

Environmental Design Research

Executive Director / CEO

EIN 237451983

DC · NTEE C030

FY ending 2024-12-31

June 9, 2026

This analysis benchmarks the total compensation of **Deni Ruggeri, Executive Director / CEO** (\$65,735) against **every comparable organization** that fit the selection criteria — **779** in total — drawn systematically from IRS Form 990 filings, not a hand-picked subset.

Compensation sits at approximately the **34th** percentile of comparable organizations within the typical range

Benchmarked executive: Deni Ruggeri — reported title “Executive Dir.”, a **direct title match** to the Executive Director / CEO role.

How comparable organizations were selected

SECTOR	Organizations sharing the subject's NTEE classification (C030).
BUDGET	Total revenue between \$274,542 and \$614,647 — 0.67x to 1.50x the subject's \$409,765 (the band tightens as size grows).
GEOGRAPHY	Same NTEE major group (C), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5x revenue.

779 organizations qualified on sector, size, and geography → **779** within the band form the benchmarked peer set.

Distribution of comparable compensation



\$25,662	\$53,239	\$81,062	\$105,582	\$130,975	\$65,735
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● Comparable organizations

Each figure is Form 990 Part VII columns D + F (reportable pay plus other compensation and benefits; column F may include amounts from related organizations), normalized to DC cost of living (BEA RPP, 2023) and to its filing year (CPI-U); the reported amount is on each linked 990.

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
Hilltown Land Trust Inc	MA	\$409,978	Executive Director	\$1,979	\$2,027	2024
Yellow Dog Community And Conservation	MT	\$409,274	Executive Dir	\$80,315	\$98,657	2024
Earth Guardians Inc	CO	\$410,445	Executive Director	\$47,297	\$53,208	2023
United Prairie Foundation Incorporated	ND	\$408,993	President	\$17,091	\$22,005	2023
Bay Area Clean Air Foundation	CA	\$408,967	President	\$69,702	\$68,588	2024
30 Mile River Watershed Association	ME	\$408,868	Executive Director	\$100,722	\$114,933	2024
Yaak Valley Forest Council	MT	\$410,680	Executive Di	\$16,828	\$20,671	2024
Fox Haven Center Inc	MD	\$410,766	Director Of Operations And	\$67,332	\$71,734	2024
Higgins Lake Foundation	MI	\$410,917	Executive Di	\$7,989	\$9,397	2024
Chattanooga Audubon Society	TN	\$411,485	Executive Director	\$53,385	\$63,947	2024
Fungi Foundation Inc	NY	\$407,817	Chief Executive Director	\$58,336	\$60,071	2024
Kansas Wildscape Foundation	KS	\$407,611	Executive Di	\$82,271	\$104,276	2023
Keep Knoxville Beautiful Inc	TN	\$412,096	Executive Dir.	\$70,600	\$82,387	2025
Grace Hudowalski Charitable Trust	ME	\$407,041	Trustee	\$54,000	\$63,439	2023
Us Research Impact Alliance Corp	WV	\$406,795	Executive Director	\$173,262	\$220,095	2023

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
Santa Fe Watershed Association	NM	\$412,814	Executive Di	\$50,195	\$63,340	2023
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition	CA	\$413,193	Executive Dir.	\$163,249	\$160,639	2024
Plant A Million Corals Foundation Inc	FL	\$406,319	President & Ceo	\$82,214	\$88,013	2024
Mills River Partnership Inc	NC	\$406,242	Executive Di	\$84,253	\$96,648	2025
Multicultural Education For Resource	CA	\$413,304	Exec. Director	\$94,250	\$95,483	2023
Friends Of The Mad River	VT	\$406,162	Executive Director	\$68,571	\$78,651	2024
Torrey House Press	UT	\$405,952	Executive Director	\$69,650	\$83,633	2023
Friends Of Illinois Nature Preserves	IL	\$405,851	Executive Director	\$70,000	\$78,423	2024
North Dakota Private Grazing Lands	ND	\$414,512	Past Chairma	\$22,112	\$28,469	2023
Palos Verdes Estates Foundation	CA	\$414,730	Executive Director	\$50,000	\$49,201	2024

Comp (reported) is the figure on each organization's Form 990 (columns D + F); **Comp (adjusted)** normalizes it to DC cost of living and 2024 dollars. Click any organization to verify the figure on ProPublica.

● Methodology

Comparable organizations were drawn from electronically filed IRS Form 990 returns and matched on sector (NTEE code), budget (a size-adaptive revenue band that tightens as the organization grows), and geography (same-state first, broadening only when too few peers qualify); every organization within the band forms the peer set. To compare fairly across regions and years, peer compensation is normalized to DC cost of living (BEA Regional Price Parities, 2023) and to the subject's filing year (CPI-U). The figure benchmarked is Form 990 Part VII, Section A, columns D + F — reportable pay plus other compensation, benefits, and deferred amounts (column F may include amounts from related organizations) — with the chief executive matched by role. Related-organization amounts (column E) and institutional trustees are excluded. Full methodology: peerbasis.org/methodology.

● Sample, role match & sensitivity

PEER COUNT **779** organizations. Compensation range \$347–\$987,578; filing years 2021–2025.

SIZE BASIS Matched on total revenue (\$409,765); for reference, expenses \$341,630 and assets \$896,140.

ROLE MATCH	Deni Ruggeri, reported title " <i>Executive Dir.</i> ", benchmarked as Executive Director / CEO. The title maps directly to this role.
RELATED-ORG PAY	39 peers report related-organization compensation (column E), which the D + F benchmark does not fully capture; review where material.
OUTLIERS	20 peers fall outside 1.5× the interquartile range — consider whether any reflect one-time payments (severance, deferred-comp payouts).

Sensitivity — the subject's percentile under alternative compensation definitions:

BASIS	SUBJECT PERCENTILE
Total compensation (D + F), cost-of-living + inflation adjusted — the PeerBasis default	34 th
Total compensation (D + F), as reported (no adjustments)	41 st
Reportable pay only (column D), adjusted	36 th
All sources (D + E + F), adjusted	31 st

If the percentile moves materially across these definitions, the result is sensitive to methodology choices, and the board should weigh which basis best fits its facts.

● Rebuttable presumption of reasonableness • 26 CFR 53.4958-6

Compensation paid by a tax-exempt organization is presumed reasonable — shifting the burden to the IRS — when three requirements are met. This report supplies the comparability data for the second. The board should record the following in its minutes *concurrently* with its decision:

Draft board minutes – executive compensation

1. The compensation of the Executive Director / CEO (Deni Ruggeri) was approved in advance by [the Board / Compensation Committee], composed of members with no conflict of interest with respect to the arrangement.
2. Prior to its determination, the authorized body obtained and relied upon appropriate comparability data, namely the PeerBasis Compensation Comparability Determination dated June 9, 2026, comparing compensation against 779 similarly situated organizations (Same NTEE major group (C), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5× revenue).
3. The authorized body determined that total compensation of \$65,735 is reasonable (approximately the 34th percentile of comparable organizations) and documented the basis for this determination concurrently, on [date], by a vote of [__ for / __ against].

Sources: IRS Form 990 e-file data (apps.irs.gov); IRS Business Master File (NTEE classification). Every figure traces to an original public filing — click any organization above to verify it on ProPublica. PeerBasis is a service of Prismind Analytics; its [methodology is published](#), was commissioned for independent adversarial review, and discloses its own limitations. This report is comparability

data to support a board's good-faith determination under IRC 4958; it is not legal or tax advice. Generated by PeerBasis on June 9, 2026.