



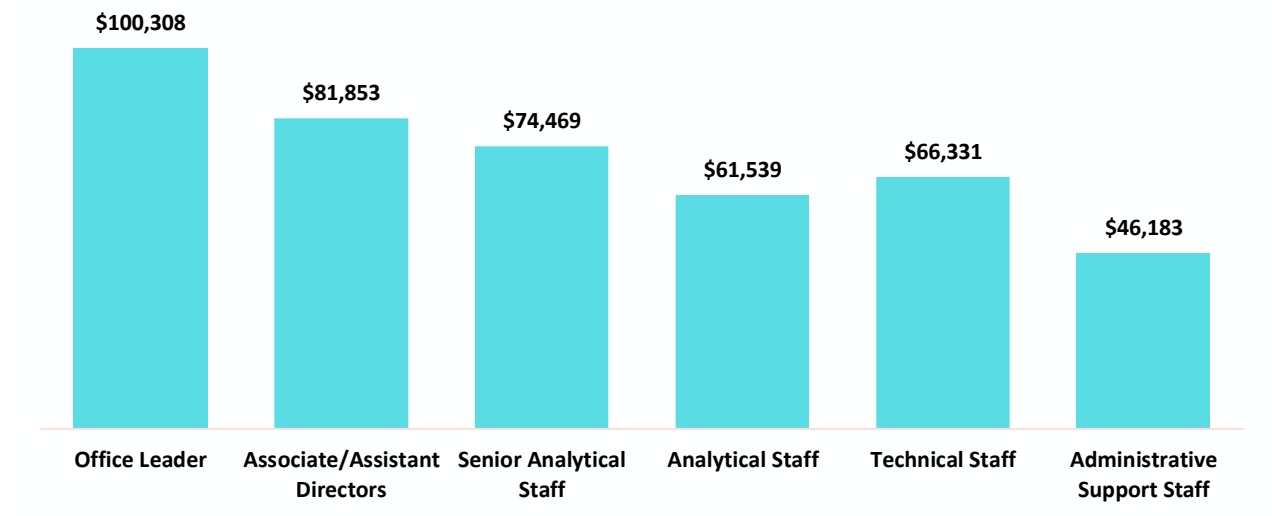
# 2021 AIR National Survey of IR Offices: IR Office Full-time Staff Salaries

Transformation of data into informed decisions requires financial investment and commitment by the institution. Hardware, software, and other resources are essential to the work of institutional research (IR). Yet the tools and technology are inadequate without a corresponding investment in people. Salaries play critical roles in recruiting and retaining highly skilled staff. In the 2021 AIR National Survey of IR Offices, we asked leaders to describe and evaluate staff salaries.

## Annual Salaries of Full-time Staff

The 2021 National Survey asked office leaders to report annual staff salaries. Chart 1 shows the average salary for full-time staff for each staff role.

**Chart 1. Average Salary of Full-time Staff by Staff Role**



Average salary varied by major institutional sector: public 4-year, public 2-year, and private not-for-profit 4-year. Office leaders at public 4-year institutions earn nearly \$118,000 on average which is higher than office leaders at public 2-year and private not-for-profit 4-year institutions.

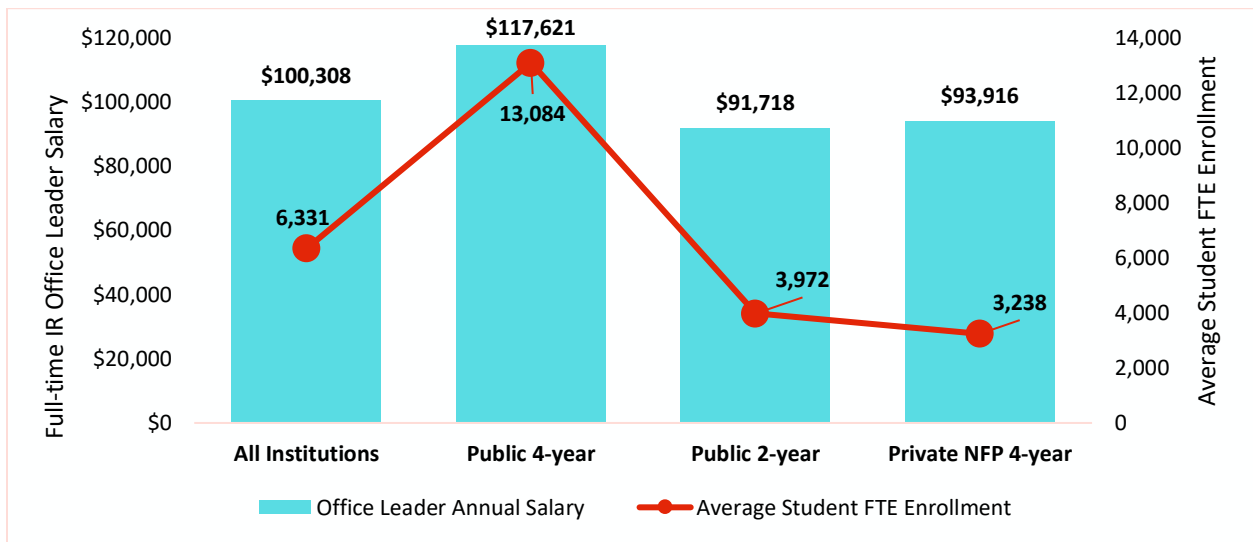
Except for analytical staff and administrative support staff, IR office staff at public 4-year institutions earn higher salaries than their colleagues in the other two sectors.

**Table 1. Average IR Salaries of Full-time Staff by Role and Sector**

Role	All Institutions	Public 4 year	Public 2 year	Private NFP 4 year
Office Leader	\$100,308	\$117,621	\$91,718	\$93,916
Associate/Assistant Directors	\$81,853	\$86,576	\$95,147	\$77,802
Senior Analytical Staff	\$74,469	\$76,805	\$75,928	\$69,806
Analytical Staff	\$61,539	\$63,240	\$64,499	\$56,366
Technical Staff	\$66,331	\$69,832	\$55,828	\$69,444
Administrative Support Staff	\$46,183	\$45,993	\$48,061	\$43,781

Survey findings indicate that full-time IR office leader salaries correlate with institutional enrollment. This is similar to the finding that IR office staff full-time equivalent (FTE) correlates with institutional enrollment as reported in the AIR National Survey of IR Offices 2022 report titled *IR Office Staff Roles*. Chart 2 shows the full-time IR office leader salary overlaid with the average student FTE enrollment in aggregate for the three major institutional sectors.

**Chart 2. Relationship between Full-time IR Office Leader Salary and Student FTE Enrollment**



Note: Enrollment data reported from the 2019 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Table 2 presents the average full-time IR office staff salary by institutional enrollment (e.g., all enrolled degree-seeking student FTEs) and institutional sector. As this table shows, institutions with smaller enrollments have lower salaries and institutions with larger enrollments have higher salaries.

**Table 2. Full-time Office Leader Salary by Total Institutional Enrollment**

Total Enrollment	All Institutions	Public 4-year	Public 2-year	Private NFP 4-year
Less than 3,000 student FTE	\$83,465	\$80,795	\$78,800	\$86,196
3,000 to 4,999 student FTE	\$97,122	\$98,793	\$102,014	\$94,001
5,000 to 9,999 student FTE	\$115,393	\$105,740	\$119,839	\$125,361
10,000 or more student FTE	\$136,872	\$140,998	\$123,556	\$127,533

Note: FTE = full-time equivalent.

## Comparing Full-time Annual Salaries Across U.S. Census Regions

Using regions defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, we calculated the average salary for each full-time staff role. Salaries vary greatly across the country (Table 3). People at institutions on the east and west coasts typically earn more than those living in midwestern and southern states. Average office leaders' annual salaries range from a high of approximately \$110,000 in the West to a low of approximately \$93,000 in the Midwest.

Differences in average salary in other IR office staff roles reflect a similar pattern (Table 3).

**Table 3. Average IR Full-time Salaries by Staff Roles by U.S. Census Region**

Role	All Institutions	West (n 83)	Northeast (n 91)	South (n 166)	Midwest (n 139)
Office Leader	\$100,308	\$109,993	\$107,676	\$97,401	\$92,777
Associate/Assistant Directors	\$81,853	\$89,883	\$83,156	\$79,667	\$78,494
Senior Analytical Staff	\$74,469	\$84,462	\$72,392	\$72,997	\$67,211
Analytical Staff	\$61,539	\$65,446	\$62,486	\$59,619	\$60,876
Technical Staff	\$66,331	\$78,462	\$73,500	\$65,445	\$59,561
Administrative Support Staff	\$46,183	\$57,743	\$51,928	\$42,197	\$45,137

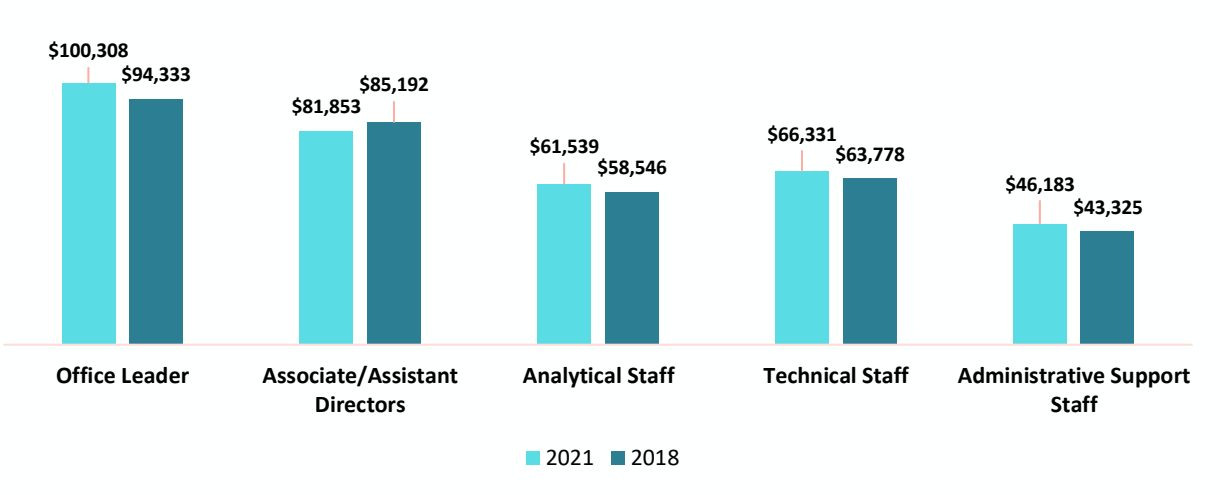
Reference: U.S. Census Bureau regions [https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us\\_reqdiv.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_reqdiv.pdf);

# Changes in Full-time Annual Staff Salaries: 2018 to 2021

Of the 479 IR offices that provided full-time staff salaries for this report, 215 also provided these data in 2018 which was the first time the National Survey of IR Offices sought salary data. The results in this section are based on those 215 institutions.

Across each of the five roles that existed in 2018 and 2021), salaries for full-time staff increased for every role except for Associate/Assistant Directors. A reason for this decline may be that more, and smaller, institutions have adopted this role between 2018 and 2021 and, as the survey data indicate, smaller institutions have lower salaries on average.

**Chart 3. Changes in Staff Salaries: 2018 to 2021**



*Note: The Senior Analytical Staff role was not included in the 2018 National Survey of IR Offices and is not included here.*

Table 4 shows the average full-time staff salaries by role disaggregated by sector.

**Table 4. Changes in Full-time Staff Salaries**

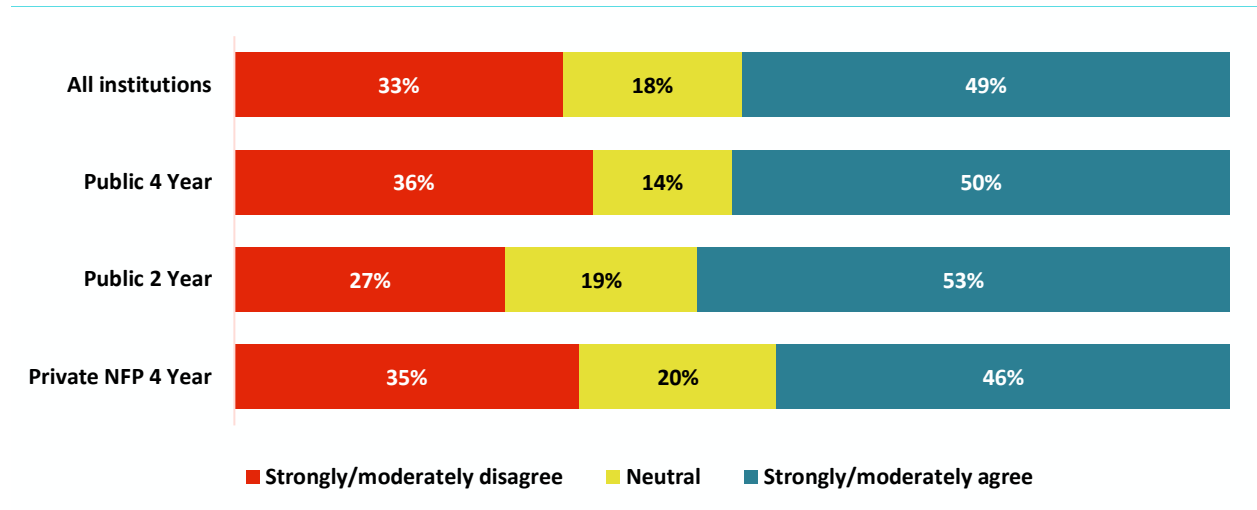
Role	All Institutions		Public 4-year		Public 2-year		Private NFP 4-year	
	2021	2018	2021	2018	2021	2018	2021	2018
<b>Office Leader</b>	\$103,003	\$94,333	\$122,421	\$109,270	\$89,209	\$83,133	\$92,743	\$86,335
<b>Associate / Assistant Directors</b>	\$79,901	\$85,192	\$86,913	\$86,494	\$62,704	\$70,492	\$70,289	\$87,966
<b>Senior Analytical Staff</b>	\$75,444	NA	\$76,558	NA	\$70,662	NA	\$75,311	NA
<b>Analytical Staff</b>	\$61,107	\$58,546	\$62,696	\$58,479	\$67,956	\$56,761	\$53,929	\$59,409
<b>Technical Staff</b>	\$66,952	\$63,778	\$71,673	\$66,205	\$51,633	\$54,941	\$64,700	\$62,823
<b>Administrative Support Staff</b>	\$47,861	\$43,325	\$47,649	\$42,689	\$55,918	\$48,459	\$39,167	\$41,282

*Note: The Senior Analytical Staff role was not included in the 2018 National Survey of IR Offices.*

## Evaluation of Staff Salaries by Office Leader

We asked office leaders to indicate their agreement with the statement, “Office staff are paid competitive salaries.” Across all institutions, just under half of IR office leaders feel that salaries are competitive, but that differed by sector. A slightly higher percentage of IR office leaders at public 2-year institutions agreed that their staff salaries were competitive compared to colleagues at 4-year institutions (Chart 4).

**Chart 4. Evaluation of Staff Salaries**



## Methodology

The 2021 AIR National Survey of IR Offices attempted to survey IR office leaders at more than 3,000 postsecondary degree-granting institutions. Institutions of all sectors, types of control, and sizes were included in the sample. In total, responses were collected from 1,142 institutions, and 554 of those institutions completed the survey in full. To ensure comparable results, incomplete responses are excluded from this report. In addition, responses from for-profit institutions, administrative units, international institutions, private not-for-profit 2-year institutions, and institutions in U.S. territories are excluded due to low response rates.

Please note that institutions were not required to provide salary data for their surveys to be counted as complete since salary data are proprietary information for some institutions. The findings presented in this report are based on 479 responses that represent U.S. postsecondary, degree-granting institutions at public 4-year (142 institutions), public 2-year (114 institutions), or private not-for-profit 4-year institutions (223 institutions) that provided salary data for their full-time IR office staff.

## Suggested Citation

Jones, D., Keller, C., & Raza, Z. (2022). *2021 AIR National Survey of IR Offices: IR Office Full-time Staff Salaries* [Report]. Association for Institutional Research. [www.airweb.org/NationalSurvey](http://www.airweb.org/NationalSurvey).