

The background of the entire page is a grayscale photograph of a set of wide, stone steps. The steps are made of large, rectangular blocks of stone, and the perspective is from a low angle looking up the stairs. The lighting creates soft shadows between the steps, emphasizing their texture and depth.

snipebridge

2024

SALARY GUIDE

**ARCHITECTURE
& DESIGN**

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INTRODUCTION



01

Unlocking Compensation Insights in a Dynamic Talent Landscape

As we present our 2024 Annual Salary Survey, the landscape of talent acquisition and compensation has never been more dynamic. The competition for top talent has intensified, compelling organizations to refine their recruitment strategies. With nearly 70% of companies reporting difficulty in filling roles, understanding compensation dynamics is more crucial than ever for attracting and retaining skilled professionals.

In recent years, shifting workforce demographics and evolving employee expectations have reshaped the workplace. Firms must now adapt their compensation strategies to stay competitive and attract top talent.

For example, the evolving workforce demographics—such as the increasing influence of millennials and Gen Z—are reshaping expectations around work-life balance and career development.

Today's employees prioritize meaningful work, professional growth, and inclusive cultures, leading to a demand for more transparent and equitable compensation practices.

The pandemic accelerated these shifts, prompting employees to reassess their career goals and seek environments that promote flexibility, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Our 2024 Salary Survey aims to provide a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of these trends. Through insights gathered from our diverse participant pool, we unveil industry benchmarks, identify pressing challenges, and offer actionable recommendations tailored for Hiring Managers, HR Leaders, and CEOs.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

- Origin of Participants
- Demographics
- Education & Experience
- Firm Types & Disciplines

02

Demographics

The demographic makeup of the AEC industry has long been a point of discussion within the industry, particularly regarding diversity and representation.

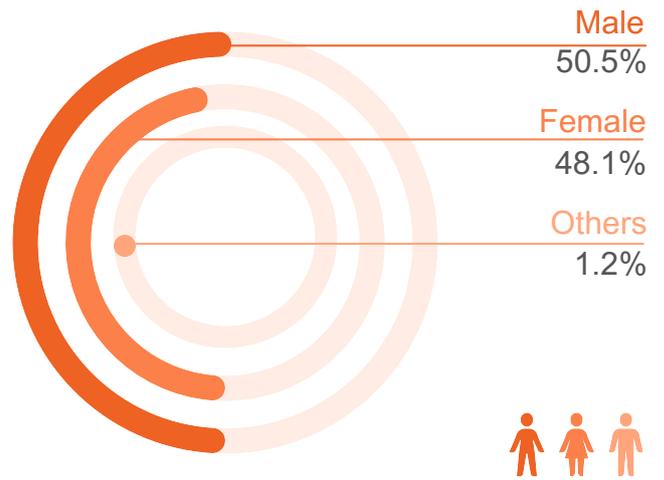
According to our survey, this concern is justified, as a significant majority of respondents identify as White (64%). This lack of diversity mirrors US-wide and industry-specific data, which according to NCARB's By the Numbers 2024 report, reveals that two-thirds of U.S. architects are white men. However, it's worth noting that NCARB also reports a promising trend towards increased representation for other demographic groups, indicating that the industry is slowly but surely moving towards greater diversity.

While the industry still has a long way to go, our survey results show a promising trend in terms of gender diversity, with a nearly balanced distribution of 50.5% male, 48.1% female, and 1.2% identifying as other. This shift towards greater gender parity is a positive step, but it's only one aspect of a more comprehensive approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

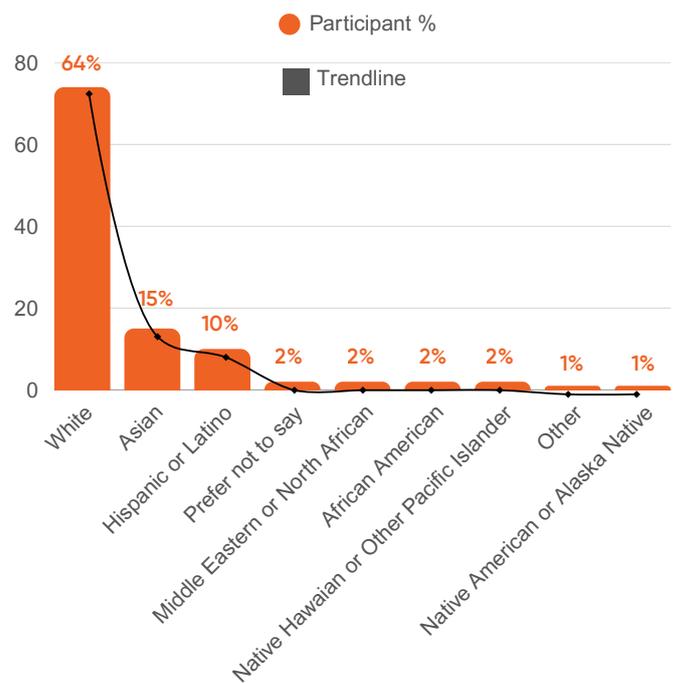
To address the ongoing issue of diversity, firms must prioritize DEI initiatives that create a more representative workforce, foster an environment that values diverse perspectives and experiences, and provide opportunities for growth and development for underrepresented groups.

By doing so, firms can enhance their culture, drive innovation, and support the growth of a more diverse AEC industry that better reflects the communities they serve.

Gender Split



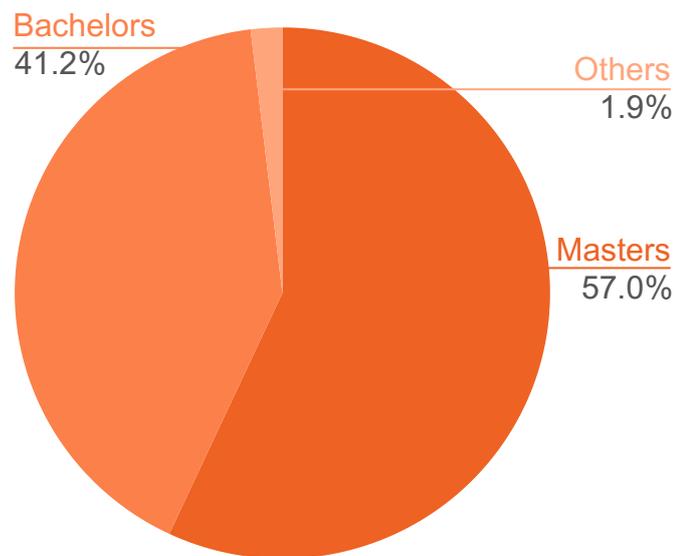
Culture/Race Identification



Education and Experience

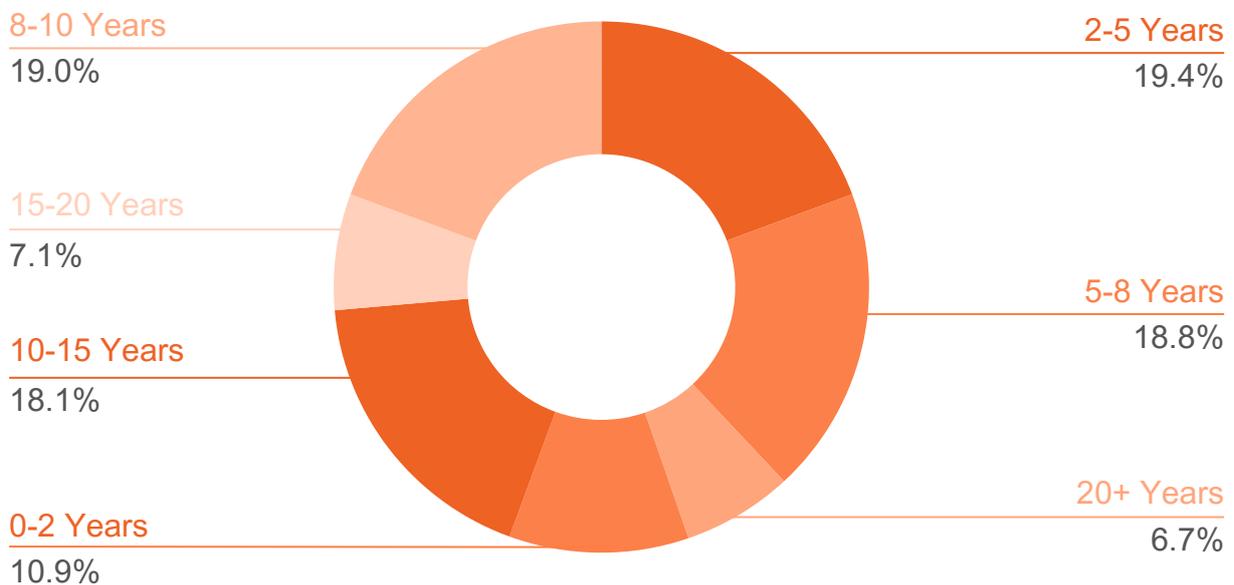
In the US, the vast majority of states require individuals pursuing a career in architecture, interiors or Planning to hold a professional degree from an accredited program in order to obtain a license. This requirement has established a strong expectation within the industry, with most firms expecting employees to possess an undergraduate or graduate degree. However, there is growing recognition of the need for more diverse and inclusive pathways to entry, particularly for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds or those who may not have had access to traditional educational opportunities.

Highest Level of Education



As the industry continues to evolve, it is likely that alternative models of education and training will become more prominent, offering new opportunities for individuals to pursue careers in architecture.

Experience Level

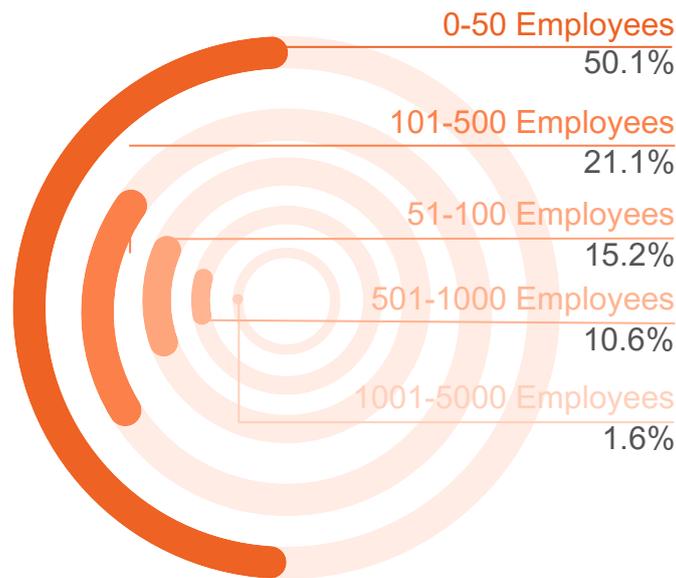


Firm Types and Disciplines

The survey was distributed to a diverse range of participants who worked in firms of varying sizes and across multiple disciplines providing a comprehensive snapshot of the industry's dynamics.

Firm Size

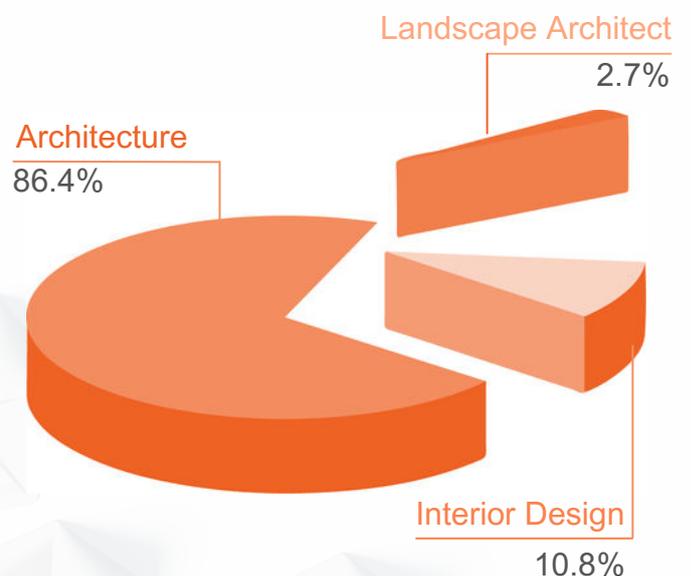
Majority of the survey respondents came from small boutique studios followed by mid size design firms. Over 11% respondents came from fairly large firms with size of over 500 employees.



Discipline/Practice

The majority of respondents identified architecture as their primary focus, with many indicating that their work spans multiple disciplines, such as architecture and interior design or architecture and landscape architecture.

While this concentration of architects is not surprising, to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the findings, all responses were included in the data analysis, except where specific disciplines are noted for clarity or to highlight unique trends or insights.



SURVEY RESULTS

- Compensation By Discipline
- Compensation By Experience
- Compensation By Location
- Benefits & Compensation Analysis

03

SURVEY RESULTS

Compensation - All Disciplines

This section delves into the respondents' data on current salary ranges across all disciplines within the AEC industry throughout the United States. The data provides a comprehensive snapshot of the current compensation landscape, offering insights into the average salary ranges for professionals in various roles, from entry-level positions to senior leadership. Additionally, this section explores the overall satisfaction that respondents have with their total base salary.

Job Title	Min Base Salary	Avg Base Salary	Max Base Salary	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Architect Level I	\$44,000	\$74,047	\$137,280	77%	23%
Architect Level II	\$67,500	\$93,168	\$166,400	59%	41%
Architect Level III	\$77,000	\$92,886	\$135,000	45%	55%
Architectural Technologist	\$90,000	\$107,500	\$125,000	100%	0%
Associate	\$55,000	\$105,312	\$249,600	83%	17%
Construction Administrator	\$135,000	\$180,000	\$225,000	100%	0%
Design Manager	\$91,000	\$104,950	\$117,000	25%	75%
Design Technology Manager	\$98,000	\$131,600	\$160,000	50%	50%
Design Technology Specialist II	\$50,000	\$93,778	\$150,000	67%	33%
Director	\$105,000	\$138,833	\$165,000	75%	25%
Director of Design Technology	\$103,000	\$129,000	\$155,000	100%	0%
Draftsperson	\$60,000	\$69,000	\$78,000	100%	0%
Interior Architect	\$65,000	\$95,000	\$120,000	50%	50%

Job Title	Min Base Salary	Avg Base Salary	Max Base Salary	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Interior Designer Level I	\$58,000	\$65,429	\$72,000	100%	0%
Interior Designer Level II	\$62,000	\$78,813	\$110,000	50%	50%
Interior Designer Level III	\$84,500	\$96,979	\$120,000	67%	33%
Job Captain	\$55,000	\$88,542	\$170,000	82%	18%
Junior Architect	\$37,440	\$65,226	\$86,000	79%	21%
Junior Designer	\$41,600	\$64,724	\$82,500	88%	12%
Landscape Architect I	\$55,000	\$68,150	\$78,600	67%	33%
Landscape Architect II	\$62,500	\$74,482	\$111,000	29%	71%
Landscape Architect III	-	\$90,000	-	100%	0%
Marketing Director	\$68,000	\$115,600	\$165,000	75%	25%
Principal	\$70,000	\$156,823	\$475,000	97%	3%
Project Coordinator	\$82,000	\$86,833	\$98,000	0%	100%
Project Designer	\$47,840	\$71,614	\$172,640	85%	15%
Project Director	\$110,000	\$133,667	\$155,000	100%	0%
Project Manager	\$61,000	\$104,186	\$183,040	80%	20%
Senior Architect	\$60,000	\$104,252	\$301,600	80%	20%
Senior Associate	\$85,000	\$116,156	\$142,000	83%	17%
Senior Interior Designer	\$80,000	\$123,244	\$250,000	50%	50%
Senior Project Designer	\$70,000	\$99,532	\$165,000	82%	18%
Senior Project Manager	\$104,000	\$125,125	\$146,000	50%	50%
Sr Landscape Architect	\$71,000	\$89,400	\$135,200	50%	50%

Compensation by Experience

We compared the base salaries and total compensation by years of experience, taking data from the 25th percentile, median, and 75th percentile. Here, you can see a steady increase in both areas as experience level rises, with the potential for additional compensation becoming greater throughout a career.

The data illustrates a consistent and steady increase in both areas as experience level rises, indicating that career advancement is closely tied to increased earning potential. As professionals gain more experience, they become more likely to assume leadership roles, which often come with greater earning opportunities. These leadership positions may offer additional forms of compensation, such as greater amounts of profit-sharing or bonuses.

ARCHITECTURE

Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile
0-5	\$63,000.00	\$75,370.00	\$80,000.00
5-8	\$79,543.25	\$86,634.00	\$94,180.75
8-10	\$92,136.00	\$96,217.00	\$109,250.00
10-15	\$104,878.50	\$112,536.00	\$127,968.00
15-20+	\$110,500.00	\$127,968.00	\$145,936.00

INTERIORS

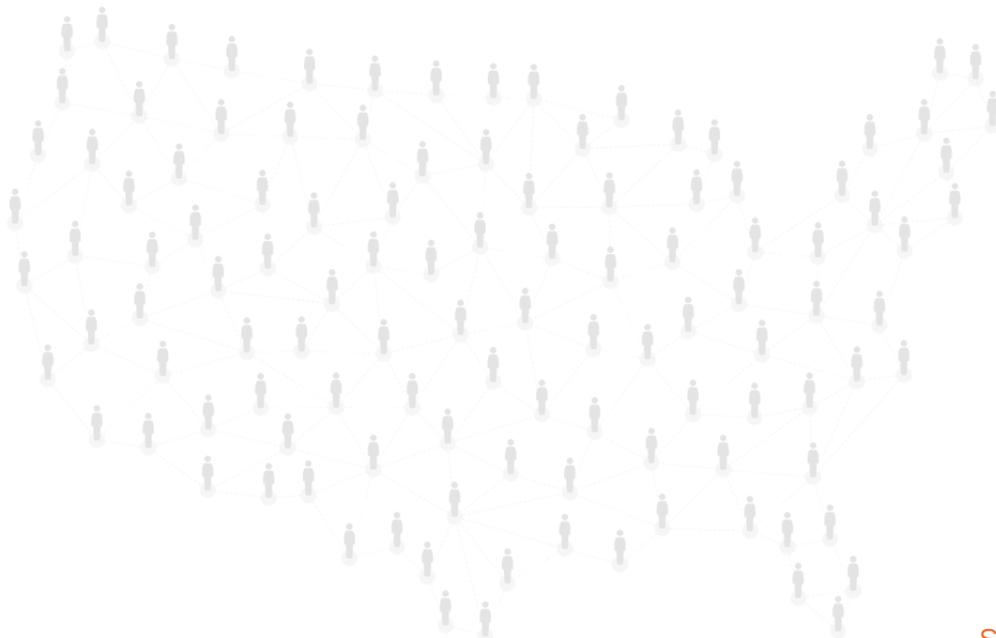
Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile
0-5	\$63,875.00	\$65,215	\$65,887.25
5-8	\$65,960.00	\$71,800	\$97,500.00
8-10	\$78,000.00	\$82,000	\$99,058.00
10-15	\$81,687.50	\$98,916	\$118,332.75
15-20+	\$76,250.00	\$120,875	\$152,657.75

Compensation by Location

In the four states and metropolitan areas with the highest response volume, we compiled salary data from architecture-focused respondents at the 25th percentile, median, and 75th percentile. Additionally, we assessed overall satisfaction with total compensation. Although data was collected across the US, these specific regions provided the most robust and representative sample of the overall landscape.

CALIFORNIA				
Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Satisfied
0-5	\$62,500.00	\$72,000.00	\$79,000.00	85%
5-8	\$80,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$99,750.00	56%
8-10	\$93,000.00	\$108,000.00	\$120,000.00	52%
10-15	\$110,000.00	\$116,000.00	\$130,000.00	65%
15-20+	\$132,500.00	\$145,500.00	\$155,250.00	82%

NEW YORK				
Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Satisfied
0-5	\$71,000.00	\$76,000.00	\$84,000.00	R
5-8	\$80,500.00	\$87,000.00	\$95,000.00	44%
8-10	\$93,000.00	\$101,000.00	\$107,250.00	71%
10-15	\$100,500.00	\$115,000.00	\$120,875.00	61%
15-20+	\$135,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$225,000.00	64%

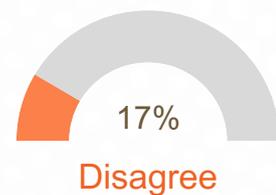
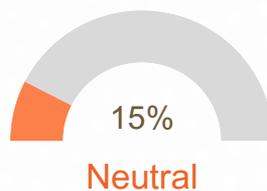
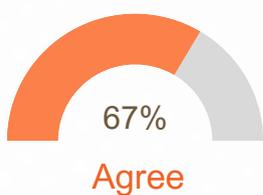


Compensation by Location

ILLINOIS				
Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Satisfied
0-5	\$57,000.00	\$64,000.00	\$67,280.00	62%
5-8	\$68,500.00	\$74,000.00	\$90,000.00	25%
8-10	\$94,000.00	\$100,500.00	\$115,500.00	50%
10-15	\$92,350.00	\$107,500.00	\$121,625.00	60%
15-20+	\$94,000.00	\$110,000.00	\$135,000.00	86%

TEXAS				
Years of Exp	25th percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Satisfied
0-5	\$56,125.00	\$64,000.00	\$66,750.00	89%
5-8	\$80,000.00	\$84,500.00	\$90,500.00	62%
8-10	\$86,000.00	\$92,000.00	\$100,000.00	60%
10-15	\$98,125.00	\$101,000.00	\$147,250.00	70%
15-20+	\$98,125.00	\$103,500.00	\$151,000.00	71%

Salary Satisfaction



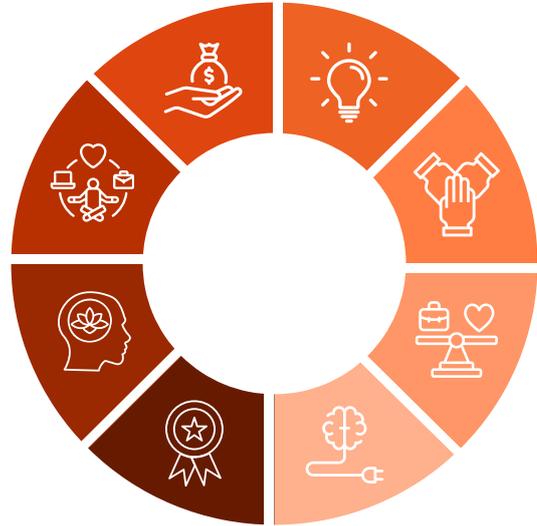
Over half of respondents reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with their base salary, accounting for 67% of the total. Meanwhile, 15% were neutral, and 17% expressed dissatisfaction or strong dissatisfaction.

Benefit and Total Compensation Analysis

Total compensation is a critical factor in attracting and retaining top talent, as it can play a significant role in differentiating one firm from another in a competitive job market. While base salary is an important consideration, it is only one aspect of a comprehensive compensation package.

Other benefits, such as health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, and professional development opportunities, can add significant value to an employee's overall compensation and improve their overall job satisfaction.

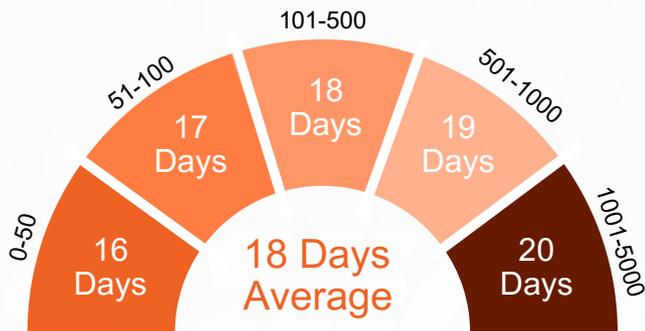
The following graphics provide a breakdown of the common benefits offered by firms across various types and experience levels.



Employer Contribution to 401k by Firm size

Employer Contribution	0-50	51-100	101-500	501-1000	1001-5000	5001+
0 to 3%	61%	48%	45%	41%	45%	53%
3 to 5%	35%	36%	47%	53%	45%	33%
5 to 10%	2%	14%	5%	6%	5%	13%
10%+	3%	2%	3%	0%	5%	0%

Average PTO by Firm Size



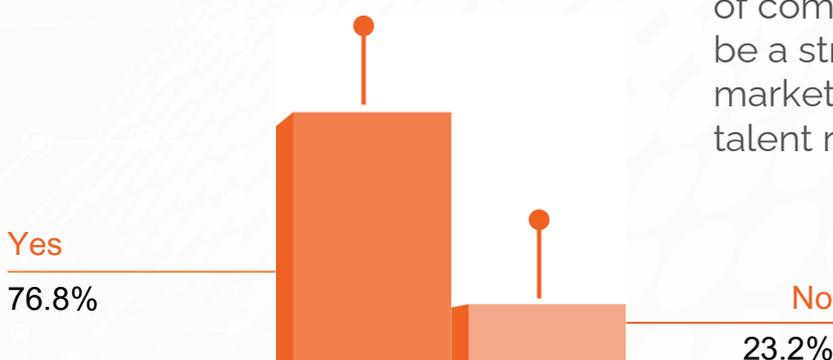
The data uncovers a strong positive correlation between firm size and average paid time off (PTO), with smaller firms offering a median of 16 days, whereas larger firms provide a median of 20 days. Interestingly, PTO is consistently ranked by employees as one of their most coveted benefits, often eclipsing even salary hikes in perceived value

Average Annual Bonus by Years of Experience

Results show a correlation between years of experience and average annual bonuses, with a significant peak of \$22,507 for professionals boasting over 20 years of experience, compared to a modest \$5,724 for those with 0-5 years under their belt. This pattern suggests that while early-career bonuses are relatively subdued, senior professionals with lengthy tenures are handsomely rewarded, likely due to their elevated value to organizations and prominent leadership roles.



Raise in Past 12 months?



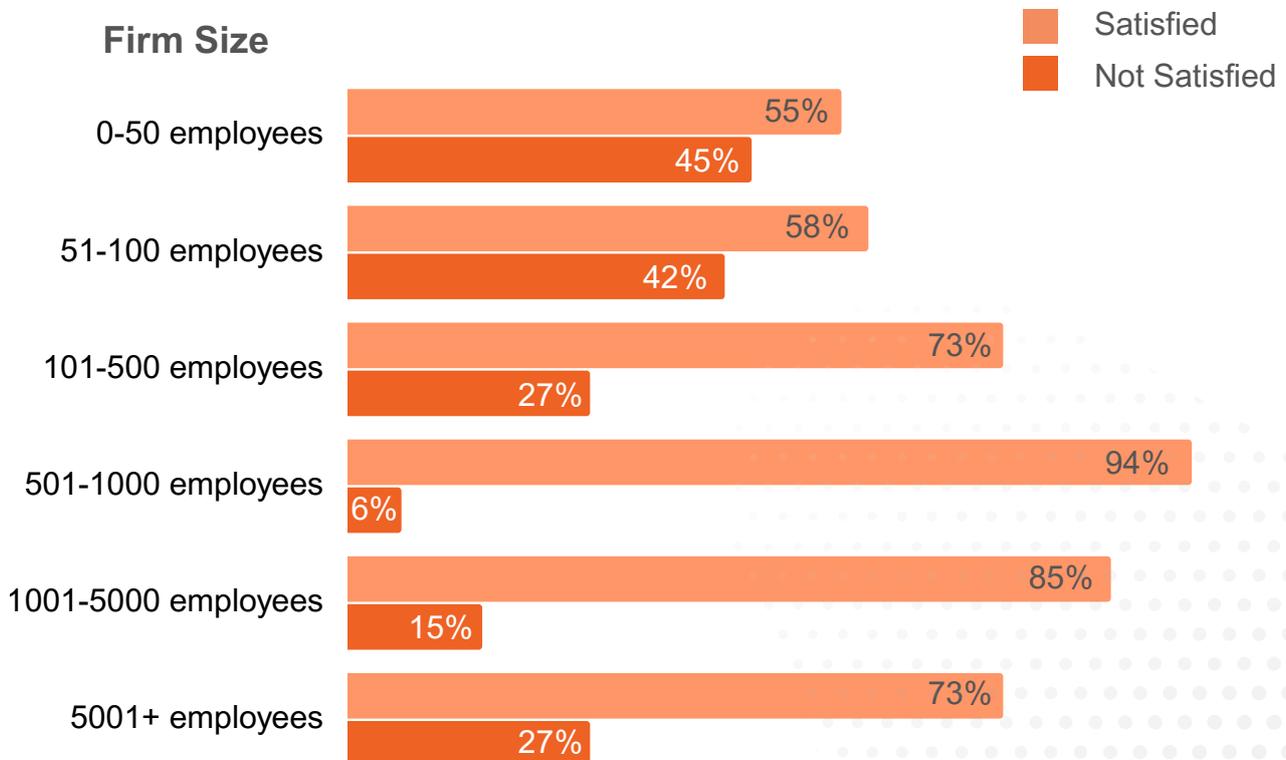
The data suggests that a majority of participants experienced some level of compensation growth, which can be a strong indicator of a healthy job market or employer commitment to talent retention.

Benefits Satisfaction by Firm Size

The data reveals several key trends in benefits satisfaction rates among firms of different sizes. Larger firms, those with 101-5000 employees, tend to have higher benefits satisfaction rates, ranging from 73% to 94%. This is likely due to the fact that these firms have more resources to invest in comprehensive benefits packages and more HR support.

On the other hand, smaller firms with 0-100 employees have lower satisfaction rates, ranging from 55% to 58%. This may be attributed to the limited resources and less effective benefits administration in these firms.

Overall, the data suggests that benefits satisfaction rates vary significantly by firm size, with larger firms generally performing better and smaller firms facing challenges in providing satisfactory benefits to their employees.



TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

- Hybrid Work Place
- Top Ranked Benefits
- Job Satisfactin & Retention
- Passive Talent Pool

04

TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

Beyond the Office: Navigating Hybrid Work

The modern workforce is evolving, and flexible work arrangements have become an expectation of employees and candidates alike. A recent Gallup poll revealed that among all full-time, remote-capable workers in the U.S., a staggering 53% are currently engaged in hybrid work arrangements, while an additional 27% are fully remote. While these numbers are not exclusive to the AEC industry, they reflect a broader trend that is also evident among A+D professionals, who are increasingly seeking flexible work arrangements that balance the benefits of in-person collaboration with the flexibility and productivity of remote work.

By embracing hybrid work arrangements and leveraging technology to facilitate collaboration and communication, firms can create a more flexible, productive, and attractive work environment that benefits both employees and the organization as a whole.

The following graphic highlights the hybrid work model for respondents across the different firm sizes. As the AEC industry continues to navigate this new reality, firms will need to adapt their policies and practices to meet the changing needs and expectations of their employees.

Remote/Hybrid as per Firm Size					
Firm Size	1/day Week	2/day Week	3/day Week	Fully Onsite	Fully Remote
0-50 employees	24%	22%	15%	29%	10%
1001-5000 employees	9%	36%	45%	9%	--
101-500 employees	36%	26%	17%	14%	7%
5001+ employees	29%	29%	--	36%	7%
501-1000 employees	--	25%	58%	17%	--
51-100 employees	32%	35%	14%	11%	8%
Total AVG	26%	27%	18%	21%	8%

Top Ranked Benefits

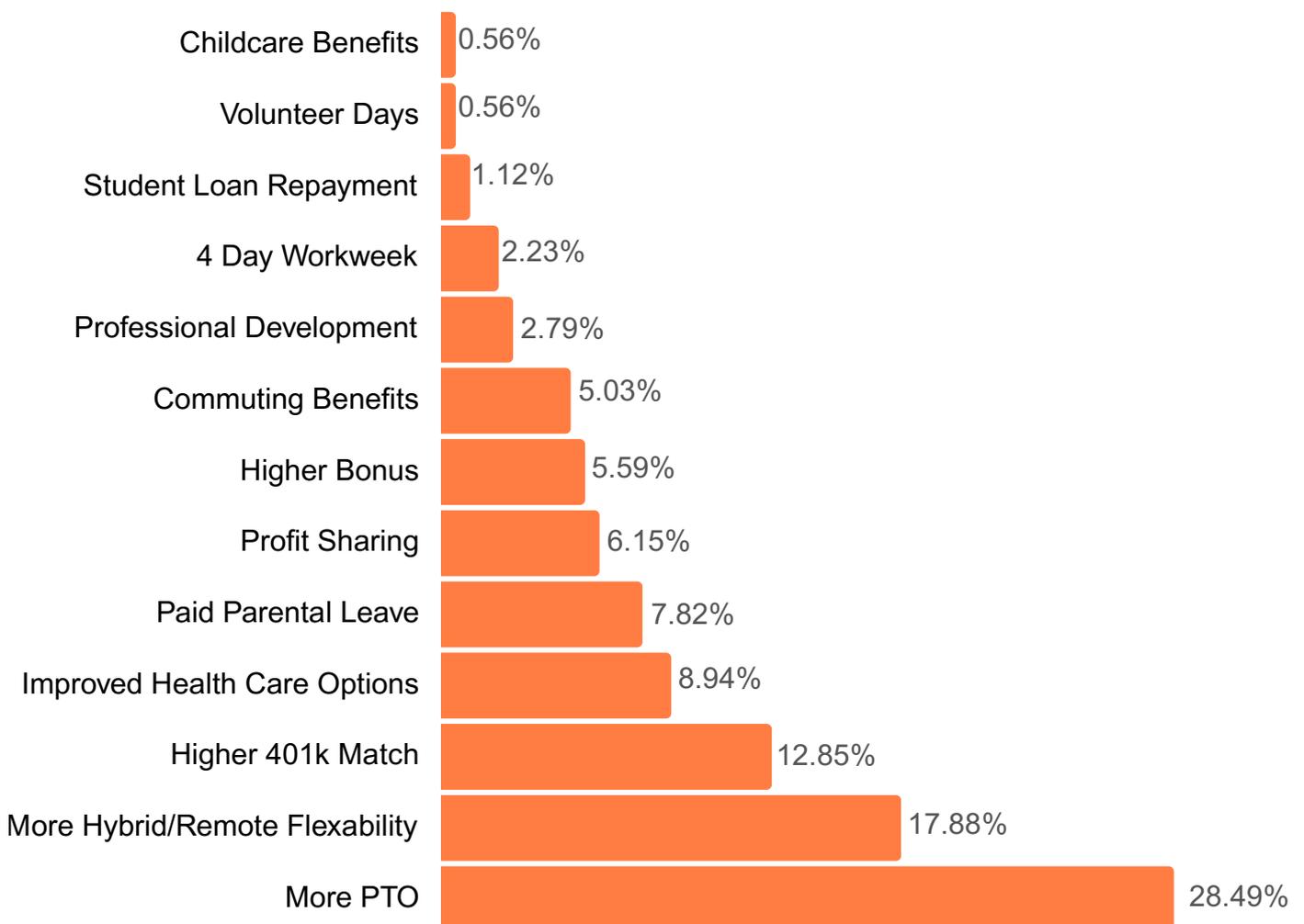
The survey asked respondents to identify one benefit they would like to add or improve in their current total compensation package. The results reveal a strong emphasis on work-life balance, with 28.5% of participants highlighting a desire for more paid time off (PTO) and 17.9% seeking increased hybrid or remote work opportunities.

This trend underscores a shift in priorities, as employees increasingly value flexibility and personal time.

Additionally, the chart indicates a significant interest in financial security and health benefits. These preferences highlight the growing demand for comprehensive benefits that support employees' diverse needs.

Overall, this analysis reflects a workforce increasingly focused on holistic well-being, financial stability, and flexible work arrangements, suggesting that employers who adapt to these priorities will likely attract and retain top talent.

Highly Desired Benefits

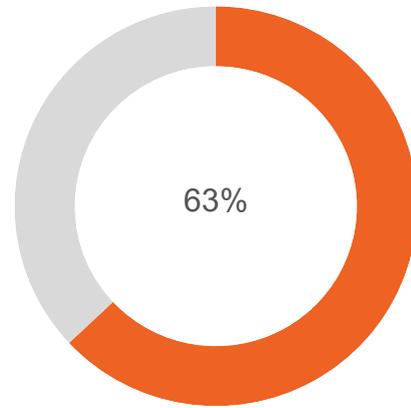


Job Satisfaction and Retention

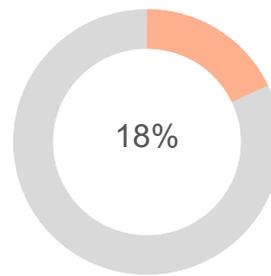
While 63% of employees express satisfaction with their current roles, a noteworthy 46% of them remain passively open to new opportunities. This indicates that even content employees may feel there are aspects of their compensation package or work environment that could be improved.

To enhance both retention and employee satisfaction, it is crucial for employers to take a comprehensive approach by thoroughly analyzing their current total compensation package. This analysis should go beyond just salaries to include all aspects of compensation, such as health benefits, retirement plans, bonuses, and other incentives. By aligning these offerings with what employees actually value and desire, employers can create a more attractive package that meets or even exceeds expectations. This process involves gathering feedback directly from employees to understand their priorities and pain points. It may also require benchmarking against industry standards to ensure competitiveness.

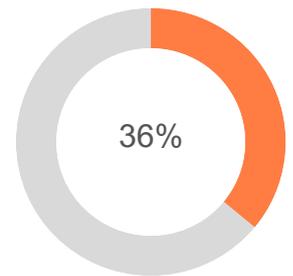
Additionally, it's crucial to recognize employees' growing desire for flexibility and personal time by integrating benefits like increased paid time off (PTO) and hybrid/remote work options.



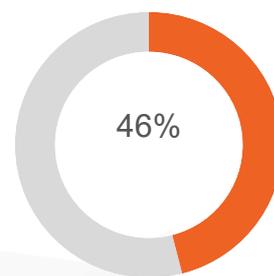
Satisfaction %



Actively Looking



Not Looking

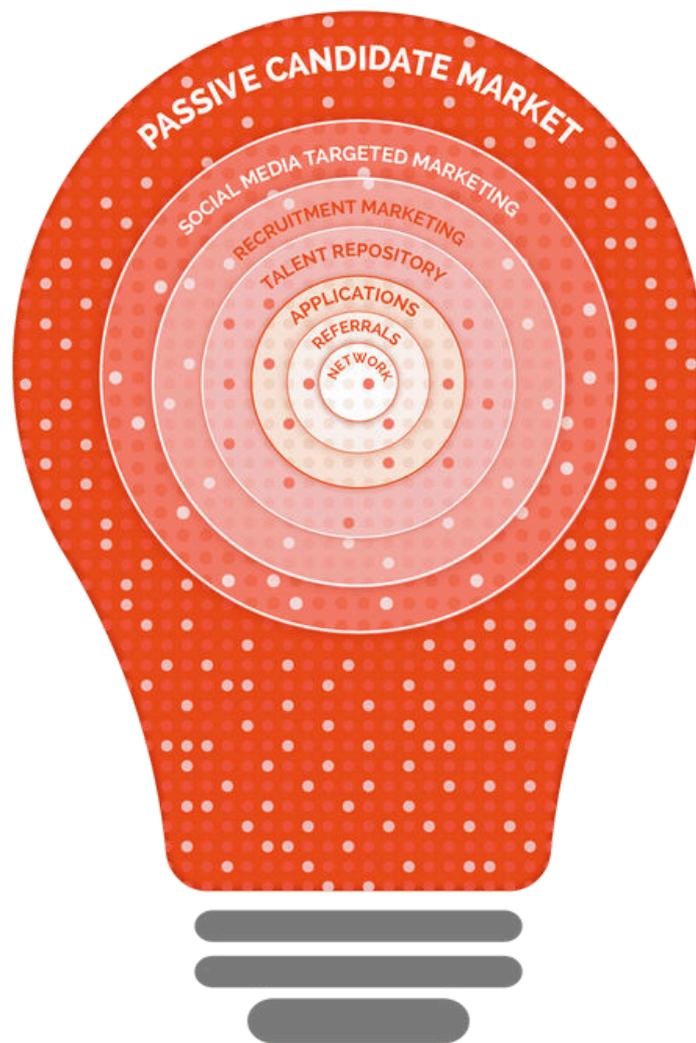


Passively Looking

Passive Talent Pool

While overall satisfaction is relatively high, a significant portion of the workforce is still open to new opportunities. Employers seeking to hire should consider enhancing their recruitment strategies to include passive recruiting. This approach targets potential candidates who may not be actively job hunting but are receptive to interesting prospects, enabling firms to tap into a valuable talent pool that might otherwise remain inaccessible through traditional recruitment methods.

By focusing on comprehensive and flexible compensation strategies, employers can boost both satisfaction and retention, thereby creating a more engaged and committed workforce while attracting top talent in a competitive job market.



CONCLUSION

05

CONCLUSION

Our 2024 Salary Survey report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of compensation in the A+D industry. It highlights pressing areas of focus for firms who want to remain competitive in today's rapidly evolving talent market. Our intention for preparing this report is to support you relevant data that will help you craft an actionable strategy to attract, retain, and engage top-tier professionals.

The survey findings reveal that flexibility is no longer a perk—it's an employee expectation. By adopting hybrid work options, design firms can foster improved employee satisfaction, expand their talent pool, and maintain high performance levels through the effective utilization of collaboration technology.

Comprehensive Total Compensation Packages are no longer just a nice-to-have; they are now a requirement. Firms must focus on creating well-rounded offers that encompass more than just base salary. This includes essential benefits such as increased paid time off (PTO), parental leave, premium health insurance, progressive retirement plans, and motivating bonuses. These elements contribute to a significantly more attractive offer, ultimately improving employee retention and satisfaction.

Capitalizing on Passive Talent is an essential recruiting strategy in the current market. With over 40% of respondents open to new opportunities, despite being satisfied with their current roles, proactive outreach and a compelling compensation package that caters to modern work-life expectations can yield significant results. This approach should incorporate flexible working conditions and holistic benefits to stay competitive.

Prioritizing Employee Retention is no longer an afterthought; it's a must-have. Although employee satisfaction levels are relatively high, significant openness to new roles indicates a pressing need for ongoing retention efforts. Regularly reviewing and adjusting total compensation, going beyond just salary, will help ensure employees feel valued and remain engaged in the long term.

The industry's future success hinges on its ability to adapt to the evolving workforce needs. By embracing flexible work arrangements, refining compensation strategies, and proactively targeting passive talent, firms can strengthen their position in the increasingly competitive talent market and lay the foundation for long-term success.

ABOUT SNIPEBRIDGE

SNIPEBRIDGE is a leading talent solutions firm based in the United States. We help top architecture & engineering firms and boutique design studios hire exceptional talent and build high-performing teams.

Our embedded recruiting service is revolutionizing the way companies are hiring. We empower enterprises to compete in attracting, engaging and acquiring top-tier talent through use of modern recruiting methods, tailored hiring programs, and innovative recruiting technology solutions.

Over the years, SNIPEBRIDGE has cultivated an extensive and trusted network of top industry practitioners across architecture, engineering, landscape, interiors and planning disciplines. Our strategic approach to recruiting, aligned with our clients' business objectives, helps reduce both, the time to hire and cost per hire, while significantly lowering new hire attrition rates. Our success is largely due to our focus on passive talent recruitment.

Our purpose-driven team is fanatical about Customer Success!


snipebridge

Talent Drives Success

