



Artistic and Executive Leadership Report

MARCH 2020

Report Summary

For years, questions have been raised about pay equity in ballet. Until 2019, when Dance Data Project® (DDP) published our first Artistic and Executive Leadership Report, no comprehensive analysis had been made publicly available. With this 2020 Artistic and Executive Leadership Report, DDP expands our coverage to 74 companies and for the first time examines longitudinal trends in the industry.

This report surveys the annual salaries and gender distribution of artistic and executive leaders of the largest U.S. ballet companies. The report shows that there is a significant gender pay gap that persists among artistic directors of American ballet companies. This report demonstrates that women currently earn an average of 63 cents for every dollar men earn as artistic director. In 2019, Dance Data Project® (DDP) reported that women earned 62 cents and 68 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director in 2016 and 2017, respectively. In 2018, that figure dropped to 61 cents.

DDP also reviewed executive director compensation for the largest 50 ballet companies and found overall, women make 90 cents for every dollar men earn as executive director. However, this data is skewed by the significantly higher salaries earned among the Top 10 companies. In the 40 remaining companies, women's average pay is only 75 percent of what their male colleagues are paid.

In our analysis of gender distributions, DDP found that 75 percent of artistic directors and 48 percent of executive directors of the Top 50 companies are male. Ninety percent of artistic directors and 30 percent of executive directors of the Top 10 largest companies are male.

Introduction

The following study contains three sections, organized as follows: **Section 1:** Gender Distribution Report, **Section 2:** Artistic Director Salary Report. **Section 3:** Executive Director Salary Report.

The Gender Distribution Report examines the counts and percentages of men and women employed in the artistic and executive director (or equivalent) positions. The Artistic Director Salary Report highlights the gap between salaries of male and female artistic directors of the Top 50 U.S. ballet companies with the largest expense budgets. The Executive Director Salary Report assesses the disparity in salaries of male and female executive directors within the Top 50.

DDP obtained the 2020 Top 50 budgets from tax returns and our Self-Report Survey. See the entire list, as well as companies considered that fell below the expense range of the Top 50 in 2020, in **Appendix A**.

Each section divides findings into several categories based on company budget: Top 50, Top 10, 40 Remaining Companies, Upper 25, and Lower 25. (The titles for each budget category are based on company expenses alone. The label “Top” simply indicates relative size.)

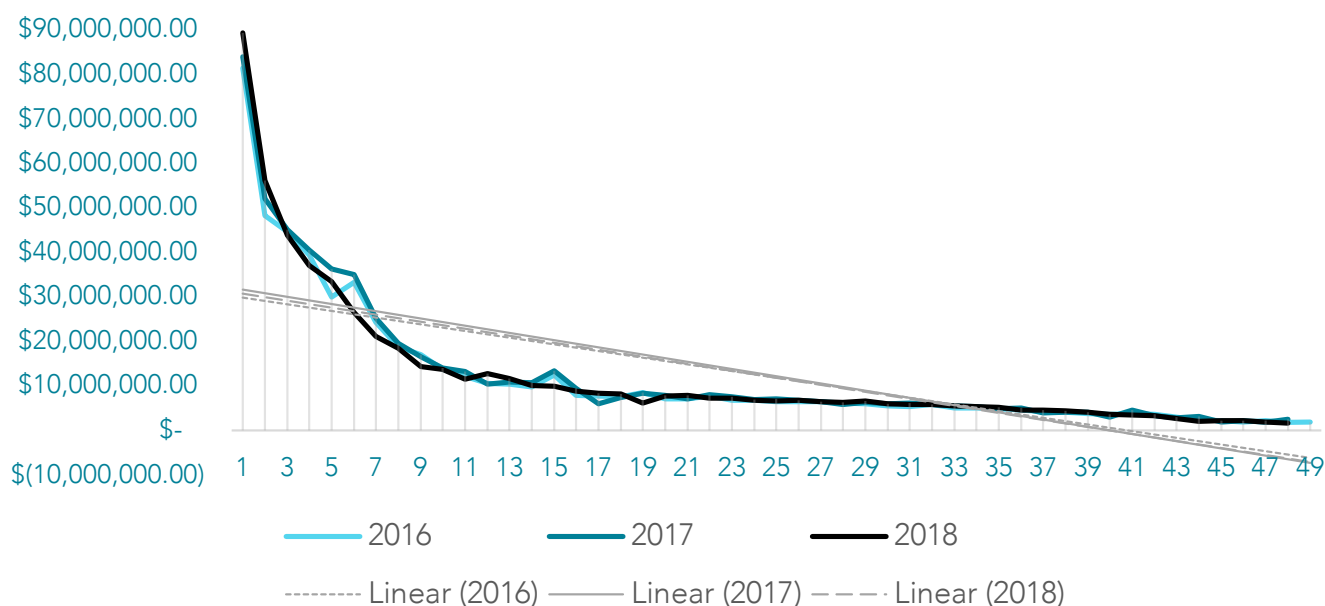
Limitations to DDP’s findings and sources are listed at the end of the report. All percentages in the report are rounded up to the nearest whole number.

Scope of the Industry

- The Top 50 companies, the largest in the United States, operate with \$636,130,522.00 in combined expenses.
- The largest companies in this sample, or “Top 10,” command \$385,644,854.00 of that total (61%).¹
- By contrast, the 19 companies (of 24 examined) with adequate financial information publicly available have a total combined budget figure of \$17,010,877.00. For comparison purposes relative to the Lower 25, this total represents 16% of the latter’s total expenses.²

The following figure displays the aggregate distribution of expenditures for the Top 50 companies from 2016 to 2018. DDP updated our database to include the budgets that were not available/obtained for the 2019 report and included them in the figure. *Please note the skew above the 7th largest company on the x-axis.*

Year-by-Year Distribution of Expenses
Top 50



¹ See Limitations section

² See Appendix B; these companies, for which expense budgets were not always available, make up 16% of the “Lower 25” expenses.

Section 1: Gender Distribution Report

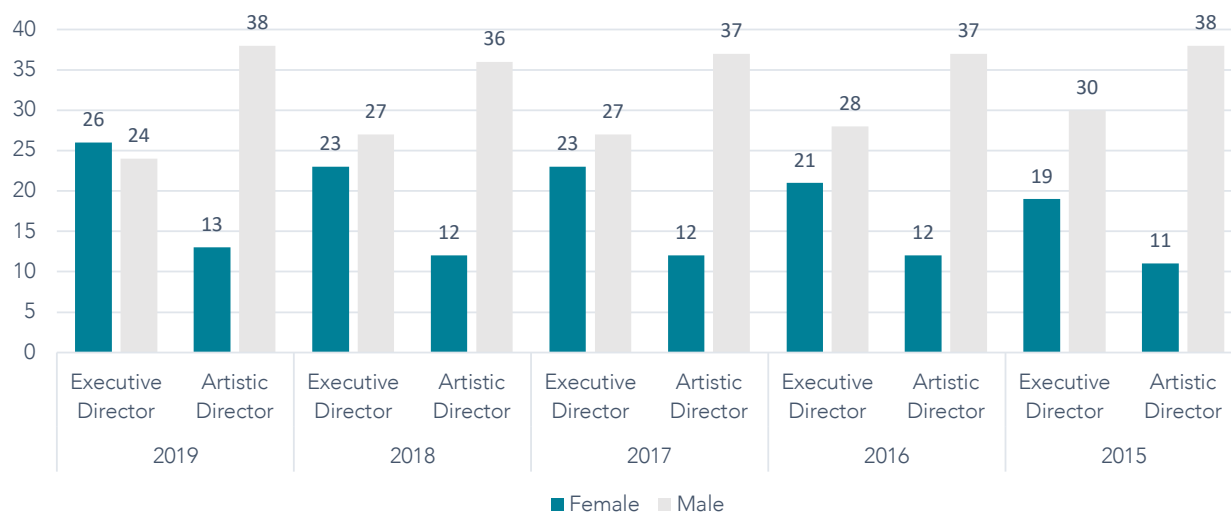
The first part of this section reviews the year-by-year distribution of male and female artistic and executive directors (or equivalent) in the Top 50. The second part of this section examines the most recent distribution of male and female artistic and executive directors both in the Top 50 and in smaller budget categories.

(continued on page 5)

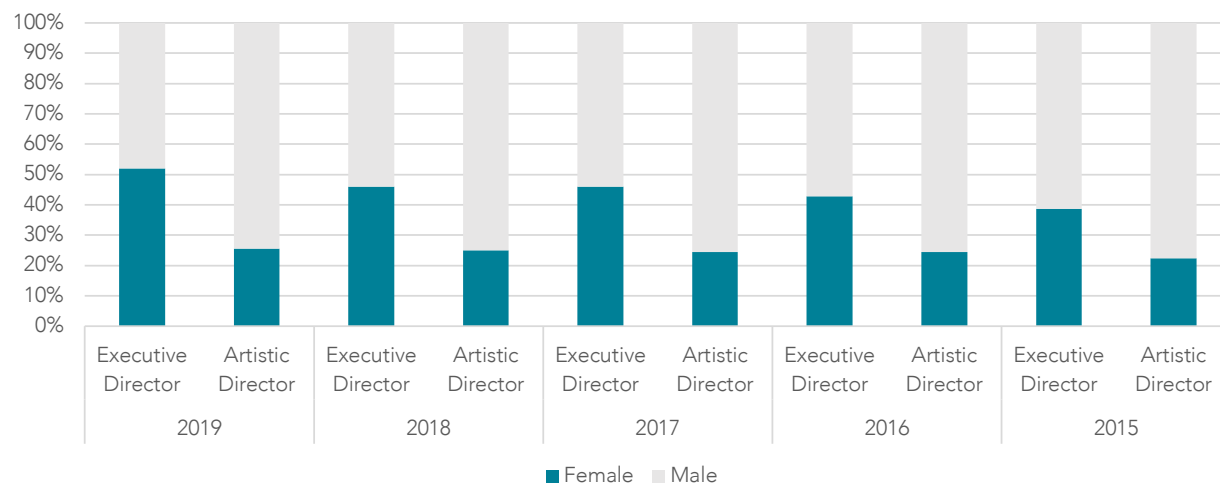
Year-by-Year Comparison

The following figures display the distribution of male and female artistic and executive directors in the Top 50 from 2015 to 2019, first by counts of men v. women, then by percentages.

Gender Distribution of Artistic and Executive Directors
Year-by-Year Comparison (counts)

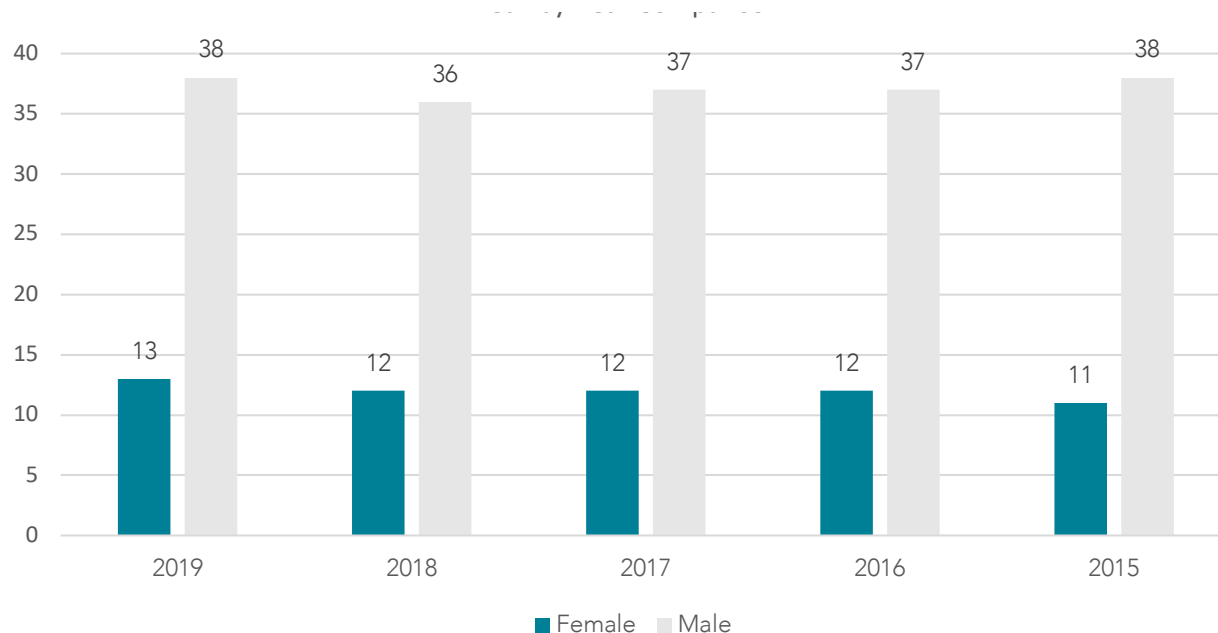


Gender Distribution of Artistic and Executive Directors
Year-by-Year Comparison (%)

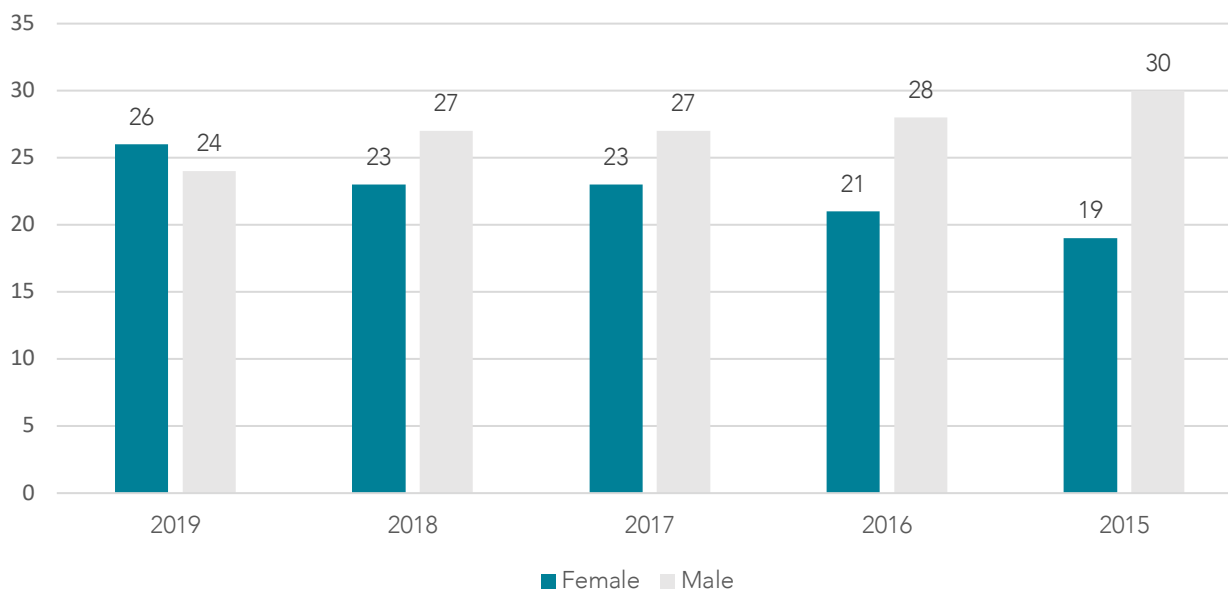


The following figures display the year-by-year gender distribution of male and female leaders in the Top 50, first by artistic directors, followed by executive directors.

Gender Distribution of Artistic Directors Year-by-Year Comparison



Gender Distribution of Executive Directors Year-by-Year Comparison



Most Recent by Budget Category in the Top 50

Top 50

75 percent of artistic directors of the Top 50 ballet companies in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

25 percent of artistic directors of the Top 50 ballet companies in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

48 percent of executive directors of the Top 50 ballet companies in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

52 percent of executive directors of the Top 50 ballet companies in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

Top 10

90 percent of artistic directors of the Top 10 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

10 percent of artistic directors of the Top 10 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

30 percent of executive directors of the Top 10 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

70 percent of executive directors of the Top 10 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

40 Remaining Companies

71 percent of artistic directors of the 40 Remaining Companies in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

29 percent of artistic directors of the 40 Remaining Companies in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

53 percent of executive directors of the 40 Remaining Companies in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

48 percent of executive directors of the 40 Remaining Companies in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

Upper 25

80 percent of artistic directors of the Upper 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

20 percent of artistic directors of the Upper 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

60 percent of executive directors of the Upper 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

40 percent of executive directors of the Upper 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

Lower 25

65 percent of artistic directors of the Lower 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

35 percent of artistic directors of the Lower 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

44 percent of executive directors of the Lower 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **male**.

56 percent of executive directors of the Lower 25 in 2019 | 2020 are **female**.

Section 2: Artistic Director Salary Report

Section 2 divides findings into multiple budget categories: Top 50, Top 10, 40 Remaining Companies, Upper 25, and Lower 25.

Top 50 - Year-by-Year Comparison Artistic Directors

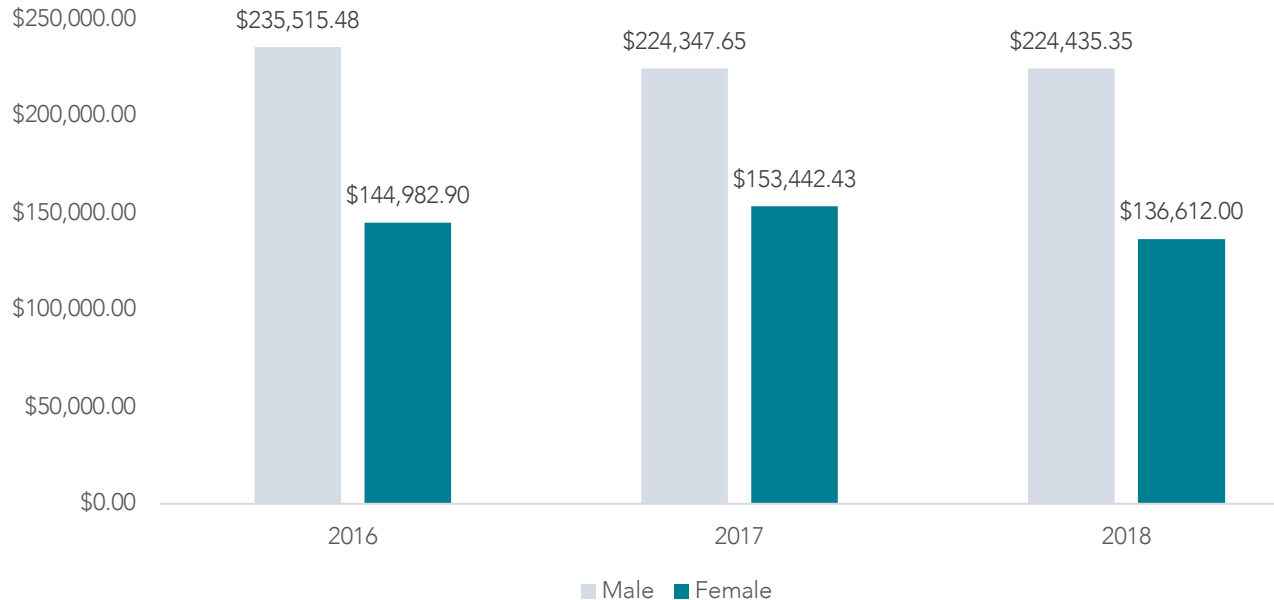
In the 2019 report, DDP determined the following:

1. In 2016, women earned 62 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director.
2. In 2017, women earned 68 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director.

New finding:

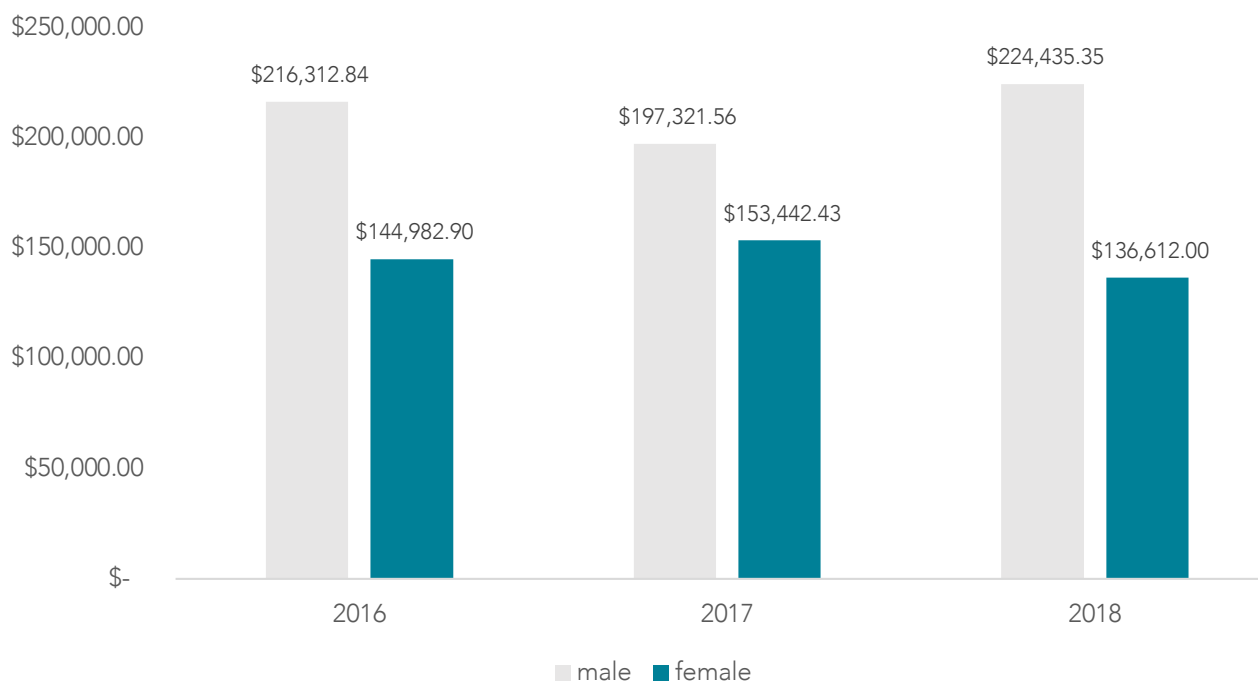
3. In 2018, women earned 61 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director.

Average Compensation of Artistic Directors from 2016 to 2018



Nota Bene: Because of the departure of the highest-paid male artistic director (NYCB) in 2018, DDP adjusted the previous years' statistics for comparison to show the average compensation without the outlier effect his salary has on the sample (\$850,000 in 2016, \$900,000 in 2017).

Average Compensation of Artistic Directors from 2016 to 2018 (adjusted)



Statements adjusted for the male artistic director salary's exclusion from 2016 and 2017 averages:

In 2016, women earned 67 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director (excluding the highest-paid man).

In 2017, women earned 78 cents for every dollar men earned as artistic director (excluding the highest-paid man).

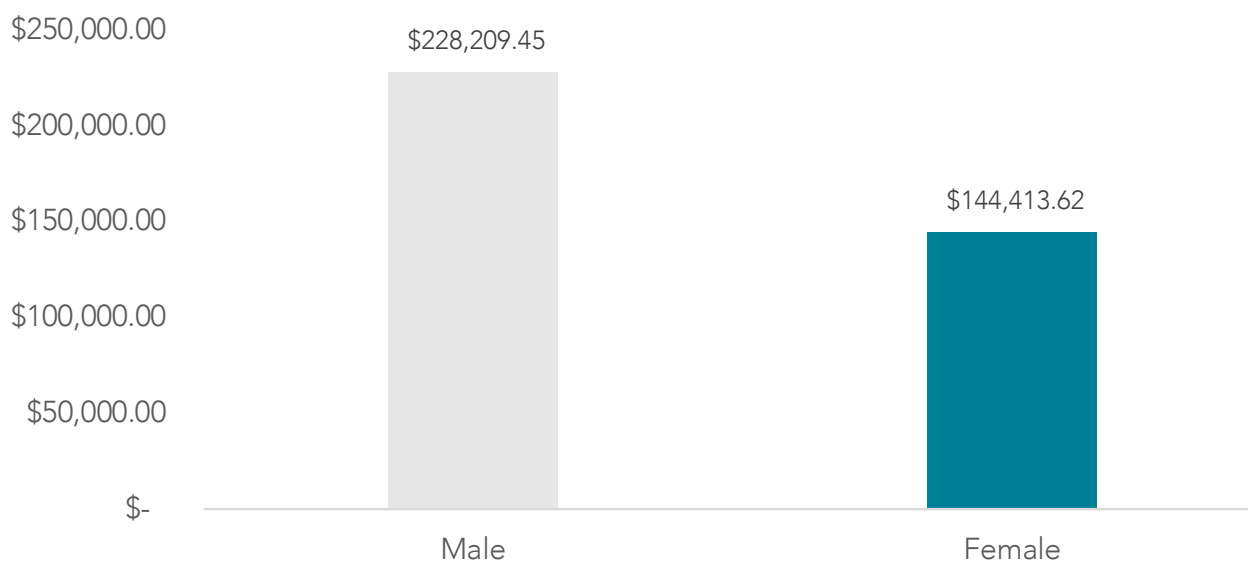
Top 50 – Latest Findings

Artistic Directors

The following findings are based on the salary of the artistic director listed on a company's **most recent**³ tax returns per [ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer](#).

4. Women earn 63 cents for every dollar men earn as artistic director.
5. On average, female artistic directors earn \$144,413.62 per year, while male artistic directors earn \$228,209.45 per year.

Average Compensation of Artistic Directors (Most Recently Reported)



³ **Nota Bene:** This statement is based on the most recent data available. Some companies reported 2018 salaries, some reported 2019. This section contains aggregate numbers as of March 20th, 2020 and is not the same as the prior summary of the 2018 average salaries alone (see Top 50 Year-by-Year Comparison).

Top 10 - Latest Findings

Artistic Directors

6. There is one woman among the artistic directors of the Top 10 ballet companies, she earns \$325,000.00 per year, making her the highest-paid female artistic director. The average male artistic director of the Top 10 earns \$455,281.38 per year. Her salary is therefore only 71% of the average salary of male artistic directors at the largest companies.⁴ (The highest-paid male artistic director earns \$743,527.00 per year.)

Top 10: Average Compensation of Artistic Directors (Most Recently Reported)



⁴ Please note: As previously stated, average salaries reported from 2018 on do not include the salary of the previously highest-paid male artistic director, so the outlier effect from his salary is not present in the most-recent findings.

40 Remaining Companies – Latest Findings Artistic Directors

7. Excluding the Top 10 U.S. ballet companies, female artistic directors receive an average salary of \$129,364.75 per year, while male artistic directors in this category receive an average salary of \$155,546.44 per year.
8. Women's average pay is 83% of their male colleagues' average pay.

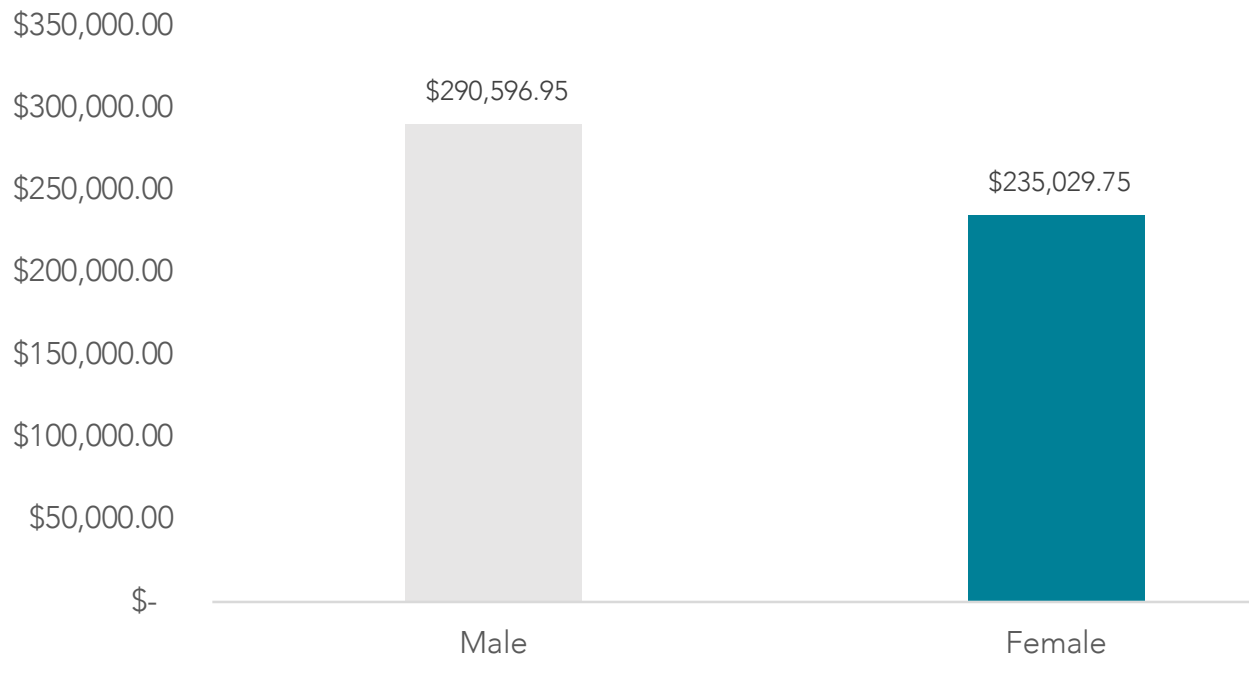
40 Remaining Companies: Average Compensation of Artistic Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Upper 25 – Latest Findings Artistic Directors

9. On average, female artistic directors in the Upper 25 earn \$235,029.75 per year, while male artistic directors in this category earn an average of \$290,596.95 per year.
10. Women's average pay is 81% of their male colleagues' average pay.

Upper 25: Average Compensation of Artistic Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Lower 25 – Latest Findings Artistic Directors

11. On average, female artistic directors of the 25 smallest companies in the Top 50 earn \$104,139.78 per year, while male artistic directors in this category earn an average of \$132,228.69 per year.
12. Women's average pay is 79% of their male colleagues' average pay.

Lower 25: Average Compensation of Artistic Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Section 3: Executive Director Salary Distribution

Section 3 divides findings into multiple budget categories: Top 50, Top 10, Top 25, Lower 25, and Lower 40.

Top 50 - Year-by-Year Comparison Executive Directors

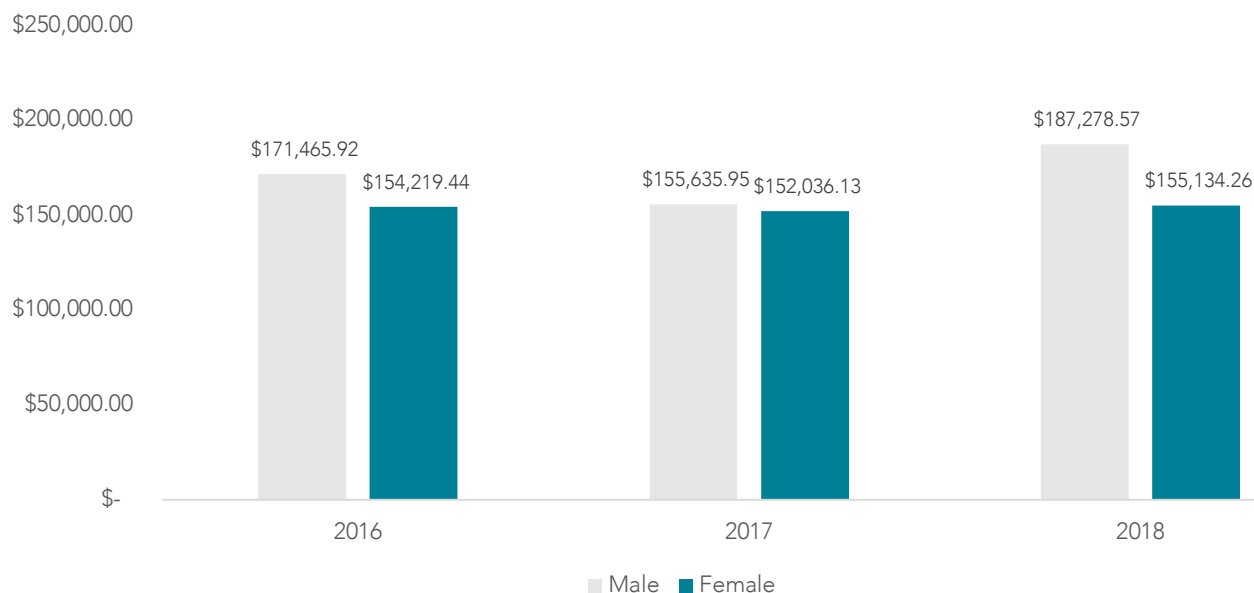
In the 2019 report, DDP found the following:

1. In 2016, women earned 90 cents for every dollar men earned as executive director.
2. In 2017, women earned 98 cents for every dollar men earned as executive director.

New finding:

3. In 2018, women earned 83 cents for every dollar men earned as executive director.

Average Compensation of Executive Directors from 2016 to 2018

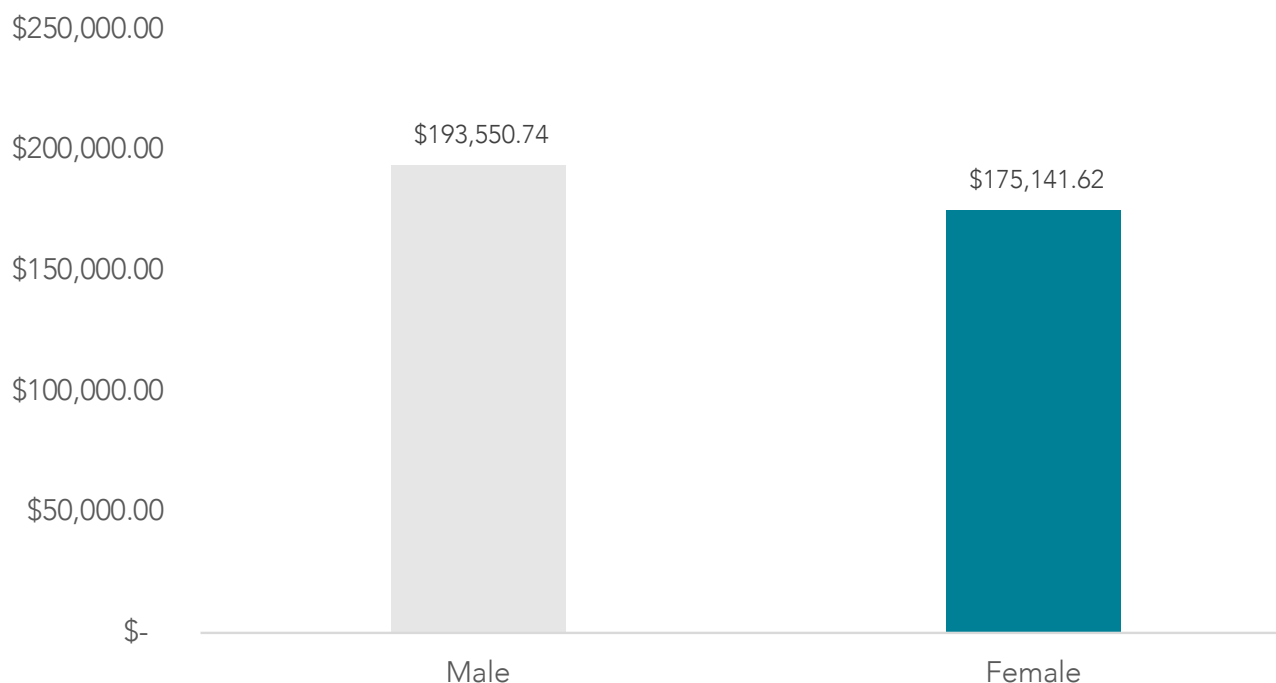


Top 50 – Latest Findings Executive Directors

The following findings are based on the salary of the executive director (or equivalent) listed on a company's **most recent**⁵ tax returns per [ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer](#).

4. On average, female executive directors make \$175,141.62 per year, while male executive directors make an average of \$193,550.74 per year.
5. Women's average pay is 90% of their male colleagues' average pay.⁶

Average Compensation of Executive Directors (Most Recently Reported)



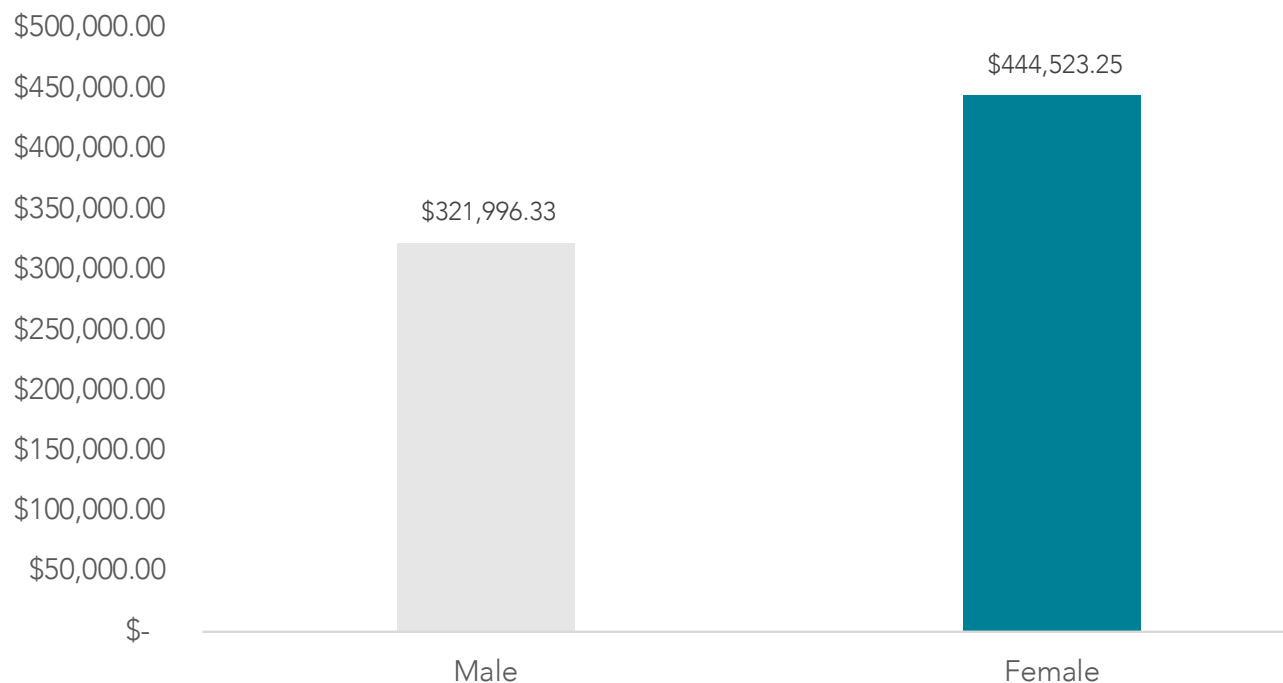
⁵ **Nota Bene:** This statement is based on the most recent data available. Some companies reported 2018 salaries, some reported 2019. This section contains aggregate numbers as of March 20th, 2020 and is not the same as the prior summary of the 2018 average salaries alone (see Top 50 Year-by-Year Comparison).

⁶ Please consult the limitations section to see DDP's cautionary admonition regarding the skew of Top 10 salaries, which distorts the average of the entire sample in aggregate form.

Top 10 – Latest Findings Executive Directors

6. On average, female executive directors in the Top 10 make \$444,523.25 per year, while male executive directors in this category make an average of \$321,996.33 per year.
7. Men's average pay is 72% of their female colleagues' average pay.

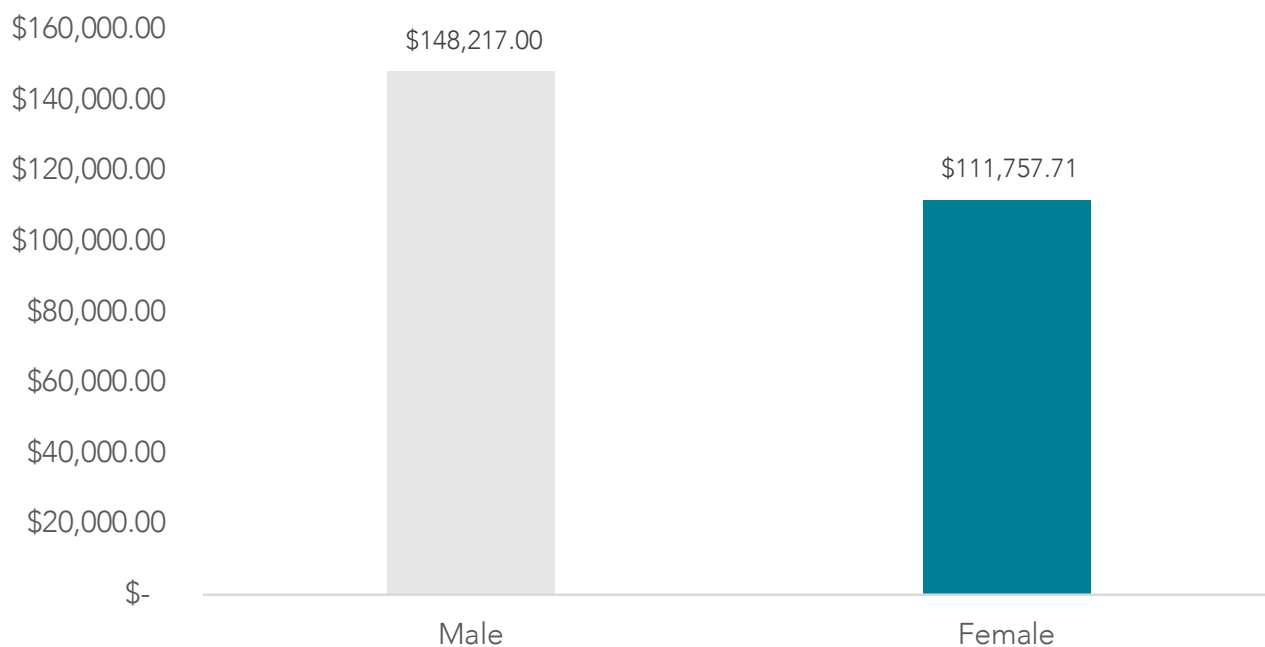
Top 10: Average Compensation of Executive Directors (Most Recently Reported)



40 Remaining Companies – Latest Findings Executive Directors

8. Excluding the Top 10 U.S. ballet companies, female executive directors receive an average salary of \$111,757.71 per year, while male executive directors in this category receive an average salary of \$148,217.00 per year.
9. Women's average pay is 75% of their male colleagues' average pay.

40 Remaining Companies: Average Compensation of Executive Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Upper 25 – Latest Findings Executive Directors

10. On average, female executive directors in the Top 25 make \$274,728.44 per year, while male executive directors in this category make an average of \$230,311.14 per year.
11. Men's average pay is 84% of their female colleagues' average pay.

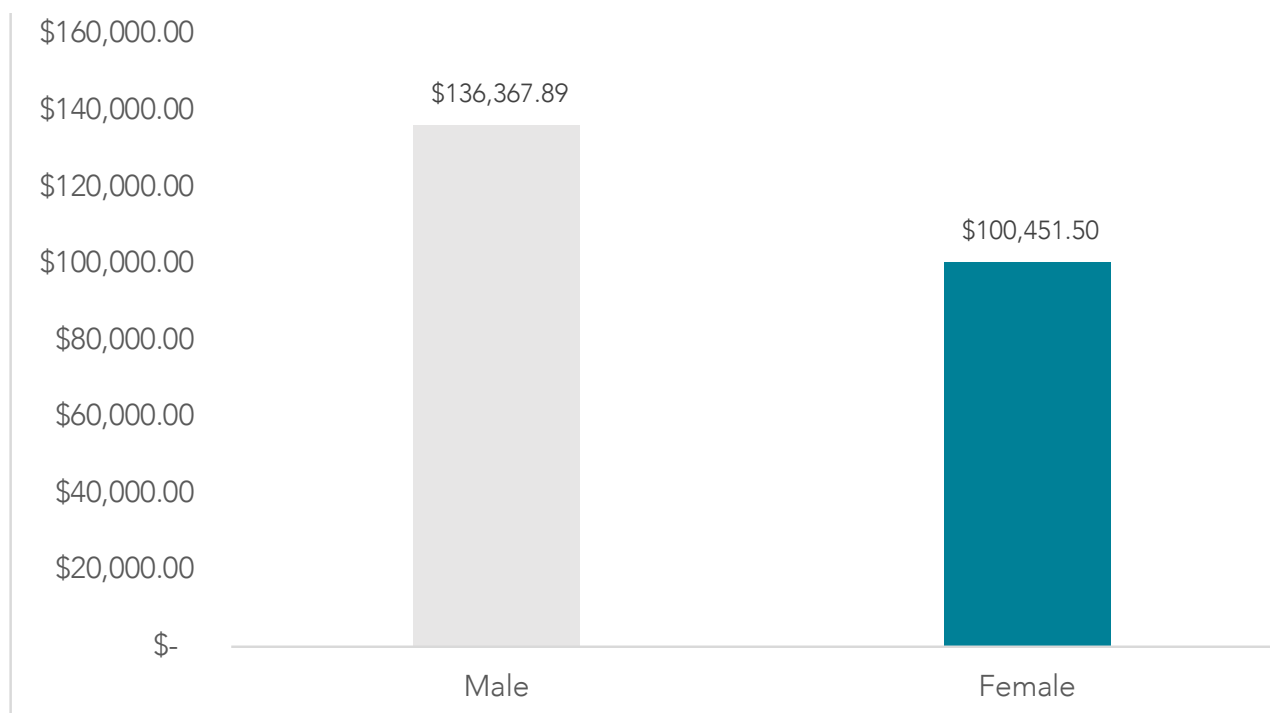
Upper 25: Average Compensation of Executive Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Lower 25– Latest Findings Executive Directors

12. On average, female executive directors of the 25 smallest companies in the Top 50 make \$100,451.50 per year, while male executive directors in this category make an average of \$136,367.89 per year.
13. Women's average pay is 74% of their male colleagues' average pay.

Lower 25: Average Compensation of Executive Directors (Most Recently Reported)



Operational Definition of Ballet

For the purposes of study, DDP defines “ballet company” as a nonprofit dance company that has roots in classical dance. The art form, however, is clearly evolving, incorporating tap dance (see Michelle Dorrance at American Ballet Theatre) as well as hip hop (see Lil Buck at Vail Dance Festival), a natural and welcome evolution or cross pollination. DDP has considered many factors in the formation of our operational definition, including the definition of “ballet” provided by our friends at the NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts, who define it simply as “to dance” or “a form of poetic gesture.”

Sources

All compensation data was obtained through one of the following sources:

- A) IRS Form 990 (accessed via the ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer)
- B) Dance Data Project® Self-Report Survey (15 companies participated, 13 of which were among the Top 50, and with two of those opting out of disclosing salary information)

For Section 3, all data was obtained via artistic and administrative staff rosters listed on company websites (and verified through press releases for any leadership changes).

Limitations

The aggregate salaries of artistic and executive directors in the Top 10 companies radically skew the average for the remaining 40 companies in any aggregate finding. For this reason, DDP divided findings in this report into the budget categories Top 50, Top 10, 40 Remaining Companies, Upper 25, and Lower 25. The only findings not affected by this are the Top 10, 40 Remaining Companies, and the Lower 25.

Limitations in Section 1

Artistic director and executive director counts may not total to 50, due to year-by-year employment changes, as well as the employment of multiple artistic directors during a particular year (see example below). DDP used subtotals within each position to calculate the percentages reported in Section 1.

- Example: Los Angeles Ballet, lists two artistic directors. Both individuals were counted for Section 2, making the total artistic director count = 51.

Limitations in Sections 2 and 3

DDP recorded salaries based on reportable compensation from the organization, as filed with the IRS on Forms W-2 and 1099-MISC and reported by the company in its Form 990. Any other compensation from the organization and/or related organizations was not included in DDP's recorded salary.

The amount of compensation provided by participating companies in DDP's Self-Report Survey reported was entirely at organization's own discretion and may include other compensation excluded from amounts reported on Forms W-2 and 1099-MISC.

Two companies opted out of disclosing salary information on DDP's Self-Report Survey. DDP recorded the salaries listed by each company in the company's most recent Form 990. These companies are:

1. San Francisco Ballet (2018 Form 990)
2. Pacific Northwest Ballet (2018 Form 990)

Nine companies did not report complete salary information in their 2018 tax returns. DDP excluded these companies from calculations pertaining to the role for which information was not available.

1. **New York City Ballet** (artistic director, this role was vacant in 2018) – see **Nota Bene** on page 9
2. The Washington Ballet (executive director)
3. Oregon Ballet Theatre (executive director)
4. Nevada Ballet Theatre (artistic director)
5. American Repertory Ballet (artistic director)
6. Oklahoma City Ballet (executive director)
7. Sacramento Ballet (artistic director, executive director)
8. LA Dance Project (executive director)
9. California Ballet (artistic director, executive director)

Leaders at two companies served in both the roles of artistic director and executive director. DDP included the salaries in calculations for both Section 2 and Section 3. These directors and their companies are:

1. Christine Cox, BalletX
2. Robert Curran, Louisville Ballet

There were two leaders listed for executive director on the 2018 Form 990 of Miami City Ballet*. DDP aggregated the two individuals' salaries to count their aggregate salary as one male salary for Section 3 of the report.

*One of these individuals, Michael Scolamiero, was also reported for this position by Ballet West, where he transitioned into the position in 2017-2018. His salary at Ballet West was significantly smaller, and DDP attempted to, but could not determine, for how many months he served in this position at Ballet West for the fiscal year ending in 2018. DDP therefore recorded \$33,481.00 as his total salary at Ballet West, as reported in the company's 2018 Form 990. Please note that this salary may have decreased the aggregate male salary for 40 Remaining Companies and Upper 25 findings in Section 3 of the report.

Within the ballet industry, the role of executive director is often interchangeable with that of the managing director and/or CEO. DDP recorded the salary of whichever individual was listed on each company's Form 990 (or in each company's Self-Report Survey) with the higher salary.

Limitations in Section 3

As noted above, the role of executive director is often interchangeable with that of the managing director and/or CEO of a company. DDP primarily recorded the name and gender of the individual employed as executive director for Section 3, but in cases in which there was no executive director, DDP recorded the name and gender of the interim executive director, the CEO, the director of development/administration, and/or the managing director (in cases where DDP could access the company's Form 990, this individual would be listed on the Form as the highest compensated employee other than the artistic director).

Limitations in Year-by-Year Comparisons

Because the information available for a company may change from year to year, any comparison of a company, a budget category, or a role is subject to variances in the information DDP was able to access in a specific year. Depending on the year, there may be a larger proportion of male or female director salaries available for a cohort of companies, causing the average to appear larger or smaller than prior years.

While ballet companies, the IRS, and DDP each take every measure to avoid human error, DDP acknowledges the possibility of such error appearing in data obtained from organizations both via the Self-Report Survey and tax returns.

For access to raw data, conditions, and specific sources of information, we invite you to contact DDP's Director of Research, Isabelle Vail (ivail@dancedataproject.com).

(see Appendices A and B on pages 24-25)

Appendix A

The following companies make up the 2020 **Top 50** (ranked from largest to smallest expenses):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. New York City Ballet | 26. The Sarasota Ballet |
| 2. San Francisco Ballet | 27. Hubbard Street Dance Chicago |
| 3. American Ballet Theatre | 28. Ballet Hispánico |
| 4. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater | 29. BalletMet |
| 5. Boston Ballet | 30. Richmond Ballet |
| 6. Houston Ballet | 31. Carolina Ballet |
| 7. Pacific Northwest Ballet | 32. Dance Theatre of Harlem |
| 8. Joffrey Ballet | 33. Orlando Ballet |
| 9. Miami City Ballet | 34. Alonzo King LINES Ballet |
| 10. Pennsylvania Ballet | 35. Ballet Memphis |
| 11. Ballet West | 36. Nevada Ballet Theatre |
| 12. Atlanta Ballet | 37. Aspen Santa Fe Ballet |
| 13. The Washington Ballet | 38. Louisville Ballet |
| 14. Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre | 39. American Repertory Ballet |
| 15. Cincinnati Ballet | 40. Smuin Ballet |
| 16. Kansas City Ballet | 41. Oklahoma City Ballet |
| 17. Texas Ballet Theater | 42. Los Angeles Ballet |
| 18. Ballet Austin | 43. Sacramento Ballet |
| 19. Colorado Ballet | 44. Grand Rapids Ballet |
| 20. Nashville Ballet | 45. BalletX |
| 21. Ballet Arizona | 46. LA Dance Project |
| 22. Charlotte Ballet | 47. California Ballet |
| 23. Oregon Ballet Theatre | 48. Eugene Ballet |
| 24. Tulsa Ballet | 49. Alabama Ballet |
| 25. Milwaukee Ballet | 50. Ballet Idaho |

Download the complete **Top 50** ranking, with expenses and fiscal years [detailed here](#).

Appendix B

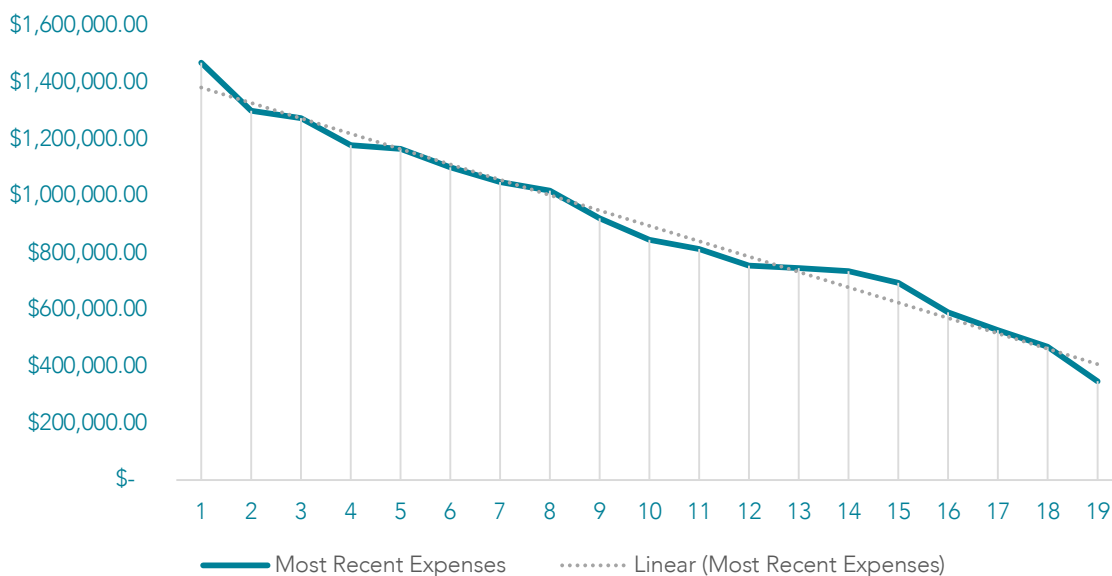
DDP broadened our research in 2020 to consider more companies in our study of the industry. The following companies were considered but their expenses fell below the range of the Top 50 (listed alphabetically):

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Alaska Dance Theatre | 13. Indianapolis Ballet |
| 2. Arch Ballet | 14. Kentucky Ballet Theatre |
| 3. Ballet Arkansas | 15. Maine State Ballet |
| 4. Ballet Pensacola | 16. Minnesota Ballet |
| 5. Ballet San Antonio | 17. New York Theatre Ballet |
| 6. Ballet Theatre of Maryland | 18. Philadanco! |
| 7. Boulder Ballet | 19. Rochester City Ballet |
| 8. City Ballet of San Diego | 20. South Dakota Ballet |
| 9. Complexions Contemporary Ballet | 21. St. Louis Ballet |
| 10. Connecticut Ballet | 22. Tallahassee Ballet |
| 11. Dayton Ballet | 23. Tampa City Ballet |
| 12. Diablo Ballet | 24. Verb Ballets |

Due to inconsistent/incomplete information provided by some of these companies, DDP is unable to make statistically viable conclusions about them as a sample. DDP was able to attribute expenses to 19 of the 24 companies with Form 990s on the ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer. The aggregate expenses for these 19 companies total to \$17,010,877.00, while the average expenses are \$895,309.32.

The following figure displays the distribution of their most recent expenses:

Distribution of Expenses
Additional 19 Companies (of 24 studied)



DDP is happy to provide any information pertaining to this group upon request. For more information about qualifications and ranking, [please visit the DDP website](#).