



2021 Compensation Guidelines

OVERVIEW

The National Young Farmers Coalition (“Young Farmers” or “the Coalition”) depends on talented, dedicated, and passionate staff to be successful. Our organization has a responsibility to not only adequately compensate our talented staff but to also provide them with transparency on our compensation structure and personnel budgeting decisions. This document is an attempt to provide more clarity, transparency, and process to our compensation guidelines. These guidelines are meant to provide a framework for pay scale decisions, not to identify individual salaries. While we recognize that these guidelines will be contingent on funding and the financial position of the organization, the compensation philosophy outlined in these guidelines articulates our process for making decisions on salary-setting.

Note: These guidelines are applicable for 2021; the guidelines will be updated annually before each evaluation cycle and with all-staff consultation.

PART 1: Our Compensation Philosophy

How compensation is determined at an organization is a direct reflection of the organization’s values. We are hopeful that this compensation guideline reflects values that we share as an organization. These values include:

- *High performance* - You will notice that performance is not a factor in determining which tier each staff is assigned. We expect everyone to perform with creativity, exhibit leadership, proceed from a strong racial equity analysis, and to welcome responsibility: we expect our staff to meet expectations, achieve aims set in job descriptions and annual planning, and follow through on promises to our farming community. Staff who do not perform to our standards will not remain at the organization - so mediocre performance is not considered or reflected in these compensation guidelines.
- *Internal equality* - We believe in equal pay for equal work. These compensation guidelines aim to compensate staff who are at the same level in the organization and doing the same kind of work at the same rate. We use national survey data to inform our guidelines. We are also mindful that in some places the cost of living is higher than in others. Therefore, we have a location-based adjustment for roles that require residing in a specific locality.
- *Transparency* - These guidelines express our commitment to transparency. We believe that when staff understand how decisions are made and why, they will feel more commitment and ownership of our organization. We want opportunities for organizational advancement to be clear and open to all.
- *Advancement opportunity* - Returning power to farming communities and bringing the food system back into people’s control is not a simple effort. And while we work to better scope the mission and strategy of the organization, Young Farmers will always provide opportunities for advancement for staff who can take on additional responsibility and justify advancements. Our compensation guidelines aim to help staff better articulate justifications for advancement by clarifying the additional responsibilities that recommend promotions. Every promotion is an increase in responsibilities and leadership; and in many cases, promotions may require creation of a new role at the organization. Advancement is not simply deserved by meeting the expectations of an existing role - it is earned by evidence of staff initiative and innovation, as well as the ability to properly assess organizational needs, articulate a compelling case for investment, and forge their own advancement at Young Farmers.

- *Competitive compensation* - We know that to recruit and retain our talented staff we must offer pay that is competitive with similar nonprofits of our size. We also know that nonprofits are notorious for underpaying staff and that we must strive to do better than our peers and be leaders in paying living wages to our staff. In some cases, the market compensates some types of work more than others (policy, development, and finance roles, for example, are more highly compensated roles) and our compensation reflects this reality.
- *Tenure* - We believe that the longer staff stay at Young Farmers, the deeper their expertise and relationship to our farmers. We will no longer frame this as “institutional knowledge” as it is the expectation of our staff to make knowledge widely available within the organization, to adequately document information, and to confront tendencies to gate-keep relationships or hoard information. To encourage our talented staff to stay, we include tenure as a key factor in determining pay tier.

PART 2: Determining Factors for Job Levels

This section outlines the five job levels at the organization. The section also identifies the key responsibilities that are shared across the organization by all employees. It aims to clarify the factors for determining a promotion at the organization and the responsibilities for leadership positions.

There are currently five “levels” at the organization - these levels correspond to a set of common responsibilities across the organization. As outlined in the rubric below, each level is defined by varying degrees of expectations for five main areas of responsibility. These responsibilities are determined as key priorities for the organization:

1. **Project & Program Strategy:** This relates to staff’s responsibility to implement, plan, manage, and direct organizational efforts. We expect that roles in the associate level, for example, will be primarily responsible for executing project plans whereas Program Directors are leading strategy development for their program.
2. **Development:** This relates to staff responsibility for bringing in revenue to support our efforts.
3. **Staff Management:** Simply put, this is a staff member’s responsibility for managing other staff.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement:** All staff represent Young Farmers, and our work depends on partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. These levels acknowledge the varying expectations for representing the Coalition and responsibility for stewarding partnerships.
5. **Budget Management:** Staff are responsible for budgets and fiscal oversight to varying degrees depending on their level within the organization.

The general rule is staff will fall within the “level” that most closely reflects their responsibility in at least four of the main areas described above. This is intended to acknowledge that some staff may have a responsibility in one of these areas that “expand” the expectations for their level, or conversely, their current role may not require them to “match” all expectations.

Areas of Responsibility: Levels	Project & Program Strategy	Development	Staff Management	Stakeholder Engagement Stakeholders include farmers, members, lawmakers, partners, etc.	Budget Management
Level 1 (“Associate”) Can be part-time or full-time employee	<i>Executes on project plans: integrates understanding of racial equity concepts, understands project goals and the importance of project management principles (time, cost and quality management).</i>	<i>Assists with grant-reporting and connects potential donors with the development team. No development targets or responsibilities.</i>	<i>No staff management responsibilities - may manage a temporary employee, intern, or volunteers. Manages effectively across differences if the opportunity for management arises.</i>	<i>Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of our organization and can professionally represent the organization to a diverse array of stakeholders and start to build relationships of trust (i.e. listening and follow-through) with communities of color.</i>	<i>Responsibly manages their expenses and expense reporting and makes procurement decisions within organizational guidelines. Participates in annual budgeting process but is not responsible for creating a budget.</i>
Level 2 (“Manager”) Can be part-time or full-time employee	<i>Staff may lead distinct projects (i.e. state policy advocacy, fellowship program, communications) with oversight from other staff but does not set a program strategy. Staff’s leadership on projects includes harmonization of a sophisticated understanding of racial equity into program work.</i>	<i>Nurtures existing relationships with donors (i.e. ensures familiarity, attends calls, sends follow up), supports and sometimes leads on grant-writing and grant-reporting. No development targets.</i>	<i>Staff manages 1 employee and/or temporary employees, conducts regular staff check-ins, manages relevant approvals etc. Manages reports from diverse backgrounds effectively.</i>	<i>Evolves relationships into projects and partnerships, especially with organizations led by people of color (i.e. co-sponsorship of events and trainings, coalition partnerships, grant collaborations). Prioritizes accountability and tracking progress when working with external stakeholders.</i>	<i>Reviews budget to actuals for their project, makes adjustments.</i>

<p>Level 3 ("Director") Can be part-time or full-time employee</p>	<p>Staff directs strategy for their project and leads strategy development with input from other staff and stakeholders. Strategy development integrates a sophisticated understanding and application of racial equity analysis.</p>	<p>Cultivates donors (i.e. identifies project goals and corresponding funding opportunities, pitches funders, manages select donor relationships, owns development process from proposal writing, reporting, proposal budgeting, and regular communications with funder), supports development strategy (i.e. recognizes and seeks funding to fill gaps), and is responsible for delivering \$125K (approximately 2 FTE salaries) in annual revenues.</p>	<p>Staff manages 1-2 employees, conducts staff check-ins, sets expectations and goals for their direct reports. Approaches management with racial justice mindset.</p>	<p>Builds long-lasting and trusting partnerships with our constituency and key partners, especially those led by people of color. Assists Program Director in building and implementing accountability and benchmark tracking measures into programmatic work.</p>	<p>Develops annual budget for projects, works with Program Director to develop program budget, holds responsibility for changes to budget for their projects.</p>
<p>Level 4 ("Program Director") Generally full-time employee</p>	<p>Staff develops major strategic initiatives that manifest a deep racial equity analysis by shifting power, leads process to set program strategy, and establishes related staffing and funding requirements. Serves as senior level Program Director, contributing to organizational strategy, policy, and processes.</p>	<p>Cultivates donors (i.e. seeks out new funding opportunities, facilitates phone calls, ensures revenue), sets and executes a development strategy (i.e. develops fundraising plan based on program strategy and current revenue streams), and is responsible for delivering \$200K (approximately 3 FTE salaries) in annual revenues.</p>	<p>Staff assembles teams of 2+ employees with complementary skills and sets expectations and goals for their direct reports. Approaches management with racial justice mindset. Provides cross-program leadership and ensures all staff are aware of their program activities and goals.</p>	<p>Builds long-lasting and trusting partnerships with our constituency and key partners, especially those led by people of color. Builds and implements accountability and benchmark tracking measures into programmatic work.</p>	<p>Develops an annual budget for the program, holds responsibility for changes to budget, has the ability to make informed long-term decisions for the program.</p>
<p>Level 5 ("Executive") Generally full-time employee</p>	<p>Oversees program strategies and incorporates into organizational strategy, stewards organizational strategic planning. Serves as a model and mentor to others on racial equity analysis. Serves as a Board representative.</p>	<p>Shapes organizational business model and delivers multi-program revenues of +\$500K in annual revenues.</p>	<p>Manages Program Directors and is responsible for fostering organizational culture and leading development of resources and trainings for organizational staff management. Demonstrates a history of intervening in problematic dynamics and deepening racial justice approach with reports.</p>	<p>Acts as an organizational spokesperson for press and keynotes, serving as a thought-leader and seeks out leadership roles outside the organization to increase visibility of Young Farmers. Creates opportunity for farmer leadership and visibility toward long-term succession of the organization. Follows the lead of organizations led by people of color and encourages other organization partners to follow suit.</p>	<p>Creates organizational financial processes and drives adoption across programs, can discuss organizational financial outlook with stakeholders, holds responsibility for financial well-being of organization.</p>

PART 3: Pay Scale & Base Compensation Factors

This section outlines the process by which Young Farmers will determine base salary and wages for staff in 2021. The section provides transparency on the process for setting overarching pay scales for each role, and clarifies the process for setting and revising individual employee salaries and wages. Each employee’s salary is set at the discretion of the employee’s manager and the Co-Executive Directors, and roughly corresponds to the factors below. These guidelines will be followed except when in conflict with state or federal legal requirements.

After identifying each employee’s level from Part 2, Young Farmers considers two additional factors: the employee’s experience and location.

Factor One: Experience

Young Farmers uses the following tiers to factor staff’s experience in determining their pay. Placement into each tier is case-by-case and based on a variety of factors, including:

- *Years of Young Farmers Experience:*
 - How long has the staff been employed with the organization?
 - How long have they been in their current role? Do they have previous employment experience at Young Farmers?
 - Has the staff been a Chapter Officer?

- *Years of Work / Educational Experience:*
 - How many years/seasons of full-time farming, organizing, policy/legislative, or other relevant job experience does this person bring to Young Farmers?
 - Does the staff possess an advanced degree or other relevant credentials?

It is our preference to limit placement into the Tenure tier for those employees with significant experience at Young Farmers. New hires - both internal and external - can be placed in either the Median or Median Plus tier based on their experience, as described below.

Tier	Internal Hires / Employees	External Hires
Median	0-3 years of experience in current or similar ¹ role (part- or full-time), whether acquired at the organization or elsewhere.	0-3 years of job experience in current or similar role (part- or full-time), acquired outside the organization.
Median Plus	3+ years of experience in current or similar role (part- or full-time) at the organization, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1+ year full- or part-time in other role counts as 1 year, 1 year max; ● 2+ years of Chapter Officer experience counts as 1 year, 1 year max; ● Each full season or year of full-time farming beyond 2 years counts as 1 year; ● Each advanced degree relevant to job position counts as 2 years. 	3+ years of job experience in current or similar role (part- or full-time), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2+ years of Chapter Officer experience counts as 1 year, 1 year max; ● Each full season or year of full-time farming beyond 2 years counts as 1 year; ● Each advanced degree relevant to job position counts as 2 years.
Tenure	4+ years of experience in current role at the organization.	Not eligible for tenure.

Compensation for each tier is calculated annually using the best available data. Our 2021 guidelines are based on data from the 2019 New York Nonprofit Organization Salary and Benefits Report for organizations with an operating budget of \$2.5M-\$5M with 11-25 employees, and the 2020 National Salary Report from Association Trends & The Nonprofit Finance Center for nonprofits with operating budgets between \$1M-\$5M. We supplemented this data with Third Sector New England’s Non-Profit Salary Data. The Coalition does not believe in compensating staff based on the lowest common denominator. Because of this, we used the **median** data to inform our Median tier compensation for each level, rather than the minimum pay.

In some cases, the market compensates some types of work more than others and our compensation reflects this reality. Specifically, when comparing the Coalition’s 2020 guidelines with national data, it was found that all roles were being paid higher than the median (even with a 3% cost-of-living increase) with the exception of federal policy. In order to align our guidelines with the data, the Coalition is increasing salaries for the roles of Federal Policy Associate and Federal Policy Director. Additionally, while the market does not compensate our Level 1 roles at a higher rate, the Coalition greatly values the work of these roles and is, therefore, investing in that work by increasing salary guidelines for that level.

The range between Median and Tenure is \$9,000 for all levels. The pay scale below is based on a 40-hour per week schedule. Base compensation for hourly employees directly correlates to annual salaries (e.g., \$52,000 annual salary equates to 26 pay periods of 80 hours each - or an hourly wage of \$25/hr).

¹ Similar is defined as “within the same level”

Level		Median		Median Plus		Tenure	
		Annual Salary	Hourly Wage	Annual Salary	Hourly Wage	Annual Salary	Hourly Wage
Level 1 "Associate"	CA Organizer CO Organizer Food Safety Coordinator Grants & Budgeting Coordinator Grassroots Coordinator MI Technical Assistance Navigator NM Campaign Organizer NY Organizer PA Organizer Program Associate VT Technical Assistance Navigator <i>Other Possible Roles: State Organizer, Development Associate, Coordinator, Trainer, Communications Associate</i>	\$44,900	\$21.59	\$49,400	\$23.75	\$53,900	\$25.91
	Federal Policy Associate	\$56,400	\$27.12	\$60,900	\$29.28	\$65,400	\$31.44
Level 2 "Manager"	Accounting & Budget Manager Equity & Organizational Change Manager FRSAN Program Manager Membership Manager National Chapter Manager Operations Manager PA Program Manager <i>Other Possible Roles: Program Manager, State Manager</i>	\$53,500	\$25.72	\$58,000	\$27.88	\$62,500	\$30.05
Level 3 "Director"	CA Campaign Director Organizing & Advocacy Director Western Campaign Director <i>Other Possible Roles: Campaign Director(s)</i>	\$61,000	\$29.33	\$65,500	\$31.49	\$70,000	\$33.65
	Federal Policy Director	\$70,100	\$33.70	\$74,600	\$35.87	\$79,100	\$38.03
Level 4 "Program Director"	Business Services Director Communications Director Land Access Program Director State Policy Director <i>Other Possible Roles: Program Director</i>	\$70,000	\$33.65	\$74,500	\$35.82	\$79,000	\$37.98
	Development Director	\$79,000	\$37.98	\$83,500	\$40.14	\$89,000	\$42.79
Level 5 "Executive"	<i>Other Possible Roles: Executive Level</i>	\$84,000	\$40.38	\$88,500	\$42.55	\$93,000	\$44.71
	Co-Executive Directors	\$105,000 (Co-ED salaries are set by the Young Farmers Board of Directors.)					

Factor Two: Location-Based Adjustment

The Coalition strongly believes that staff should be able to afford to live in the location they are required to reside in for work. As such, employees may be eligible for a location-based adjustment to our pay rates. Location-based adjustments will be granted at the discretion of the Co-Executive Directors. **We will only make location-based adjustments for staff who are required to live and work in a certain location.** Currently we are not making downward location-based adjustments.

To determine location-based adjustments, we will compare the national living wage from MIT’s Living Wage Calculator to the living wage for the location in which the employee is required to work. Note: if two or more options are available for location (e.g., DC metro area vs. DC county), we will use the higher of the two living wages. The national average living wage in the United States is \$16.54 per hour before taxes for a family of four (two working adults, two children) in 2019 (most recent data).²

The location-based adjustment will apply differently based on which level the role falls. Level 1 roles will receive 100% of an applicable location-based adjustment; Level 2+3 roles will receive 75% of an applicable location-based adjustment; and Level 4+5 roles will receive 50% of an applicable location-based adjustment. The adjustment is applied differently by level in order to build pay equity into our compensation guidelines. In other words, because the location-based adjustment’s primary function is to ensure a living wage to staff that are required to work in a location, staff at levels above the living wage floor of their location will be granted modified adjustments to keep compensation competitive for the location.

The table below shows an example of how the methodology will be applied for an employee who is required to work in Washington, DC.

Example of Level 1 Employee in DC		Example of Level 2 Employee in DC	
Living Wage for DC-based Employee (according to MIT’s Living Wage Calculator)	\$18.11/hr	Living Wage for DC-based Employee (according to MIT’s Living Wage Calculator)	\$18.11/hr
National Average Living Wage (according to MIT’s Living Wage Calculator)	\$16.54/hr	National Average Living Wage (according to MIT’s Living Wage Calculator)	\$16.54/hr
Percentage Difference	9%	Percentage Difference	9%
Amount of Adjustment Applied based on Level	100%	Amount of Adjustment Applied based on Level	75%
Location-Based Adjustment Percentage	9%	Location-Based Adjustment Percentage	6.75%
<i>Now we apply the 9% adjustment to our pay rate:</i>		<i>Now we apply the 6.75% adjustment to our pay rate:</i>	
Median Tier Salary for Level 1 Employee	\$44,900	Median Tier Salary for Level 2 Employee	\$53,500
Adjusted Salary (for Median tier, Level 1 employee required to work in DC)	\$48,941	Adjusted Salary (for Median tier, Level 2 employee required to work in DC)	\$57,111

² Glasmeier, Amy K. Living Wage Calculator. 2020. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. <https://livingwage.mit.edu/articles/61-new-living-wage-data-for-now-available-on-the-tool>

Part 4: Pay Rate Adjustments and Promotions

Going into 2021, the Co-Executive Directors will make adjustments to salary based on aligning compensation with staff's level, experience, and required work location. We will not decrease any existing salaries for employees who are currently above our payscale. The Co-EDs will apply the new location-based adjustment methodology, except in cases where the new methodology would result in a reduction in pay.

Managers will recommend any level changes to the Co-Executive Directors after completing the annual performance evaluation with each of their reports. Recommendations are due by Friday, October 9, 2020, at the latest. The Co-EDs, via managers, have up until November 2 to communicate recommendation approvals to staff. Staff have 1 week from the time of notification to accept, accept with negotiation, or decline the level or role change to their manager. If negotiations ensue, each party must respond to one another within 2 business days of receipt up until the offer letter is sent. During this time, managers should forward any communication between Co-EDs and reports by the end of the business day to ensure both reports and the Co-EDs have adequate time to discuss and respond. All offer letters for level or role changes must be sent to the relevant staff member by November 24, with signatures required by December 1. Staff can negotiate on the following points: 1) their level or role, and 2) how their experience factors into the tier in which they are placed. **Staff cannot negotiate salary numbers or location-based adjustments.**

Employees may request a performance evaluation outside of the annual schedule if their work has shifted and/or they believe they are due for a promotion based on increased job responsibilities. Adjustments to your tier will happen on the anniversary of your hire date or role/level change date. For example, if you begin the calendar year in the Median tier, but reach the 3-year anniversary in your current role in July, your adjustment to the Median Plus tier will be triggered in July.

These Guidelines are not a contract and do not confer any contractual or quasi-contractual rights on employees of the Coalition. These Guidelines may be terminated or changed in whole or in part at any time, with or without notice, at the sole discretion of the Coalition.

Neither these Guidelines nor any compensation provided in accordance with these Guidelines constitutes a guarantee of future employment with the Coalition or a guarantee of any future compensation. Employees of the Coalition are employed at-will.