

Who Manages Urban Trees and Greenspaces for Local Governments?

In 2017, we asked professionals who manage urban trees and greenspaces for 1,577 U.S. localities to complete a survey about their careers.

OF THE 524 RESPONDENTS,

- 91% white, 78% male, median age: 52
- Only 15% had seriously considered a career in urban trees and greenspaces in high school or earlier
- 75% in a supervisory role (mid to upper management)
- 82% in profession for 10+ years and 47% for 21+ years (mid to late career)
- Top memberships: International Society of Arboriculture (59%), Local urban forestry group (38%), Society of Municipal Arborists (28%), National Recreation and Park Association (22%)
- 17% didn't belong to any of the 25 professional organizations we asked about.

WORKPLACE PERCEPTIONS

Percent that somewhat or strongly agreed that...

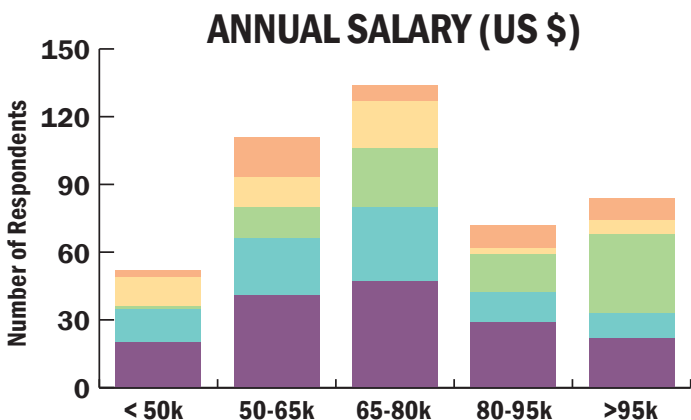
87% ... they were satisfied with their level of decision-making authority.

77% ... their coworkers understood their job.
- Arborists felt a little less understood than urban foresters and Public administrators felt very well understood.

83% ... their coworkers appreciated them.

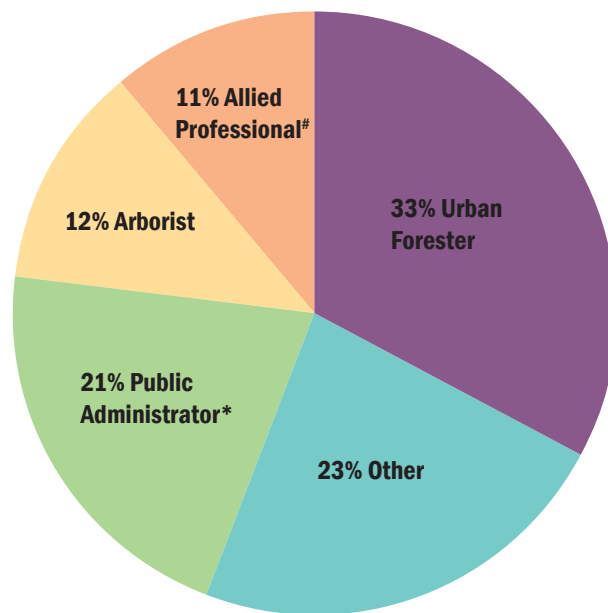
74% ... their co-workers were making full use of their expertise.

88% ... their opinion was considered on urban trees or greenspace issues.



Chi-square analysis revealed no anomalies in salary distribution across professional identities at $\alpha=.05$ or $\alpha=.10$.

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY



Such as civil engineer, landscape architect, and urban planner

* The prevalence of public administrators shows that slightly over a fifth of urban forestry decision-makers are likely not trained in plant or environmental sciences.

JOB SATISFACTION

Percent that somewhat or strongly agreed that...

94% ... they were satisfied with their career thus far.

76% ... they were well paid.
- Arborists somewhat disagreed with this statement (28%) at a higher than expected frequency ($p<.05$).

84% ... there were opportunities for career advancement in the profession

55% ... there were opportunities for career advancement with their current employer
- This suggests that career advancement would require a change of employer in many cases.

83% ... they knew where to find mentoring and resources to advance their career.
- Arborists strongly disagreed with this statement (12%) at a higher than expected frequency ($p<.05$).

Data taken from survey, "Professionals Working with Urban Trees and Greenspaces", conducted as part of the Urban Forestry 2020 project, funded by the US Forest Service through the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council. <http://urbanforestry.frec.vt.edu/2020/>. Send inquiries to sdd@vt.edu. Release date: June 1, 2017.