

# Three Minnesota Nonprofits Advocate for Wage Transparency

## Job Postings on Minnesota Job Boards Must Now Include Compensation Information

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Pollen, and Springboard for the Arts are pleased to announce that as of July 21, all job postings across their job boards must include compensation information, with each organization reserving the right to not publish those that do not. As organizations hosting go-to job boards in the nonprofit, civic, and creative sectors in Minnesota and the region, this is an important move towards structural change for equity in hiring, and closing pay gaps by race and gender.

“Nonprofits achieve their charitable missions for a healthy, cooperative, and just society in large part because of strong and values-driven employees who represent the single-largest investment a nonprofit makes each year,” said Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Associate Director Nonoko Sato. “Minnesota’s nonprofit workforce has made positive strides towards reducing the pay gap with other types of employers, including business and government. By having access to accurate, representative compensation information up front, jobseekers are in a better position to find the right fit and mission for their careers. We recognize that salary transparency on its own cannot resolve inequitable hiring practices, but it is a critical step, among many, that works in tandem with other elements of a hiring process to close gaps by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity/orientations, and more.”

“Salary transparency is a small but important step towards making the hiring process more equitable and less frustrating for everyone,” said Springboard for the Arts Executive Director Laura Zabel. “We hope that this change to our job boards will help support organizations to reexamine all the things we have been taught are ‘best practices’, ask ourselves ‘best practices for who?’ and reimagine our internal systems to align with the mission and values of our work.”

“100% of job seekers want to know salary information before applying for a job.” said Pollen Executive Director Jamie Millard. “When employers are upfront about what a job pays, it signals to the job seeker that their expertise, talent, and contributions will be valued fairly. “Imagine the relief a job seeker feels when they excitedly read through a posting for their dream job and see that compensation upfront. They can make a decision, right then and there, to invest the time in applying and trust that the compensation aligns with their goals and needs. It’s a win/win for everyone.”

## Why Salary Transparency Is Important

As we make this move towards transparency, it is informed by the research and the experiences of our sector. Wage transparency is critical for our collective future because:

- **Being transparent** about compensation is one way organizations can address discriminatory and inequitable workplace practices, thereby putting an end to perpetuating harm against the communities and people they serve.

- **Wage transparency** [reduces the gender pay gap by 7%](#). When job listings include a clear range, it eliminates the need to negotiate — [a practice that rewards white men](#) but punishes people of color and womxn.
- **Including compensation** information [helps organizations recruit and retain talent](#). When candidates see that organizations are committed to wage transparency, it demonstrates an organization's values in action.
- **Applying for jobs is time-consuming**. Candidates meet for informational interviews, tailor their cover letters and resumes, tap their networks for connections, follow up with the hiring manager and, if they're lucky, participate in multiple interviews. To invest all that time into an opportunity and organization only to learn at the end of the process that the compensation is well below what they can accept is demoralizing and a waste of time on all sides. Organizations need to respect candidates' time and be forthcoming with compensation information from the start. Hiring committees benefit from transparency as it is frustrating and demoralizing to invest time in a candidate who can't afford to take the job.
- **When employees feel valued** and are compensated fairly with wage transparency, [they are more motivated and productive](#).

## Advocating for Salary Transparency

We know that this transition may be difficult for organizations, and challenge long-standing assumptions around hiring and compensation strategies. This may result in hard conversations with your staff, donors, and around your budgeting process, but these steps are critical for moving towards equity. Below are some ongoing resources to guide your conversation and planning.

[Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Salary Survey](#)

[W.A.G.E. guide & fee calculator for visual art work](#)

[The New York Times on closing the pay gap and salary transparency](#)

[Nonprofit AF on the importance of salary transparency](#)

[Team Dynamics BEHAVE podcast on hiring](#)

We welcome your questions or comments about this policy.

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## About MCN

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) was founded in 1987 to meet the increasing information needs of nonprofits and to convene nonprofits to address issues facing the sector. It is the largest state association of nonprofits in the United States. Through MCN, nonprofits join together across interest areas to work on issues of common concern to all. MCN was the largest employer association to support the 2014 statewide increase in minimum wage, as well as 2017 Minneapolis and 2018 St. Paul ordinances for \$15 minimum wage.

MCN has the largest state-wide job board for nonprofits, hosting an average of 1,320 of current job postings per month. The organization has also published a biennial nonprofit salary and benefit survey report for the past 22 years, and collects data on Minnesota nonprofit economy every year.

## Notable data about MN nonprofits:

- **Minnesota nonprofits employed** 391,850 Minnesotans in 2019, 14 percent of the state's workforce.
- **The average nonprofit annual wage** (excluding hospitals and higher education) was \$55,181, compared to average business wages of \$60,341 and government wages of \$54,681
- **Minnesota nonprofit employees** are 75 percent female, compared to 60 percent female for government and 45 percent female for business.

For further nonprofit workforce information see: [https://bit.ly/MCN\\_NPER18](https://bit.ly/MCN_NPER18)

## About Pollen

Pollen is a media arts organization that fosters empathy, encourages connection across difference, and inspires meaningful action by sharing stories of individuals who want to change our collective story for the better. Through its narrative experiences, Pollen grows a network of Pollenites who have an unwavering belief in equity, empathy, and our shared humanity. Its social enterprise, Pollen Studio, brings Pollen's narrative expertise to mission-driven organizations looking to tell their stories in new and engaging ways.

Learn more about us at: [pollenmidwest.org](http://pollenmidwest.org)

## About Springboard for the Arts

Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. From our offices in Fergus Falls and Saint Paul, MN, Springboard provides programs that help artists make a living and a life, and programs that help communities connect to the creative power of artists. Our work is about creating communities and artists that have a reciprocal relationship, where artists are key contributors to community issues and are visible and valued for the impact they create. We do this work by creating simple, practical solutions and systems to support artists. Springboard's work has been featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Stanford Social Innovation Review and The Guardian and directly impacts over 25,000 artists each year in our home state of Minnesota. Through national tools and training Springboard's programs have been replicated in over 80 communities across the U.S. and internationally.

Learn more about our work at: [springboardforthearts.org](http://springboardforthearts.org)