

2016 Grassroots Salary Survey



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Introduction

The Grassroots Salary Survey is conducted annually by the Public Affairs Council in response to a demonstrated interest in compensation and job tasks for grassroots practitioners. The survey is designed to collect, analyze and provide valid, reliable data on the current compensation levels for grassroots positions.

Survey questionnaires were distributed at the 2016 National Grassroots Conference in June 2016, as well as via email and social media channels to the Council's grassroots community in the spring and early summer. Because grassroots practitioners often have additional public affairs responsibilities, the questionnaire stated that it was to be completed only by individuals whose grassroots or advocacy-related responsibilities account for at least 50 percent of their job time. The survey asked respondents to provide base salary and percentage breakdown of job responsibilities, as well as bonus eligibility and bonus earned for fiscal year 2015. The survey also asked about supervisory roles, years of experience in the grassroots field and additional job responsibilities. All survey responses are anonymous. Eighty-four grassroots practitioners participated in this year's survey.

Methodology

This report provides summary statistics on compensation for this position. The mean is an arithmetical average calculated by adding the figures in a set, then dividing the sum by the number of items in the set. For some questions, the data is presented in percentiles. Ordering the data from smallest to largest, those numbers falling below 25 percent of all the data analyzed are allocated in the 25th percentile, and so on for each quartile of data. The number reported in each percentile is the upper limit of that data set. The number noted for the 50th percentile is also the median.



Trends in Time Spent on Grassroots Management

In 2016, the amount of time grassroots professionals spent solely on grassroots management and administration increased slightly (more so for association professionals).

Below are the median results for time spent working on grassroots (by organization type):

	2016 Median	2015 Median	2014 Median	2013 Median
Corporate Grassroots Staff	50%	50%	50%	50%
Association Grassroots Staff	60%	50%	60%	75%
All Grassroots Staff	53%	50%	55%	70%

Percentage of Time Spent on Grassroots

Association grassroots professionals tend to spend slightly more of their time focused on grassroots activities than their corporate counterparts.

The following is an analysis of grassroots practitioners' time spent on grassroots administration and management:

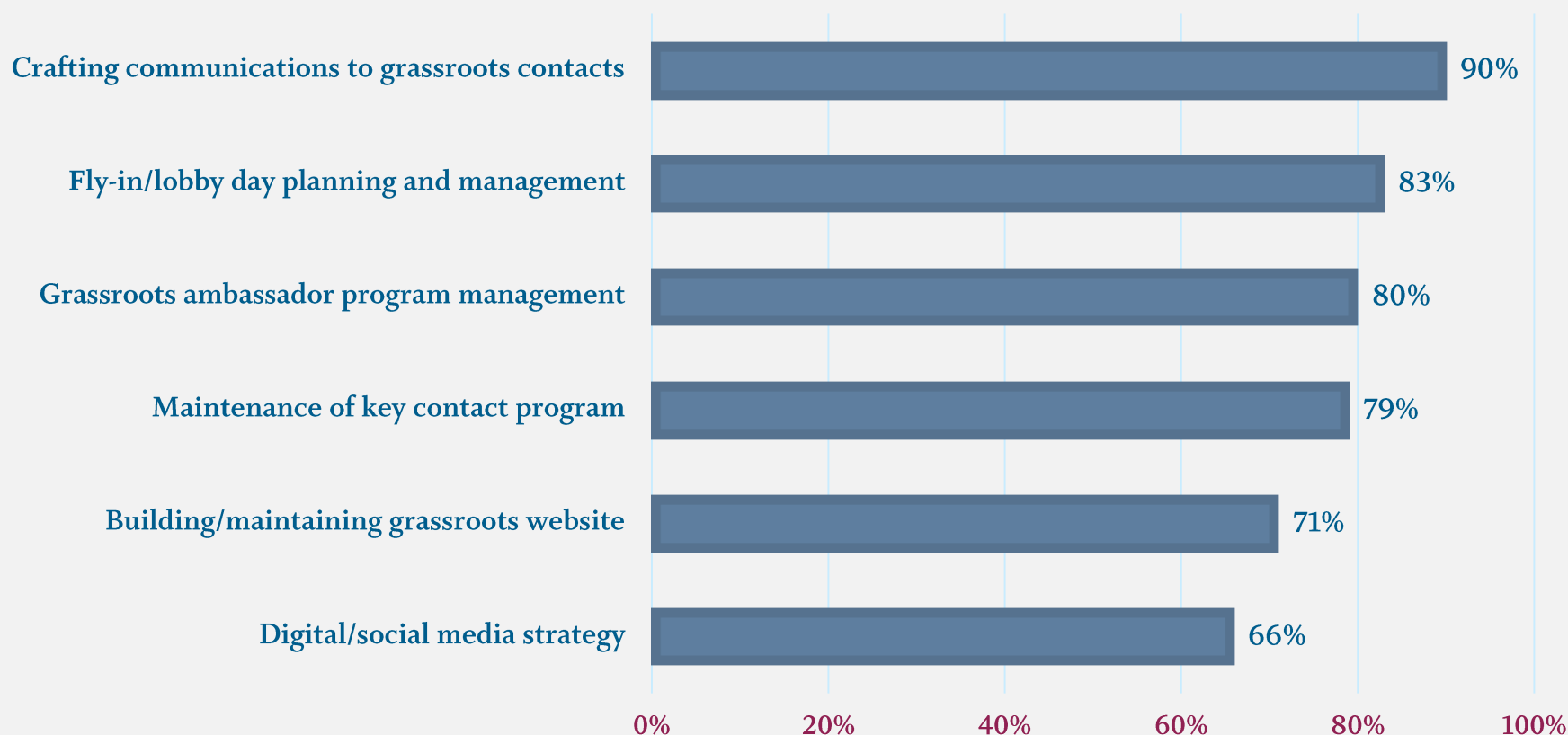
	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
Corporate Grassroots Staff	23	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%	54%
Association Grassroots Staff	57	50%	50%	60%	70%	100%	63%
All Grassroots Staff	80	50%	50%	53%	70%	100%	61%

Note: Four respondents did not indicate the time they spent on various job responsibilities, so they were not counted in the above analysis.

Grassroots-Related Responsibilities

Within the median 53 percent of time spent on grassroots management and administration, grassroots professionals manage many activities.

The following indicates how many respondents have these grassroots-related duties as part of their role:



Grassroots Professionals' Responsibilities

The median grassroots practitioner spends **53 percent** of his or her time on grassroots responsibilities. Only 18 percent of respondents spend three-quarters or more of their time on grassroots-related activities. The most common other activities that they spend their remaining time on — and the number of respondents who spend at least some of their time on these activities — are:

- **Communications:** 70%
- **Federal lobbying and/or legislative tracking:** 45%
- **Coalition/alliance management or industry relations:** 44%
- **Supervisory and/or administrative responsibilities:** 39%
- **Issues management:** 34%
- **PAC management and administration:** 32%

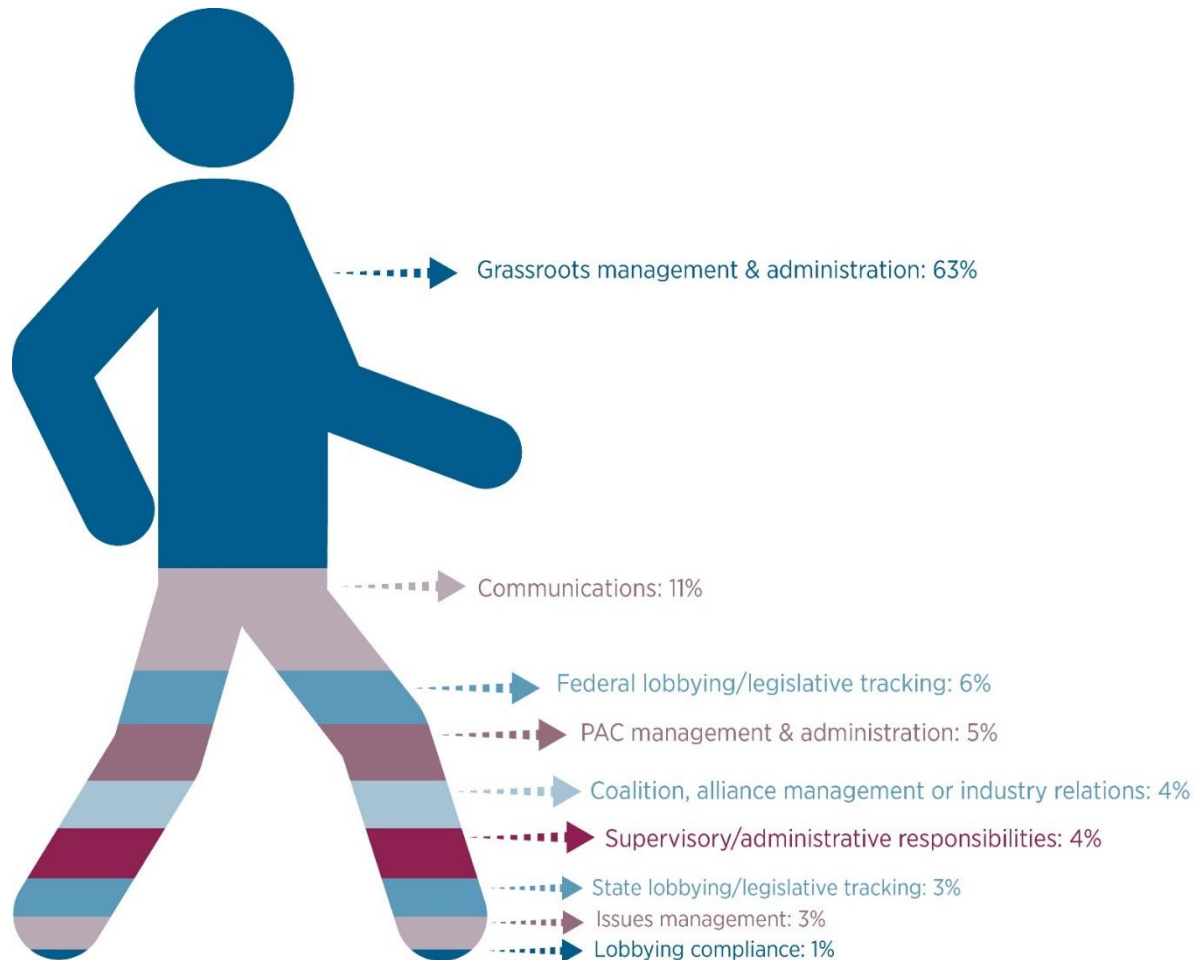
Percentage of Grassroots Practitioners Registered as Lobbyists

At the federal level	19%
At the state/local level	8%
At both the federal and state/local levels	1%



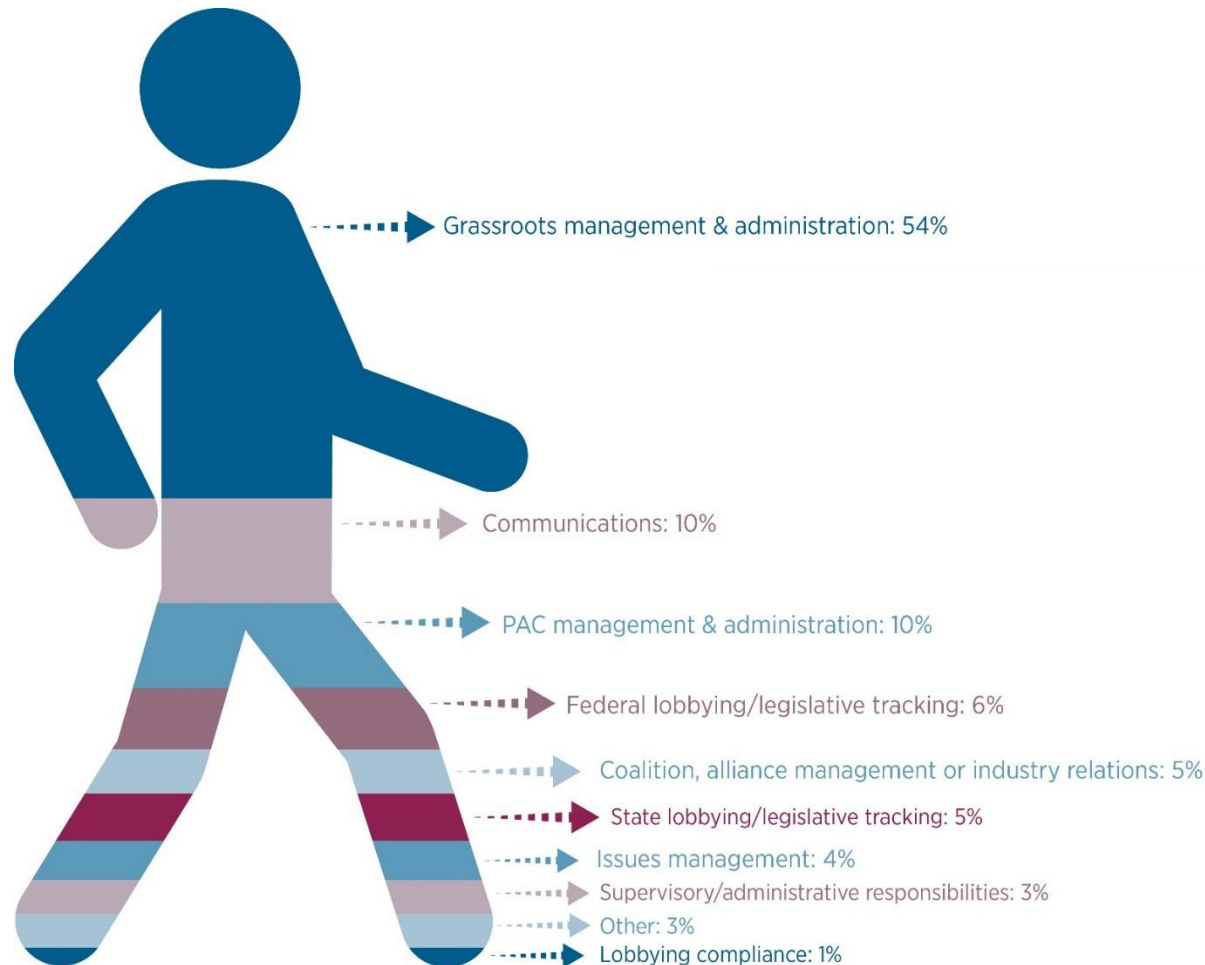
Association Grassroots Professionals' Responsibilities

Below is the average percentage of time spent by association grassroots professionals on grassroots and non-grassroots activities:



Corporate Grassroots Professionals' Responsibilities

Below is the average percentage of time spent by corporate grassroots professionals on grassroots and non-grassroots activities:



Base Salary for Grassroots Professionals

Median salaries for corporate grassroots staff are slightly lower than those of association grassroots professionals.

The following is an analysis of grassroots practitioners' base salary in fiscal year (FY) 2015:

	<i>N</i>	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
Corporate Grassroots Staff	24	\$36,000	\$57,500	\$74,820	\$93,000	\$150,000	\$79,041
Association Grassroots Staff	60	\$39,500	\$58,500	\$72,750	\$94,250	\$240,000	\$82,954
All Grassroots Staff	84	\$36,000	\$57,750	\$73,500	\$93,000	\$240,000	\$81,836

Base Salary by Job Title

Salaries vary widely by title band, and that variation is consistent across both corporate and association grassroots practitioners.

The following is an analysis of the base salary for grassroots practitioners (by job title and organization type):

	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
Corporate Associates*	8	\$36,000	\$54,885	\$55,950	\$58,500	\$75,000	\$56,305
Corporate Managers	12	\$55,900	\$74,105	\$85,248	\$93,000	\$123,000	\$84,795
Corporate Directors/ Vice Presidents	4	\$70,000	**	\$104,500	**	\$150,000	\$107,250
Association Associates*	16	\$39,500	\$45,000	\$51,250	\$58,596	\$93,000	\$54,836
Association Managers	23	\$49,000	\$67,501	\$72,000	\$75,000	\$114,000	\$73,402
Association Directors/ Vice Presidents	20	\$68,000	\$80,625	\$108,500	\$145,500	\$240,000	\$117,580

* “Associates” include positions with titles such as specialist, administrator, coordinator and assistant.

** The responses from those corporate grassroots professionals with a title of director or above were too few to calculate full percentiles.

Note: One respondent did not include their title and was not counted in the above analysis.

Base Salary by Organization Size (Association Responses)

Below are the base salaries for association grassroots practitioners
(by the number of employees within an association):

	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
< 50 employees	10	\$40,000	\$54,063	\$71,000	\$72,875	\$103,600	\$66,985
51–100 employees	17	\$39,500	\$49,000	\$70,000	\$98,000	\$174,000	\$82,088
101–200 employees	11	\$48,000	\$61,500	\$74,000	\$85,250	\$125,000	\$77,045
> 200 employees	20	\$56,500	\$69,500	\$75,000	\$106,750	\$240,000	\$92,219
Overall*	60	\$39,500	\$58,500	\$72,750	\$94,250	\$240,000	\$82,954

* Two association professionals did not specify their organization size and are only counted in the “Overall” line.

Base Salary by Organization Size (Corporate Responses)

Below are the base salaries for corporate grassroots practitioners
(by the annual revenue of the respective corporation):

	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
< \$5 billion	8	\$36,000	**	\$56,950	**	\$150,000	\$69,430
\$5.1 billion– \$20 billion	5	\$55,900	**	\$67,000	**	\$123,000	\$76,180
> \$20 billion	10	\$56,000	\$77,604	\$92,500	\$93,750	\$115,000	\$87,664
Overall*	24	\$36,000	\$57,500	\$74,820	\$93,000	\$150,000	\$79,041

* One corporate professional did not specify their organization size and is only counted in the “Overall” line.

** The responses from those grassroots professionals in organizations < \$20 billion were too few to calculate full percentiles.

Base Salary for Grassroots Supervisors (by Organization Type)

Of total respondents, **27 percent** supervise other employees. Supervisor salaries are consistently higher than for those without supervisory responsibilities.

The following is an analysis of the base salary for grassroots practitioners with supervisory responsibilities:

	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
Corporate Grassroots Staff who Supervise Employees	5	\$60,000	**	\$76,000	**	\$123,000	\$82,600
Association Grassroots Staff who Supervise Employees	18	\$50,000	\$70,500	\$104,300	\$142,500	\$240,000	\$109,922
All Grassroots Staff who Supervise Employees	23	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$84,000	\$121,500	\$240,000	\$103,983

** The responses from corporate grassroots professionals who supervise employees were too few to calculate full percentiles.

FY 2015 Bonus Analysis (by Organization Type)

Of total respondents, **69 percent** were bonus-eligible in FY 2015. The mean bonus for this group was \$5,600. Corporate grassroots practitioners were more likely than their association counterparts to be bonus-eligible.

The following chart illustrates a significant difference between association and corporate mean bonus amounts:

	N	Lower Limit	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Upper Limit	Mean
Corporate Grassroots FY 2015 Bonuses	19	\$0	\$1,050	\$7,000	\$11,000	\$40,000	\$9,963
Association Grassroots FY 2015 Bonuses	36	\$0	\$1,275	\$2,000	\$3,569	\$20,000	\$3,297
All Grassroots FY 2015 Bonuses	55	\$0	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$7,000	\$40,000	\$5,600

Note: Three respondents who indicated that they were bonus-eligible did not indicate the amount of their FY 2015 bonus. As a result, they are not included in the above analysis.

Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

Sorted by total years of experience in the grassroots industry and then by base salary in descending order:

Base Salary	Bonus-Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
Up to 2 years of experience							
\$94,000	Yes	\$10,000	Corporation	Director or above	2 or less	No	50%
\$82,500	Yes	\$4,000	Association	Director or above	2 or less	No	50%
\$76,000	Yes	\$7,000	Corporation	Manager	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$75,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	2 or less	No	No answer
\$75,000	Yes	\$2,000	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$74,000	Yes	\$3,775	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$74,000	Yes	\$2,000	Association	Manager	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$70,000	Yes	\$0	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	70%
\$68,000	Yes	\$1,200	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	90%
\$60,000	Yes	\$400	Corporation	Associate	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$55,900	No	N/A	Corporation	Associate	2 or less	No	50%
\$55,900	Yes	\$0	Corporation	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$54,540	Yes	\$6,400	Corporation	Associate	2 or less	No	50%
\$51,750	Yes	\$4,500	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$51,500	Yes	\$1,800	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	70%
\$50,000	Yes	\$2,500	Association	Associate	2 or less	Yes	60%
\$48,000	No	N/A	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	75%



Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

(continued)

Base Salary	Bonus-Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
Up to 2 years of experience (continued)							
\$45,000	No	N/A	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	70%
\$45,000	No	N/A	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	100%
\$41,000	Yes	No answer	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	No answer
\$39,500	Yes	\$650	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	70%
\$36,000	Yes	\$500	Corporation	Associate	2 or less	No	50%
3–5 years of experience							
\$150,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	Yes	50%
\$120,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	Yes	50%
\$103,600	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	Yes	60%
\$100,000	Yes	\$15,000	Corporation	Manager	2 or less	No	70%
\$93,000	Yes	\$5,000	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	75%
\$75,000	No	N/A	Corporation	Associate	3 to 5	No	50%
\$75,000	Yes	\$0	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	60%
\$75,000	Yes	\$1,300	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	55%
\$74,500	Yes	\$0	Association	Director or above	2 or less	No	70%
\$74,000	Yes	\$1,400	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	76%
\$73,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	Yes	65%

Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

(continued)

Base Salary	Bonus-Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
3–5 years of experience (continued)							
\$72,500	Yes	\$7,000	Corporation	Manager	3 to 5	No	65%
\$70,000	Yes	No answer	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$68,000	Yes	\$3,000	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	No	55%
\$67,000	No	N/A	Corporation	Manager	3 to 5	No	50%
\$64,882	Yes	\$1,500	Association	Associate	3 to 5	No	50%
\$59,000	Yes	\$2,500	Association	Manager	3 to 5	Yes	50%
\$58,000	Yes	\$5,000	Corporation	Associate	3 to 5	No	80%
\$56,000	No	N/A	Corporation	Associate	3 to 5	No	50%
\$55,000	Yes	\$0	Corporation	Associate	2 or less	No	50%
\$55,000	Yes	\$1,650	Association	Associate	3 to 5	No	85%
\$51,000	Yes	\$1,900	Association	Associate	3 to 5	No	50%
\$49,000	No	N/A	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	75%
\$40,000	Yes	\$1,200	Association	Associate	3 to 5	No	60%



Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

(continued)

Base Salary	Bonus-Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
6–10 years of experience							
\$150,000	Yes	\$12,000	Corporation	Director or above	5 to 10	No	65%
\$123,000	Yes	\$40,000	Corporation	Manager	5 to 10	No	60%
\$115,000	Yes	\$10,000	Corporation	Director or above	More than 10	No	50%
\$115,000	Yes	\$9,000	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	No	No answer
\$93,000	No	N/A	Corporation	Manager	2 or less	No	90%
\$92,000	Yes	\$30,000	Corporation	Manager	3 to 5	No	60%
\$90,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	2 or less	No	60%
\$88,000	Yes	\$600	Association	Manager	3 to 5	Yes	50%
\$87,000	Yes	\$3,500	Association	Manager	2 or less	Yes	65%
\$86,496	Yes	\$6,400	Corporation	Manager	3 to 5	Yes	70%
\$72,500	Yes	\$2,500	Association	Manager	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$72,000	Yes	\$2,500	Association	Manager	5 to 10	No	50%
\$72,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	No	70%
\$70,000	Yes	No answer	Association	Manager	5 to 10	No	50%
\$70,000	Yes	\$0	Corporation	Director or above	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$70,000	Yes	\$1,500	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$69,000	Yes	\$1,875	Association	Manager	3 to 5	Yes	50%

Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

(continued)

Base Salary	Bonus-Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
6–10 years of experience (continued)							
\$66,001	No	N/A	Association	Manager	2 or less	Yes	65%
\$61,000	Yes	\$3,500	Association	Manager	3 to 5	No	50%
\$60,000	No	N/A	Association	<i>Undisclosed</i>	5 to 10	No	80%
\$57,000	No	N/A	Association	Manager	3 to 5	No	70%
\$56,500	Yes	\$3,500	Association	Associate	3 to 5	No	50%
\$55,000	No	N/A	Association	Associate	2 or less	No	50%

Base Salary Detail (by Years of Experience)

(continued)

Base Salary	Bonus Eligible?	FY 2015 Bonus Earned	Type of Organization	Title Band	Years in Current Role	Supervise Employees?	Time Spent on Grassroots
More than 10 years of experience							
\$240,000	Yes	\$8,000	Association	Director or above	2 or less	Yes	50%
\$174,000	Yes	\$12,000	Association	Director or above	5 to 10	Yes	70%
\$170,000	Yes	\$20,000	Association	Director or above	5 to 10	Yes	100%
\$160,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	More than 10	Yes	50%
\$144,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	No answer	No	No answer
\$125,000	Yes	\$0	Association	Director or above	3 to 5	No	50%
\$114,000	Yes	\$350	Association	Manager	5 to 10	No	75%
\$114,000	No	N/A	Association	Manager	5 to 10	No	50%
\$112,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	2 or less	Yes	75%
\$105,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	5 to 10	Yes	55%
\$98,000	No	N/A	Association	Director or above	5 to 10	No	60%
\$93,000	Yes	\$30,000	Corporation	Manager	5 to 10	No	50%
\$84,000	Yes	\$8,000	Corporation	Manager	3 to 5	Yes	50%
\$75,000	Yes	\$8,000	Association	Manager	2 or less	No	50%
\$74,640	Yes	\$1,600	Corporation	Manager	More than 10	No	100%



Examples of Grassroots Job Titles

Below are examples of titles for respondents spending at least 50 percent of time on grassroots activities:

Common Associate-Level Titles:

- Grassroots Coordinator
- Government Relations Assistant
- Grassroots Administrator
- Advocacy Coordinator
- Advocacy Associate
- Grassroots Specialist
- Political Action Assistant
- Public Affairs Coordinator

Common Director-Level Titles:

- Director, Grassroots
- Director, PAC/Political and Grassroots
- Director, Grassroots Programs/Services
- Director, Advocacy
- Director, Grassroots Advocacy
- Director, Political Affairs/Programs
- Director, Civic Programs

Common Manager-Level Titles:

- Manager, Grassroots Advocacy
- Manager, Grassroots
- Manager, Government Affairs
- Manager, Public Affairs
- Manager, Political Affairs/Mobilization
- Manager, Community Engagement
- Manager, Advocacy Outreach

**Thank you to all of the
grassroots practitioners who
participated in this survey.**

Have questions?

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