

Music In The Somerset Hills Inc

Executive Director / CEO

EIN 273418121

NJ · NTEE A68

FY ending 2024-07-31

June 10, 2026

This analysis benchmarks the total compensation of **Stephen Sands, Executive Director / CEO** (\$65,141) against **every comparable organization** that fit the selection criteria — **188** in total — drawn systematically from IRS Form 990 filings, not a hand-picked subset.

Compensation sits at approximately the **68th** percentile of comparable organizations within the typical range

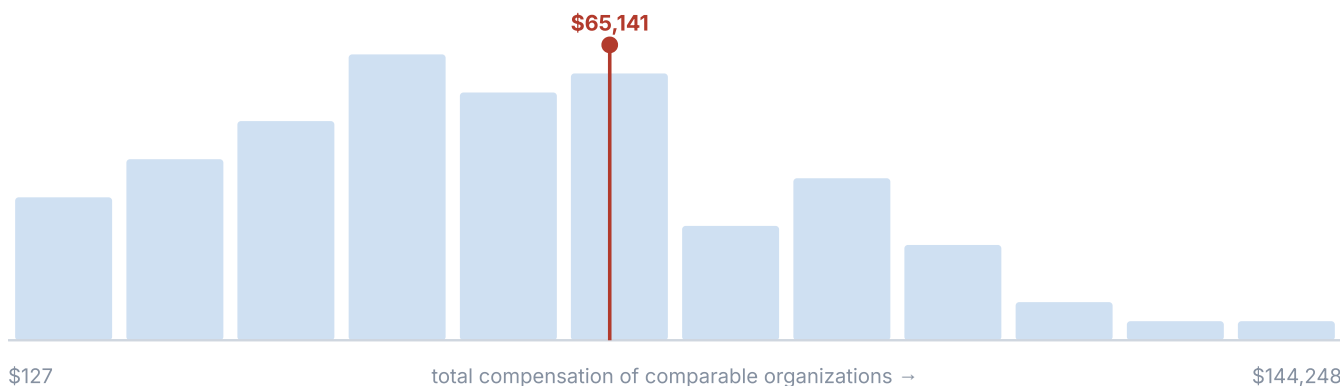
Benchmarked executive: Stephen Sands — reported title “ARTISTIC DIRECTOR”, selected as the organization's **highest-paid individual** — no exact title match, so confirm this is a comparable role.

How comparable organizations were selected

SECTOR	Organizations sharing the subject's NTEE classification (A68).
BUDGET	Total revenue between \$213,542 and \$478,080 — 0.67x to 1.50x the subject's \$318,720 (the band tightens as size grows).
GEOGRAPHY	Same NTEE sector (A68), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5x revenue.

188 organizations qualified on sector, size, and geography → **188** within the band form the benchmarked peer set.

Distribution of comparable compensation



\$15,055	\$32,147	\$50,936	\$72,182	\$95,183	\$65,141
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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 NJ 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
United States Open Music Competition	CA	\$318,411	President	\$1,000	\$967	2024
Rain City Rock Camp For Girls	WA	\$317,881	Executive Dir.	\$76,489	\$76,700	2024
Market Square Concerts	PA	\$321,305	Co-director	\$32,000	\$34,820	2025
Keys Corp	NY	\$316,049	Executive Director	\$43,378	\$45,199	2023
Master Musicians Festival Inc	KY	\$323,246	Executive Di	\$54,799	\$65,940	2024
Cellobello Inc	MA	\$323,408	Executive Director	\$101,952	\$102,612	2024
Baton Rouge Blues Festival & Foundation	LA	\$313,533	Executive Director	\$72,000	\$88,797	2024
Mount Desert Festival Of Chamber Music	ME	\$325,266	Executive Director	\$13,140	\$15,172	2023
Overture Band Programs Inc	WI	\$325,285	President/treas.	\$72,755	\$82,909	2025
Idaho Music Educators Association Inc	ID	\$311,720	Executive Director (Non-voting)	\$21,000	\$25,021	2024
Braver Players Musical Theater Foundation	CA	\$326,173	President	\$50,000	\$48,357	2024
Keeping The Blues Alive Foundation	FL	\$326,367	President	\$41,958	\$45,451	2023
Moon & Stars Foundation	CO	\$326,461	Executive Director	\$40,498	\$42,372	2025
Danbury Music Centre	CT	\$327,415	President	\$14,615	\$14,952	2025
Make Music Alliance Inc	NY	\$328,374	Executive Director	\$9,692	\$9,556	2025

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
Goat In The Road Productions	LA	\$329,022	Co-artistic Director	\$52,916	\$63,579	2025
Baltimore Classical Guitar Society Inc	MD	\$307,151	President	\$70,000	\$71,409	2025
Colajazz Foundation	SC	\$306,593	Director	\$45,000	\$54,133	2023
Anthology Of Recorded Music Inc	NY	\$330,999	Vice President & Secretary	\$112,450	\$117,170	2023
Southwood Band Booster Club	LA	\$305,948	Director	\$5,310	\$6,549	2024
Sarasota Music Conservatory Inc	FL	\$305,622	Director (Appt. 2/24)	\$600	\$631	2024
Backcountry Concerts Inc	CT	\$304,276	Artistic Direct	\$54,000	\$58,383	2023
Kelly Music For Life	PA	\$336,039	President	\$39,000	\$43,560	2024
City Strings United Inc	MA	\$301,126	President	\$72,220	\$74,834	2023
Music At Kohl Mansion Inc	CA	\$336,836	Exec. Dir.	\$90,417	\$90,029	2023

Comp (reported) is the figure on each organization's Form 990 (columns D + F); **Comp (adjusted)** normalizes it to NJ 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 NJ 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	188 organizations. Compensation range \$127–\$144,248; filing years 2023–2025.
SIZE BASIS	Matched on total revenue (\$318,720); for reference, expenses \$242,557 and assets \$110,186.
ROLE MATCH	Stephen Sands, reported title <i>"ARTISTIC DIRECTOR"</i> , benchmarked as Executive Director / CEO. Selected as the organization's highest-paid individual without an exact title match —

the board should confirm this is a comparable role.

RELATED-ORG PAY	4 peers report related-organization compensation (column E), which the D + F benchmark does not fully capture; review where material.
OUTLIERS	2 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	68 th
Total compensation (D + F), as reported (no adjustments)	72 nd
Reportable pay only (column D), adjusted	69 th
All sources (D + E + F), adjusted	68 th

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 (Stephen Sands) 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 10, 2026, comparing compensation against 188 similarly situated organizations (Same NTEE sector (A68), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5× revenue).
3. The authorized body determined that total compensation of \$65,141 is reasonable (approximately the 68th 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 10, 2026.