



Librarian Caveats 2008

Caveats should be observed in reading the tables. The intent of the survey is to collect and present a statistically valid report of regional- and state-level data for each position and library type. This was not possible with an overall response rate of 29 percent. Although we received at least one response from either a public or academic library in all states and the District of Columbia, separating those responses by library class and region reduced the significance of individual library responses.

Public library responses were received from all states except Arkansas, Delaware and the District of Columbia. Academic library responses were received from all fifty states and the District of Columbia.

Regional- and state-level salaries are reported in this survey for each position and by type of library, despite the low response rate. Individual cases are not presented where there are so few libraries or library systems in a category or state that it would be possible to identify the individual salary, such as in a state where there is one Very Large public library and one Director. Standard association practices recommend that salaries only be reported when there are three or more responses.

These data are not representative because of the response rate, so use caution in reviewing them or re-using them in any way.

Table 1 shows that Very Large public libraries had the highest response rate at 71 percent, an improvement of 10 percent over 2007. Medium public library response improved 12 points to 33 percent. The largest increase was in Large public libraries, which had a 28 percent response rate in 2007, compared with 49 percent this year. Very Small public libraries response rate dipped six points to 16 percent this year.

University response rates rose six points to 32 percent this year and ARL member libraries had a 51 percent response rate, 13 percent higher than in 2007. Response remains low for Two-Year college libraries (17 percent).

Table 1. Response Rate by Library Type

Library Type	Responding Libraries	Libraries Invited to Participate	Response Rate
Very Small Public	88	541	16%
Small Public	132	523	25%
Medium Public	165	505	33%
Large Public	166	337	49%
Very Large Public	58	82	71%
2-Year College	93	539	17%
4-Year College	109	373	29%
University	163	513	32%



ARL	36	71	51%
Total	1010	3484	29%

The higher the number of cases (N), the more reliable the results of the sample in providing a true picture of the total population. For Very Large public libraries (serving over 500,000), the response rate was sufficient for all regions. For Large public libraries (serving 100,000 to 499,999), the response rate was 30 percent or higher for Great Lakes & Plains and West & Southwest. For academic libraries, only the 4-Year college libraries in the West & Southwest had a sufficient response rate of 36 percent. Response rates are defined as the percentage of responses divided by the surveys sent by category. For example, thirty-six surveys were sent to Very Large public libraries in the West & Southwest region and twenty-three responded ($23/36 = 64$ percent).

Another caveat is that when the mean and the median are not close together, the mean is being influenced by some unusual values. When the mean is much higher than the median, there are several very high salaries. When the mean is much lower than the median, there are several very low salaries.

The following examples illustrate how to interpret the tables:

Public

On the first page of the public library tables, there were thirty-seven Director salaries reported by Very Small public libraries from the North Atlantic region. The minimum salary for the range reported for this position in this region was \$31,912 and the maximum was \$83,000. When all of the salaries were added together and the result was divided by the total number (37), the average or mean salary was \$53,262. When all eighty-three of the Director salaries for all regions were arrayed from low to high, 25 percent fell below \$41,383 (Q1), 50 percent fell below or at \$49,661 (median) and 75 percent fell below \$57,300 (Q3). The mean overall of \$49,661 and median of \$46,606 were \$3,055 apart, meaning that Directors in the top 50 percent earned higher salaries that brought up the average by more than \$3,000. State-level data for Directors of Very Small public libraries follows in the table below. A final set of cumulative Regional- and State-level data tables for Directors of all public libraries follows the five sets of tables for each size of public library.

Academic

On the first page of the academic library tables, there were thirteen Director salaries reported by Two-Year College Libraries from the North Atlantic region. The minimum salary for the range reported for this position in this region was \$38,433 and the maximum was \$93,901. When all of the salaries were added together and the result was divided by the total number (13), the average or mean salary was \$75,674. When all eighty-nine of the Director salaries for all regions were arrayed from low to high, 25 percent of Director salaries fell below \$60,000 (Q1), 50 percent fell below or at \$68,646 (median) and 75 percent fell below \$84,500 (Q3). The mean overall of \$73,020 and median of \$68,646 were \$4,374 apart, meaning that Directors in the top 50 percent earned higher salaries that brought up the average by more than \$4,000.. State-level data for Directors of Two-Year college libraries follows in the table below. A final set of cumulative Regional- and State-level data tables for Directors of all academic libraries follows the three sets of tables for each type of academic library.