

# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

## Preliminary Take-aways from the Emerging Conservation Professionals Network 2018 Compensation Survey



american institute for conservation  
**Preserving Cultural Heritage**

Emerging Conservation Professionals Network

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### Introduction

ECPN undertook the *Emerging Conservation Professionals Employment Survey* in order to gather valuable data pertaining to the current realities of employment for emerging conservation professionals. The survey was open from November 8, 2018, to December 31, 2018.

The survey was targeted for individuals who are citizens and/or residents of the United States, currently employed in the United States, or attending graduate school for conservation in the United States

### Methodology

At least 383 individuals accessed the survey form, and 369 responses were recorded for the first question. 16 respondents were instructed to exit the survey based on their selections to this first question and several of the following questions (those who responded that they are not citizens or residents of the United States, While it is not possible to determine a definitive response rate, various figures can be used to estimate the level of engagement. A response rate of approximately 20.7% (311/1500) was calculated among members of AIC.

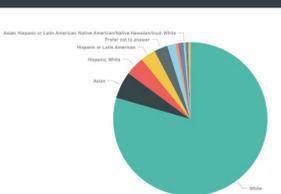
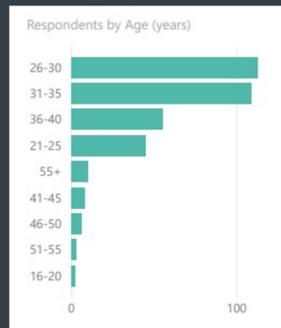
### Relationship to 2014 Survey

In 2014, AIC/FAIC conducted a general compensation survey, which included extensive analytics that are helpful for understanding compensation levels across specializations, geographic regions, employment setting, and years of professional experience. The AIC/FAIC report includes the median salary for professionals based on years of experience in the field, grouping this data into 5-year periods (e.g. 0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and so on). However, the data is not analyzed in relation to position title (e.g. Fellow vs. Contract/Project Conservator vs. Assistant Conservator). ECPN is collecting compensation data from published advertisements for post-graduate fellowship positions to supplement this data.

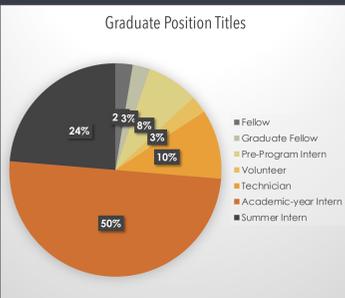
### Respondent Demographics

90.60% respondents self-identified as female, 7.12% as male, and 1.71% as a non-binary/third gender. 0.57% of respondents declined to answer this question.

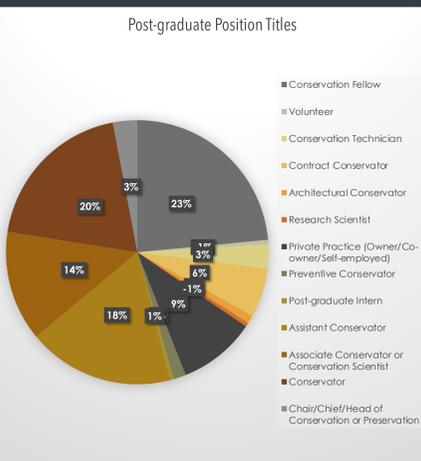
The age distribution was strongly concentrated between 21-40 years of age, with 91.73% of respondents indicating their age fell within this range. 79.5% of the emerging conservation professional demographic surveyed overall self-identifies as white.



### Employment

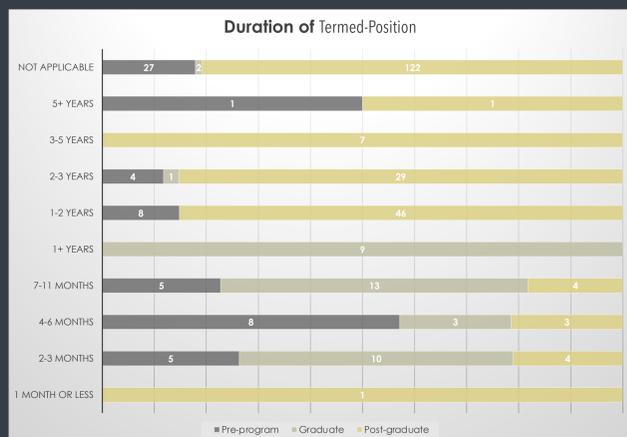


Position Titles  
Pre-program, graduate, and post-graduate respondents were asked to report their current position title.



### Term-Limited Positions

Of the 383 respondents, 48.5% (186/383) respondents reported that their position was term-limited. When asked if they knew whether or not their position could be extended, only 33 respondents were confident in this possibility while 62 were unable to extend, and 64 did not know if this was a possibility.



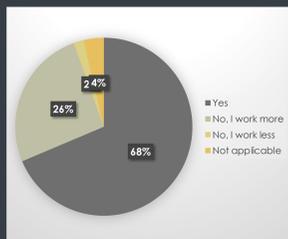
### Employment and Unemployment

The majority of survey respondents were employed in a conservation-related capacity in 2018, however some respondents reported periods of unemployment. On average pre-program respondents spent 2-6 months unemployed while post-graduate respondents spent 3-12+ months

### Hours Worked

Few pre-program respondents were considered full-time employees (those who work 40 hours a week), 40% of pre-program respondents were not considered full-time and worked 5-36 hours per week on average.

The majority of graduate and post-graduate respondents were considered full-time employees, 70% of graduate respondents reported working 31-45 hours per week while 84% post-graduate respondents reported working 31-51+ hours per week. Post-graduate respondents were asked whether their agreed upon hours of work per week accurately reflected their actual hours worked. Although 68% of post-graduate respondents thought their hours of work were accurate 26% thought that they worked more.



### Compensation

Overall, 21.5% of respondents reported that they were compensated, while 8% of respondents reported that they were specifically not compensated. Pre-program respondents accounted for the majority of the 8% of uncompensated respondents. When asked to specify the source of their compensation, 18% reported that they were compensated directly by an employer/company/institution, and 3.7% reported that they were externally funded by an outside organization, grant, or funder such as a private endowment, or The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation or Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

Few respondents reported that their stipend, hourly wage, or salary increased slightly overtime to account for inflation. Only 5% of respondents reported that their compensation was slightly increased annually, while 7.2% reported that there was no increase and 5.5% were unsure.

### Salary Transparency

Few respondents, 27%, reported that a salary range was included in the job posting for the position they currently hold. When job postings advertised the salary range most respondents, 11.5%, reported that their actual salary reflected the salary range publicly posted.

### Negotiation

16.5% of overall respondents reported that they did not attempt to negotiate their starting salary, only 5% of respondents reported that they negotiated their compensation package. Of those who did attempt to negotiate 4.6% reported that they were successful in their efforts while 7.4% reported that they were unsuccessful in negotiations.

### Benefits

The majority of respondents (57.5% of overall respondents) were provided benefits by their place of work.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their current benefits. Of the respondents 45.8% strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their current benefits, 35.7% agreed, 12.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, 5.7% disagreed, 0.4% strongly disagreed meaning that they were unsatisfied with their benefits.

### Relocation

A majority of graduate and post-graduate respondents, 62% and 60.5% respectively, reported that they were required to move for a position while 28% of pre-program respondents reported the same.

Despite the high requirement of relocation few were given financial support to aid in the burden of relocating.

Only 3% Pre-program, 21% Graduate, and 19% of Post-graduate respondents were provided financial support for relocation.

### Supplemental Income

Overall, the majority of respondents reported the need to supplement their income. Consistent among pre-program, graduate, and post-graduate respondents was the reliance on familial or partner financial support or non-conservation-based jobs. These statistics uphold the longstanding belief that conservation is only a realistic field for those who can afford it.

### Financial Security

This section was intended to gauge the respondents' perception of financial security. Respondents were directed to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "I am able - or it would be possible - to live independently and fulfill basic needs (ability to pay for rent, bills, and food) with the total annual salary or stipend I received through conservation employment in 2018." Selections could be made on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

Clear trends emerged for each demographic. Nearly half of those in the pre-program demographic indicated that they would be unable to live independently and fulfill basic needs through conservation employment. 41% of graduate students also selected this response, although a greater number indicated they "neither agree or disagree" or "agree" with the statement. Approximately half of the respondents from the post-graduate demographic indicated they either "agree" or "strongly agree" that they would be able to live independently and fulfill basic needs through conservation employment.

### Post-Graduate Focus

A person who graduated from a graduate-level (not undergraduate) degree-granting conservation, historic preservation program, or a similar training program (in the United States OR abroad) in the last ten years (since 2008) and is a citizen and/or a resident of the United States. This includes those working as conservation science professionals with a degree in a scientific discipline. The goal of surveying individuals up to ten years post-graduation is to capture data from this critical transitional period.

### Education

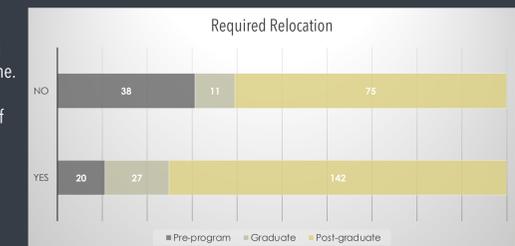
Respondents were asked for the number of conservation-related positions/job titles (including current position and short-term positions such as contracts) they have held and number of institutions they have worked for since graduating with their MA/MS in conservation.

### Research

Post-graduate respondents who indicated they were employed in at least one conservation-related position in 2018 were requested to indicate whether conservation research is part of their job description for each position. Regarding 260 positions, 53.46% (139/260) indicated "yes", while (121/260) 46.54% indicated "no."

Of the 139 positions involving research, respondents were also asked whether they are given the amount of time needed to pursue said research in those positions. 68.35% (95/139) indicated "yes"; 28.78% (40/139) responded "no"; and 2.88% (4/139) indicated "not applicable." It may be hypothesized that "not applicable" may refer to an unspecified amount of research required in the respondent's job description.

Benefit	Percentage of Overall Respondents
Health Insurance	98.2%
Dental Insurance	87.2%
401K (or other retirement benefits)	17.2%
Paid Sick Leave	16.7%
Paid Vacation Days	91.2%
Paid Personal Days	46.7%
Paid Parental Leave	35.2%
Child Care Subsidy	6.2%
Transportation Subsidy	33%
Housing Subsidy	1.3%
Pension	0.9%
Other	6.6%



	Familial Support	Partner Support	Non-conservation additional job
Pre-program	61%	16%	57%
Graduate	49%	44%	22%
Post-graduate	29.5%	47%	17.5%

### Pre-Program Focus

A person of any age or educational background who is actively pursuing a career in the conservation profession, is preparing to or in the process of applying to graduate programs and is a citizen and/or a resident of the United States

### Education

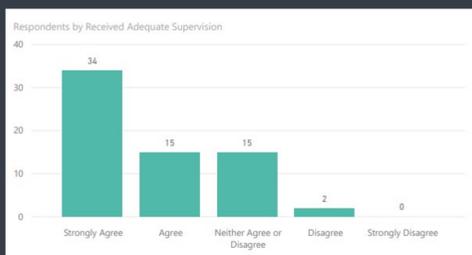
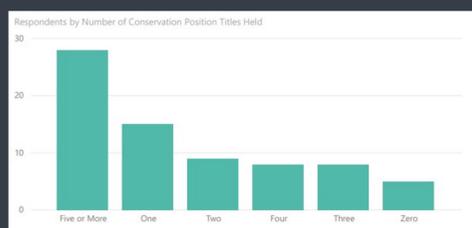
78.96% of pre-program respondents (57) indicated that they hold an undergraduate degree; 10.96% (8) have a Master's degree; 4.11% (3) an Associates degree; and 6.85% (5) a high school diploma.

### Employment

Pre-program respondents were asked to indicate the number of conservation job or volunteer titles they have held, including short-term positions such as contracts, and the number of institutions in which they have worked. The greatest percentage of pre-program respondents have held 5 or more titles (38.4%) and worked in 5 or more institutions (34.2%).

### Supervision

It was considered crucial, among other forms of professional support, to gauge the level of supervision pre-program candidates feel that they receive while employed given the early-career nature of pre-program positions. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "I receive adequate supervision" on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly agree" and 5 being "strongly disagree."



### Graduate Student Focus

A person who is currently enrolled in a graduate-level (not undergraduate) degree-granting conservation, historic preservation program, or a similar training program (in the United States OR abroad) and is a citizen and/or a resident of the United States. This includes those pursuing a degree in a scientific discipline intending to work as a conservation professional.

### Education

When asked about their level of education, 68.2% (30/44) of graduate-level respondents indicated that they hold a Bachelor's degree and 29.5% (13/44) indicated that they have a Master's degree (other than the current degree being pursued).

While all other respondents indicated enrollment in a recognized conservation program in accordance with the definition provided in the survey introduction, 1 respondent (representing 2.3% of the demographic) indicated pursuit of a Ph.D. in Conservation Science.

Employment During Graduate School  
69.77% (30/43) of graduate student respondents indicated that they had worked in a conservation-related role in the United States in the 2018 calendar year during their academic tenure, either during the academic year or over the summer. 11.63% (5/43) indicated that they had not worked in a conservation-related role during the 2018 calendar year, while 18.60% (8/43) indicated they had worked in a conservation-related as a pre-program candidate prior to enrollment in a graduate program. Respondents who indicated the latter were invited to answer further questions related to their employment, which is reflected in the analysis and discussion of pre-program responses.

