

2018 ASNE Newsroom Employment Diversity Survey Methodology

A total of 1,700 news organizations were contacted for the 2018 ASNE Newsroom Employment Diversity Survey. Editors and past survey contact persons at those organizations were sent emails starting in mid-May 2018. This year, we also included contact information from online-only organizations compiled from a list submitted by our foundation partners. Email reminders were sent monthly. Additionally, follow-up phone calls were made to all non-responding organizations beginning in mid-July. The survey was initially closed in early September. After a count of survey respondents, we re-opened the data collection period and issued a press release that encouraged more organizations to participate. We truncated the relaunched version of the survey by removing the open-ended questions for ease of completion. All survey collection methods ended in mid-October 2018.

In total, 293 news organizations responded, including 189 newspapers and 100 online-only news sites (some organizations did not specify), for a total response rate of 17.23 percent. This was lower than ideal and lower than recent response rates of 39.82 percent in 2017 and 42.50 percent in 2016. This is the third year in which we used methods that were significantly updated in 2016. Those 2016 changes included reducing the categories into which journalists would be classified to “newsroom leaders” and “all other journalists” from a system that more specifically listed types of employees (e.g., reporters, copy editors, photojournalists, etc.), which likely missed journalists in positions not covered by traditional positions. In 2016, the categories of race were updated to match likely categories to be used by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2020. This year, we added employment types, including full-time, part-time and freelance, which are not reflected in the visualization and tables. Finally, we note that, as in years past, the survey data presents a reflection of self-selecting organizations that volunteer their information and do not constitute a random sample. The results therefore cannot be generalized to make conclusions about diversity trends across the entire journalism industry.

Detailed tables are forthcoming.