



ACM-ASTC Workforce Survey

2023

Executive Summary

The ACM-ASTC Workforce Survey is one of the most comprehensive sources of information on staffing and compensation in the museum field. Administered by the Association of Children's Museums (ACM) and Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) in 2011, 2016, and now 2023, the Workforce Survey has compiled over a decade's worth of data to help institutions and their staff make informed decisions about their futures. This Executive Summary summarizes the 2023 report including trends in staffing, compensation, and methods institutions use to attract and retain staff.

ASTC Association of Science
and Technology Centers

ACM ASSOCIATION OF
**CHILDREN'S
MUSEUMS**

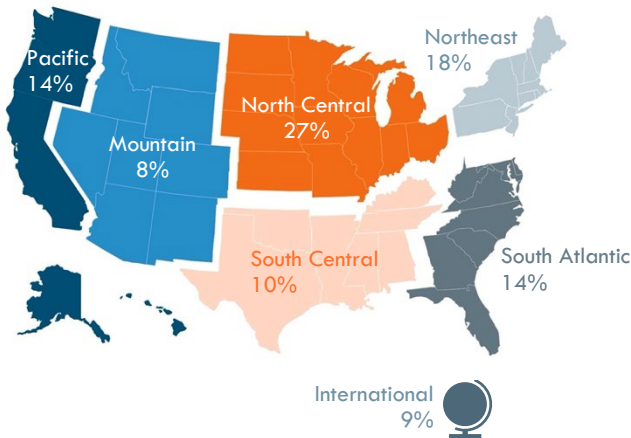
Rockman et al
Cooperative
Research & Evaluation

The 2023 ACM-ASTC Workforce survey was completed by a total of **138 institutions** between February and March of 2023, all of whom are current members of ACM and/or ASTC. The survey gathered responses from a diverse sample of institutions, reflecting different geographic areas, institution types, and institution sizes.

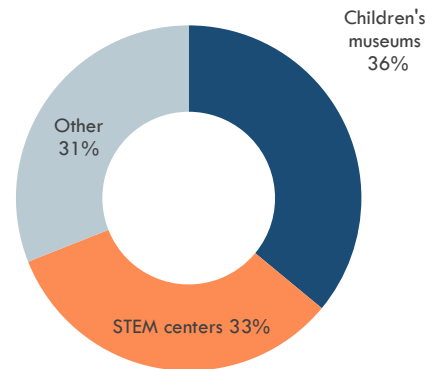
Updates to the 2023 Workforce Survey

- Compensation data is broken down by **urban/rural classifications** in addition to geographic regions, since proximity to urban centers can have a strong impact on salaries and wages.
- A **new variable for institution size** is incorporated, which accounts for square footage, number of staff, annual attendance, and operating expenses.
- **New questions on unions** explore the prevalence of this trend among ACM and ASTC members.
- Questions on **remote versus in-person work** have been incorporated to examine the shifts in the ways people work in recent years.

GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS IN SURVEY SAMPLE
(n=138)



INSTITUTION TYPES IN SURVEY SAMPLE
(n=138)



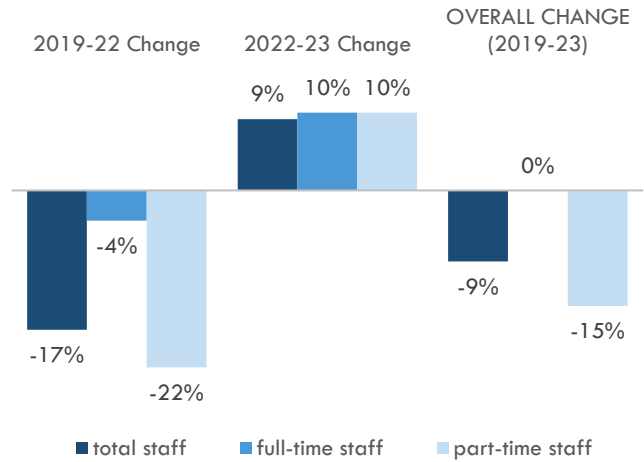
TRENDS: Staff and Volunteer Numbers

Full-time staff counts are back to pre-pandemic levels, but part-time positions remain reduced by almost 15%.

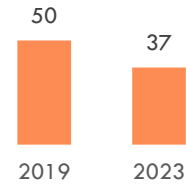
While the numbers of paid staff are rebounding in 2023, the numbers of volunteers remain much lower than their pre-pandemic levels. The drop raises the important question: will numbers of volunteers recover with additional time, or **does this reflect a lasting drop in volunteerism?**

Hiring is largely focused on floor/frontline workers. **65% percent of institutions said they are currently hiring floor/frontline staff, far above the percentage that reported currently hiring for any other position.** This number is also markedly higher than the numbers reported in either the 2011 or 2016 surveys.¹

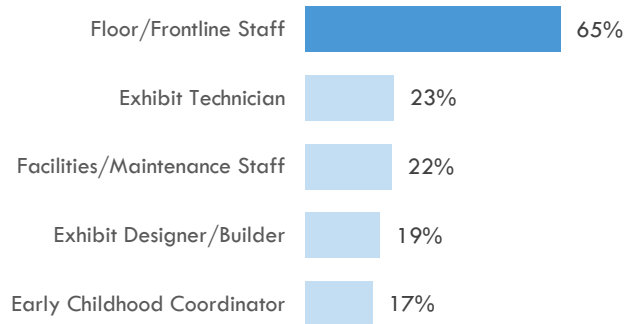
CHANGE IN STAFF NUMBERS - MEDIAN (n=110)



MEDIAN NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS (n=95)



TOP POSITIONS WHERE MUSEUMS ARE HIRING (n=138)



¹Association of Science-Technology Centers, Association of Children's Museums (2016). 2016 Workforce Survey Report.

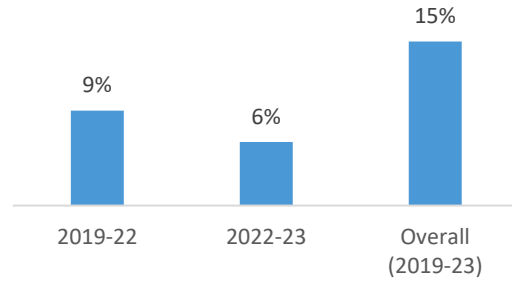
TRENDS: Compensation

Full-time staff salaries are up by 15% since 2019 and approximately 6% in the past year. These gains are seen across institutions' entire organization charts, from entry-level positions to upper management and leadership.

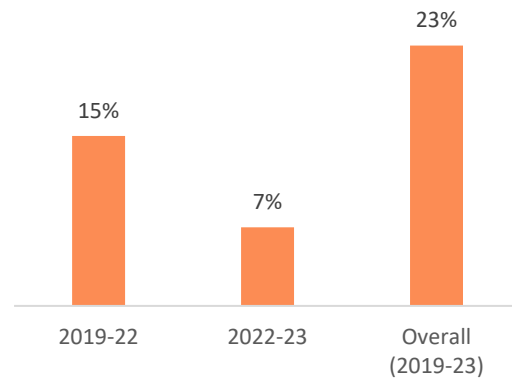
Part-time wages showed larger increases over the same time period in comparison to full-time salaries. **Median part-time hourly wages increased 23% from 2019 to 2023.**



SALARY TRENDS FOR FULL-TIME POSITIONS – PERCENT CHANGE (n=693)



SALARY TRENDS FOR PART-TIME POSITIONS – PERCENT CHANGE (n=176)



Geography and proximity to urban centers are important drivers of salaries and wages. Institutions in the Northeast and Pacific regions tend to offer higher compensation, as do institutions that are located in densely populated urban areas. Data tables that show median salaries for different geographic regions, urban/rural classifications, institution types, and institution sizes are available in the full report.

Trends: 2023 Compensation for Full-Time Positions

The table below presents annual salaries for full-time positions at the 10th through 90th percentiles. Where sample size is limited, fewer percentiles are provided because the outer limits of each salary range are less reliable when they are based on fewer data points. Shading is used show higher (darker blue) and lower (lighter blue) salaries.

Staff Positions - Grouped by Seniority	10	25	50	75	90	n
President/CEO/Executive Director	\$53,747	\$84,761	\$146,604	\$210,892	\$250,000	80
Executive VP/Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer	\$63,150	\$75,000	\$108,137	\$145,000	\$177,440	29
Director of Finance/Controller	\$58,750	\$76,375	\$98,382	\$125,288	\$150,650	56
VP/Director of Development	\$65,000	\$75,000	\$105,000	\$124,000	\$149,858	51
VP/Director of Communications/PR/Marketing	\$52,893	\$62,418	\$80,183	\$110,093	\$160,175	46
VP/Director of Education	\$43,220	\$59,145	\$79,322	\$99,038	\$126,699	58
VP/Director of Exhibits	\$50,000	\$57,965	\$85,375	\$110,500	\$164,330	32
VP/Director/Manager of HR/Organizational Development	\$49,872	\$72,775	\$89,171	\$113,125	\$132,777	32
VP/Director of Visitor/Guest Services	\$50,000	\$56,531	\$81,810	\$106,250	\$127,463	36
Research/Evaluation Director/Manager		\$68,900	\$91,233	\$114,750		7
Membership Director/Manager	\$35,360	\$38,200	\$48,880	\$70,000	\$95,500	41
Development Manager/Associate	\$42,112	\$46,150	\$51,613	\$65,000	\$77,400	39
Education Manager/Specialist	\$37,918	\$41,887	\$52,500	\$61,985	\$68,816	55
Program Manager/School Program Manager	\$34,160	\$42,220	\$48,920	\$62,000	\$74,965	46
Manager/Developer of Exhibits	\$45,508	\$51,377	\$56,650	\$71,700	\$80,080	29
Manager of Theater/Planetarium Programs	\$43,250	\$48,556	\$55,665	\$65,745	\$75,950	16
Visitor Services Manager	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$52,500	\$63,000	\$73,800	45
Floor/Operations Manager	\$34,700	\$40,360	\$46,800	\$54,977	\$63,790	35
Special Events Manager	\$37,550	\$43,500	\$54,080	\$65,750	\$79,300	42
Early Childhood Coordinator	\$39,284	\$43,590	\$48,880	\$52,500	\$58,236	23
Science Specialist/Advisor/Curator	\$39,800	\$45,000	\$53,500	\$66,500	\$82,086	17
Community Outreach Coordinator/Liaison	\$38,787	\$41,135	\$44,720	\$53,500	\$70,571	28
Communications/Digital Media Specialist	\$38,272	\$42,250	\$52,500	\$66,051	\$81,583	44
Exhibit Designer/Builder	\$40,648	\$44,747	\$51,101	\$70,184	\$80,254	20
Volunteer Coordinator	\$36,050	\$40,000	\$44,340	\$48,778	\$58,554	30
Exhibit Technician	\$34,112	\$38,550	\$45,223	\$51,713	\$61,368	39
Floor/Frontline Staff	\$25,141	\$30,732	\$33,842	\$37,330	\$41,652	26
Facilities/Maintenance Staff	\$33,654	\$39,233	\$44,105	\$53,300	\$62,952	43

TRENDS: Benefits for Workers

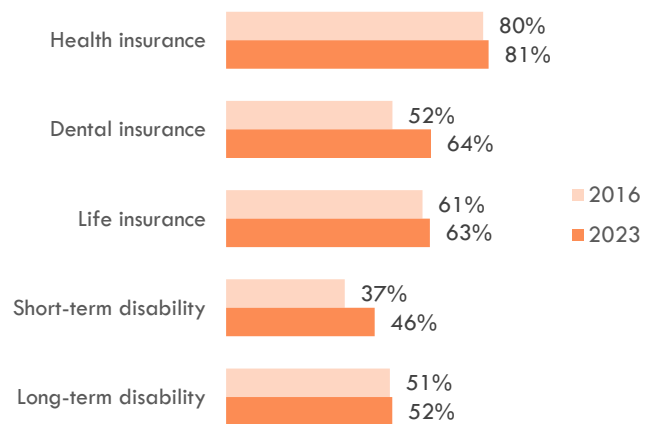
Benefits

The benefits that institutions are offering staff have not changed dramatically since the 2016 workforce survey. **Over 80% percent of institutions pay at least part of their employees' health insurance plans.** The most significant change for full-time staff is a 12% increase in institutions paying all or part of dental insurance plans and a 9% increase in institutions paying all or part of short-term disability. For part-time employees, 12% more institutions are paying for professional membership or training fees than they were in 2016. Overall, roughly half of the institutions surveyed report not providing any benefits to part-time staff.

Remote Flexibility

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in huge shifts from in-person to remote work across employment sectors. In 2023, even as many workplaces have reopened, the flexibility of remote work remains attractive to many workers. A 2022 Pew Research survey found that 60% of workers who can work remotely prefer to keep doing so.¹ As other fields embrace telework, museums provide place-based experiences, so undoubtedly there are limits to the amount of telework they can feasibly offer to their staff—as well as challenges in being equitable across job roles.

PERCENT OF INSTITUTIONS PAYING AT LEAST PART OF THESE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (n=125-129)

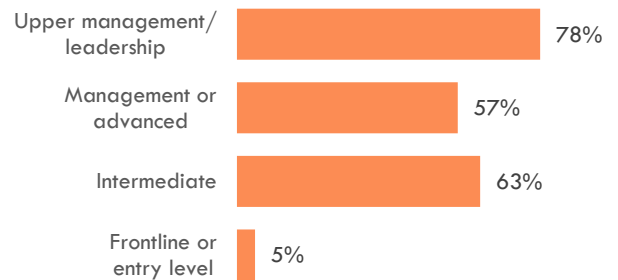


¹ Parker, K., Menasce Horowitz, J., Minkin, R. (2022, Feb 16). COVID-19 Pandemic Continues to Reshape Work in America. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2022/02/16/covid-19-pandemic-continues-to-reshape-work-in-america/>

Survey responses for 32 different staff positions showed the majority of museum work is still being done primarily in-person, but remote work is possible at the intermediate through upper levels. Twenty-three percent of institutions reported having at least one position that was primarily or fully remote. These were typically positions at the upper management/leadership level. Unsurprisingly, 95% of the frontline or entry-level positions reported on were categorized as “in-person only.”

Many survey respondents pointed to the demand for remote work as one of their main recruiting challenges. Finding ways to offer flexibility may be critical for attracting and retaining talent.

POSITIONS WHERE AT LEAST SOME REMOTE WORK IS POSSIBLE



Unionization

Unions have spread increasingly into the cultural sector and museum world in recent years. Unions bring collective bargaining benefits for their represented population and can change the nature of the relationship between these staff and museum leadership. Much of the museum unionization reported in the public media in recent years has been dominated by art museums,² but ACM and ASTC members have also reported unionization of some of their staff. The 2023 Workforce Survey asked respondents if any of their staff are unionized, and found **11% of institutions have at least some unionized staff, but none reported wall-to-wall unions.** The most common areas where institutions report unionization include facilities/maintenance, operations, security, and front-end roles such as education, parking, and guest services. These respondents included a mix of U.S. and international institutions.

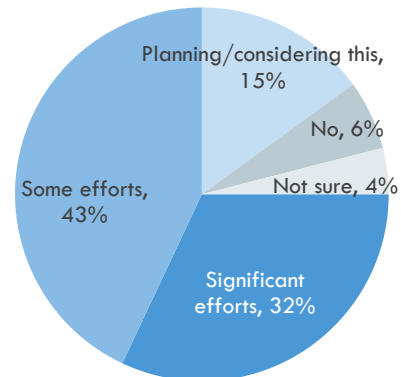
² Small, Z. (2022, Feb 21). U.S. Museums See Rise in Unions Even as Labor Movement Slumps. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/arts/design/museums-unions-labor.html>

TRENDS: Prioritizing Diversity

In recent years, museums have begun to pay more attention to the demographic diversity of their workforce, which historically has featured only small percentages of people of color. In 2022, the Mellon Foundation published the results of its most recent Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey³ and reported gradual increases in the racial diversity of that field. The report also shows that art museums have hired higher proportions of non-white staff in the past three years. It also notes that retaining these new hires is critical for maintaining the progress these institutions have made.

While some institutions submitted staff demographic information as part of the Workforce Survey, the data were not complete enough to draw conclusions about the current state of the field for children's museums, STEM centers, and the other organizations who responded. **The gaps in available information raise the question of how museums and similar organizations can better collect, analyze, and share demographic data so that the field can better understand its diversity and where progress remains to be made.** Survey respondents reported taking steps to increase diversity, such as supporting diversity, equity, access, and inclusion (DEAI) initiatives, rethinking job qualifications that may be exclusionary, and promoting job openings through a broader array of networks. Time will tell whether these efforts are successful.

HAS YOUR INSTITUTION IMPLEMENTATED STRATEGIES TO INCREASE RACIAL, ETHNIC, GENDER, LGBTQ+, OR OTHER DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR WORKFORCE?



³ Sweeney, L., Harkins, D., Dressel, J. (2022). Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey. Mellon Foundation. <https://www.mellon.org/report/aiding-the-evolution-of-art-museums-to-reflect-the-diversity-of-our-country>

Parting Thoughts

The 2023 ACM-ASTC Workforce Survey paints a picture of a field that is moving forward from the pandemic, but not without challenges. Compensation is rising and staff numbers are rebounding, but not consistently across all types of staff. Museums are looking for ways to attract and retain staff in a time when many workers are shifting jobs, but they are also encountering obstacles as workers sometimes find more competitive pay, benefits, or work policies in other fields.

The full 2023 ACM-ASTC Workforce Survey report provides a closer look at these numbers and issues, with breakouts by institution type, size, and location to help organizations understand where their own policies and practices lie in comparison to the larger field.

