally conducted either by region, sector, or job classification for the purposes of comparability. Organizations may purchase surveys conducted by various organizations proficient in the collection, analysis, and distribution of salary data, or they may choose to conduct their own salary survey.

How to Find a Salary Survey That's the Right Fit for your Needs

The following are some key ways to determine whether a salary survey is relevant to your organization:

- Review the **job descriptions** to ensure they are comparable to jobs in your organization
- Ensure you note the **location of the survey**: national, provincial, or regional. Comparing regional/local data will provide the best cost-of-living comparators.
- Review the **operating budgets** of the respondent organizations. As a general rule, larger operating budgets mean higher salaries. Comparable salaries come from organizations of comparable size. Size is usually estimated by using the operating budget or looking at the number of paid full-time staff.
- Note the **funding sources** of the respondent organizations. For example, an organization providing childcare services through provincial funding may have very different salaries than an organization providing parent/child resources through its own fundraising.
- Confirm the **year of the data collection**. Labour market forces can result in significant changes in salaries in a short timeframe. More recent data will be more helpful in establishing current salaries.
- Note the **sample size**. Larger samples will provide more valid and reliable information than ones that are too small.
- Look at the **total compensation package**. Having an understanding of what other organizations are providing in terms of benefits and retirement plans will provide the whole picture in terms of compensation when comparing your data to the external market.

The table below are some examples of existing non-profit salary surveys. These include both paid and free surveys.

Survey	Latest Version
Boland Survey of Not For Profit Sector Salaries and Human Resources Practices <i>Peter T. Boland and Associates</i>	2023
Canadian Nonprofit Sector Salary and Benefits Report CharityVillage <i>Charity Village</i>	2023
Compensation and Benefits Study <i>Association of Fundraising Professionals</i>	2022
Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) Salary and Benefits Survey <i>TREC</i>	2022
Association Executive Benefits and Compensation Report <i>Canadian Society of Association Executives</i>	2021

Establishing Salary Ranges

Based on the information from the salary surveys you use, you can establish salary ranges with a minimum, midpoint, and maximum pay range. Often organizations consider their midpoint of a salary range to be somewhere between the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile. If your compensation philosophy is to match the market, the midpoint will be the 50th percentile for most positions. A simple way to establish a proposed midpoint is to average the market data between the different positions grouped in a grade.

A typical salary range is commonly 30% to 40% from minimum to maximum. It is common that top salary grades (i.e., for executives and top management) have a wider range (sometimes greater than a range of 40%) and that the lowest salary grades often have the narrowest range (sometimes smaller than 30%).

Source: <https://guide.hr-intervals-intervallesrh.ca/hc/en-ca/articles/29622981371283-Salary-surveys>