

Ashland News

Executive Director / CEO

EIN 352721220
 OR · NTEE A33
 FY ending 2023-12-31
June 9, 2026

This analysis benchmarks the total compensation of **Bert Etling, Executive Director / CEO** (\$54,600) against **every comparable organization** that fit the selection criteria — **50** in total — drawn systematically from IRS Form 990 filings, not a hand-picked subset.

Compensation sits at approximately the **38th** percentile of comparable organizations within the typical range

Benchmarked executive: Bert Etling — reported title “Executive Editor”, selected as the organization's **highest-paid individual** — no exact title match, so confirm this is a comparable role.

How comparable organizations were selected

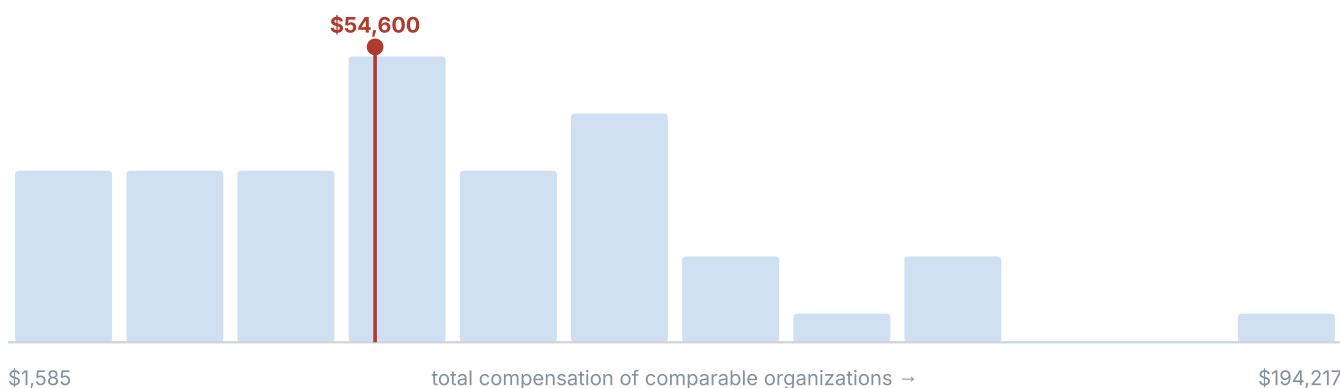
SECTOR Organizations sharing the subject's NTEE classification (A33).

BUDGET Total revenue between \$197,771 and \$442,771 — 0.67x to 1.50x the subject's \$295,181 (the band tightens as size grows).

GEOGRAPHY Same NTEE sector (A33), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5x revenue.

50 organizations qualified on sector, size, and geography → **50** within the band form the benchmarked peer set.

Distribution of comparable compensation



\$13,085	\$35,705	\$63,612	\$88,262	\$109,630	\$54,600
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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 OR 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
Spectator Publishing Company Inc	NY	\$296,078	Editor In Chief	\$4,250	\$4,017	2024
The Io Foundation	WI	\$296,207	Secretary/ed	\$90,687	\$96,507	2025
Dignity Usa Inc	MA	\$288,091	Executive Di	\$112,921	\$106,133	2024
The562 Network Inc	CA	\$302,316	Founder Editor	\$68,992	\$64,152	2023
Arcata Press	MN	\$305,326	Executive Director	\$84,000	\$86,814	2024
Bellevue Literary Review Inc	NY	\$284,941	Executive Dir.	\$39,600	\$37,427	2024
Carlisle Communications Inc	MA	\$308,493	President	\$1,731	\$1,585	2025
Skeptic Society	CA	\$309,510	President	\$143,323	\$133,267	2023
Abba A Womens Resource Center	ME	\$311,069	Executive Director	\$66,576	\$71,787	2023
Capital Region Community Media Inc	VT	\$311,307	Editor In Chief	\$60,584	\$63,780	2024
American Heritage Education Foundation Inc	TX	\$278,273	President	\$64,011	\$65,246	2025
County Economic Research Institute Inc	KS	\$317,331	President	\$171,880	\$194,217	2024
Oklahoma Media Center Inc	OK	\$272,439	Executive Dir	\$94,344	\$108,657	2024
In Black Ink	MN	\$319,183	Executive Director	\$37,606	\$40,014	2023
Nightboat Books Inc	NY	\$320,727	Executive Director	\$30,841	\$30,010	2023
Mars Hill Audio Inc	VA	\$323,706	President	\$129,079	\$130,356	2024

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
The Food Alliance	OR	\$326,179	Past Exec. Dir.	\$78,378	\$76,129	2024
Public Multimedia Inc	NJ	\$326,796	President	\$112,615	\$105,165	2024
Gospel Tract Society Inc	MO	\$263,217	President	\$49,879	\$56,888	2023
Reconciliation An Intl Network Of Churches And	PA	\$262,893	President	\$12,500	\$13,038	2024
The Massachusetts Review Inc	MA	\$262,636	Managing Editor	\$36,864	\$35,672	2023
Providence Foundation	VA	\$332,489	President	\$92,500	\$93,415	2024
Bibliographical Society Of America	NY	\$254,548	Executive Director	\$84,584	\$79,943	2024
Cavankerry Press Ltd	NJ	\$343,702	Executive Director	\$46,518	\$42,321	2025
Louisville Story Program	KY	\$345,966	Executive Di	\$69,960	\$78,615	2024

Comp (reported) is the figure on each organization's Form 990 (columns D + F); **Comp (adjusted)** normalizes it to OR cost of living and 2023 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 OR 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 50 organizations. Compensation range \$1,585–\$194,217; filing years 2023–2025.

SIZE BASIS Matched on total revenue (\$295,181); for reference, expenses \$229,505 and assets \$105,956.

ROLE MATCH Bert Etling, reported title "*Executive Editor*", 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.**

OUTLIERS 1 peer 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	38 th
Total compensation (D + F), as reported (no adjustments)	42 nd
Reportable pay only (column D), adjusted	42 nd
All sources (D + E + F), adjusted	38 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 (Bert Etling) 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 50 similarly situated organizations (Same NTEE sector (A33), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5× revenue).
3. The authorized body determined that total compensation of \$54,600 is reasonable (approximately the 38th 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.