

Upturn Compensation Policy

Last updated: October 1, 2024

Overview

Upturn's compensation policy is guided by three key values:

- **Equity.** Everyone is compensated within positions and across the organization based on their position, skills, and qualifications, without regard to protected status. This policy intends to reduce the potential for bias.
- **Predictability.** Everyone can predict their future compensation, with minimal surprise to compensation changes.
- **Attractiveness and retention.** Upturn offers highly competitive compensation and can attract and retain a great and diverse staff.

This policy provides guidelines that Upturn considers when setting salary, awarding salary increases, and granting promotions. Nothing in the policy creates contractual obligations of any kind, or guarantees any salary, any salary increase, or any advancement.

Notwithstanding any provision in this policy, salary and advancement decisions for staff are made in the sole and exclusive discretion of the Executive Director, and salary decisions for the Managing and Executive Directors are made in the sole and exclusive discretion of the Board of Directors. Upturn is not bound by the provisions of this policy and may make exceptions to its administration where, at the discretion of the Executive Director or the Board of Directors, such exceptions are warranted. This policy is subject to change at any time by the Executive Director or the Board of Directors, as conditions or circumstances may require, and with or without prior notice.

Salary and Promotions

- **Base salary** for each role is set based on the extent to which the role is responsible and accountable for Upturn's strategy, direction, development, programmatic impact, and overall success, as well as the biennial external salary analysis and the market conditions for particular skills. Each role has base salary "steps," reflecting years of relevant experience.

- **Limiting ratio.** The difference in base salary between the highest- and lowest-paid employee should not exceed a ratio of 3:1.
- **Salary increases** typically occur once each year, on the first day of the month immediately following an employee’s annual hire date anniversary.

Subject to budgetary constraints and the limiting ratio, the current standard salary increase is \$5,000. If an employee assumes a new role, the standard salary increase is instead the base salary for that role.

- **Role advancement.** For employees on the policy track, promotions into new roles are expected to occur at regular intervals, as indicated below. For example, currently, Research Associates are expected to advance to Policy Analyst on a two-year timeline.

Senior staff — in particular Project Directors, the Managing Director, and the Executive Director — should mentor other staff and provide opportunities and guidance to help them grow into new roles. At the same time, all staff are expected to take responsibility for their job performance and professional development.

Policy Track

- Research Associate (RA)
 - RA1 \$65,000
 - RA2 \$70,000

Estimated promotion target to Policy Analyst: 2 years
- Policy Analyst (PA)
 - PA1 \$75,000
 - PA2 \$80,000

Estimated promotion target to Senior Policy Analyst: 2 years
- Senior Policy Analyst (SPA)
 - SPA1 \$90,000
 - SPA2 \$95,000
 - SPA3, ... *Salary increases per standard raise policy.*
 - *In order to be promoted, an SPA must first (1) have demonstrated excellence in proactively performing all their SPA roles and responsibilities and (2) notify the Executive Director that they would like to seek a promotion. See the SPA to PD*

Promotion Framework for more details.

- Project Director (PD)
 - PD1 \$110,000
 - PD2 \$115,000
 - PD3 \$120,000
 - PD4 \$125,000

Estimated promotion target to Senior Project Director: 4 years

- Senior Project Director (SPD) \$130,000
Salary increases per standard raise policy.

Quantitative Track

- Senior Quantitative Analyst \$130,000
Salary increases per standard raise policy.

Operations Track

- Operations Associate (OA)
 - OA1 \$65,000
 - OA2 \$70,000
 - OA3 \$75,000
 - OA4 \$80,000

Estimated promotion target to Senior Operations Associate: 4 years

- Senior Operations Associate (SOA)
 - SOA1 \$90,000
 - SOA2 \$95,000
 - SOA3, ... *Salary increases per standard raise policy.*
- Operations Director \$110,000
Salary increases per standard raise policy.

Temporary Positions

- Summer Fellow \$1,250 per week

Executive Staff

- Managing Director \$190,909
- Executive Director \$190,909

The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the Executive Director and Managing Director's compensation and performing periodic review to ensure that their compensation is reasonable and in accordance with IRS requirements.

Hiring

- Upturn extends job offers for particular roles and steps, taking into consideration applicants' qualifications, education, training, and experience. Upturn does not negotiate salary for a given role and step.
- Final decisions about job offers are made by the Executive Director.

Periodic Reviews

Annual internal and policy salary review

- On at least an annual basis, typically in September, the Executive Director and the Operations Director will review individual salaries across the organization for consistency with the values underlying this compensation policy. They will also review whether this compensation policy is, on balance, meeting the needs of the organization. This review will consider such things as hiring decisions and outcomes, role changes, salary changes, organizational resources, and other organizational changes during the year.

Biennial external compensation review

- On at least a biennial basis, the Executive Director and Operations Director will conduct an external salary analysis across all positions, to compare Upturn with similarly situated organizations.

This review will consider reputable third-party salary surveys, as well as salary figures shared directly with us by our peer organizations, to assess the competitiveness of Upturn's compensation program with other comparable public interest nonprofit organizations in the Washington, D.C. metro area. Based on the review, the Executive Director may make adjustments as needed to the base salaries for each role and to other provisions of this policy.

Employee Benefits

Upturn is a growing organization that is collaborative, energetic, and fun. We are actively committed to building an inclusive and welcoming workplace. We cultivate a flexible and accommodating work culture, and we provide competitive benefits and staff-centered policies. For regular, full-time employees, we provide:

- 100% employer-covered health, dental, vision, and disability insurance;
- 403(b) retirement plan with a 10% employer contribution;
- open paid time off and flexible work hours;
- employer-sponsored medical and dependent care FSAs;
- paid sabbaticals after five years of full-time work; and
- annual professional development fund.

Additionally, we provide a one-time relocation stipend of \$2,000 to new hires moving to DC, as well as transit benefits for DC-based staff.

All benefits are subject to the Upturn Handbook and Upturn benefit plans, as established and amended from time to time. The Executive Director or the Board of Directors, in their sole discretion, may change or eliminate benefits at any time.

For any questions about this policy, please email operations@upturn.org.

Upturn Roles and Responsibilities

This document provides an overview of the current roles and responsibilities at Upturn. These descriptions are not a comprehensive list of the activities, duties, or responsibilities for each role, which may change at any time at the discretion of the Executive Director.

- The **Executive Director** is responsible for the development of Upturn as an institution, including:
 - Guiding long-term organizational vision, strategy, and development
 - Overseeing the organization's finances and ensuring financial stability
 - Fundraising and fostering positive funder relationships
 - Managing the staff's relationship with the Board of Directors
 - Developing organizational policies and supervising human resources
 - Overseeing staff compensation and promotion decisions
 - Building a multicultural, multiethnic, diverse organization
- The **Managing Director** is responsible for the overall management of Upturn's programmatic activities, including:
 - Managing overall programmatic strategies, activities, and projects
 - Coordinating staff capacity across projects
 - Ensuring consistent staff review, feedback, and professional growth
 - Identifying staff capacity gaps and overseeing the recruiting process
 - Identifying and creating professional development opportunities for staff, in collaboration with the Project Directors

In addition to their primary responsibilities, the Executive Director and the Managing Director will sometimes lead programmatic projects, taking on the responsibilities of a Project Director.

Policy Track

- **(Senior) Project Directors** are responsible for leading one or more major areas of programmatic work, including:
 - Defining and advancing strategies and goals within projects, in collaboration with the Executive Director and Managing Director
 - Leading major research and advocacy outputs within projects
 - Supervising the day-to-day work within projects

- Providing consistent feedback, support, and mentorship for SPAs, PAs, RAs, and summer fellows
 - Ensuring effective communication within and between project teams
 - Expanding and strengthening Upturn’s partnerships and collaborations within programmatic areas
- **Senior Policy Analysts** are responsible for proactively supporting programmatic work, including:
 - Taking a lead role in drafting public written outputs
 - Driving forward programmatic work, including developing research questions, advocacy strategies, and new external partnerships, in close collaboration with Project Directors
 - Presenting work in public on panels, through the press, and in other venues
 - Providing consistent feedback, support, and mentorship for PAs, RAs, and summer fellows
- **Policy Analysts** are responsible for supporting programmatic work, including:
 - Completing research assignments with minimal supervision and direction
 - Helping drive forward programmatic work, including with external partners
 - Representing Upturn independently and effectively in external meetings
 - Presenting our work in coalition meetings and events, with the support of more senior staff
- **Research Associates** are responsible for supporting programmatic work, including:
 - Researching specific questions, as assigned
 - Helping to draft public documents, including reports, policy briefs, testimony and amicus briefs
 - Attending external meetings and events in a supportive role
 - Maintaining broad awareness of news and other developments in core issue areas

Quantitative Track

- **Senior Quantitative Analysts** are responsible for leading and supporting the data-driven aspects of Upturn's programmatic work in collaboration with project teams, including:
 - Defining quantitative research ideas that are responsive to project policy objectives

- Designing and leading empirical research from beginning to end, including gathering data, performing statistical analyses, and communicating findings
- Representing Upturn at external meetings, workshops, and other events.

Operations Track

- The **Operations Director** is responsible for ensuring that Upturn runs smoothly and effectively, including:
 - Leading remote and in-person operations and logistics
 - Coordinating internal and external team activities
 - Managing the organization's financial activities, including the annual budget, annual audit, monthly closeout, payroll, billing, payments, taxes, and filings
 - Maintaining employee benefit programs
 - Maintaining internal organizational policies
 - Tracking grant compliance deadlines and helping to prepare grant proposals and reports
 - Managing the recruiting and onboarding processes
 - Maintaining the organization's website
 - Managing the operations team
- **(Senior) Operations Associates** are responsible for supporting Upturn operations, including:
 - Executing the organization's routine financial activities (including monthly closeout, invoicing, payments, taxes, and filings), and supporting bigger-picture financial projects such as annual budgeting and audit preparation
 - Supporting payroll and benefits systems administration
 - Supporting remote operations and logistics, as well as occasional in-person events and travel
 - Assisting in the development and implementation of organizational policies and processes
 - Helping to track important deadlines such as annual filings, grant reports, and internal processes
 - Helping to update the organization's website
 - Supporting recruiting and onboarding processes

All Staff

- **All staff** are responsible for contributing to team-wide activities and discussions, including:
 - Publishing the weekly newsletter
 - Leading team meetings on a rotating basis
 - Assisting with team retreats and political education sessions
 - Presenting to the board of directors, as requested
 - Providing support and feedback on major organizational policies, processes, and decisions
 - Participating in recruiting processes, including reviewing applications and conducting interviews, as needed
 - Performing other duties and responsibilities, as needed and assigned

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