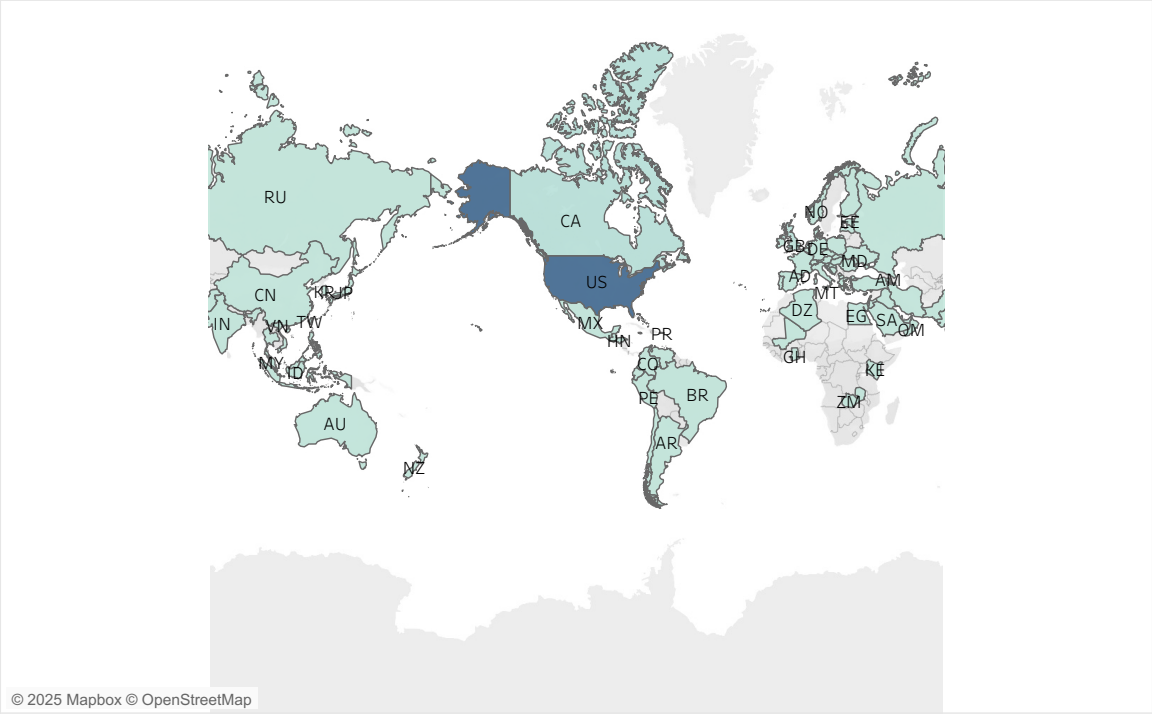
How to Attract & Retain Top Data Science, AI & ML Talent in 2025

Global Talent Density – Where Are Data Professionals Located?

The U.S. dominates the global data science labor force, with over 130,000 professionals, followed by Canada and select European and Asian markets. To build globally competitive data teams, companies should consider remote-friendly policies and satellite hubs in countries with growing talent pools like India, Germany, and Brazil.In an age where data drives decision-making across every industry, the demand for data science professionals continues to surge. But what are these professionals actually earning, and how do factors like experience, remote work, and company size influence pay?

Employee Count Map

Count of Company Location
1 131,026



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Does Experience Level Pay Off? And Does Company Size Matter?

Compensation in data roles scales significantly with experience, but **company size introduces volatility,** especially at executive levels. **Executives in medium-sized firms** earn the highest average salaries, exceeding those in large enterprises. **Senior professionals** earn consistently well across all company sizes, highlighting their stability and demand. **Entry-level and mid-level roles** benefit most in large and medium firms, with smaller companies offering the least competitive compensation. **Small companies show the greatest variance** in executive pay, suggesting either high reward or high risk. **Medium-sized firms** should double down on executive hiring and retention, this segment pays the most and offers competitive flexibility. **Large firms** need to reassess executive compensation or risk talent flight to midsize competitors. **Small businesses** must offset lower salaries with equity, growth paths, or hybrid/remote perks to attract high-caliber talent.

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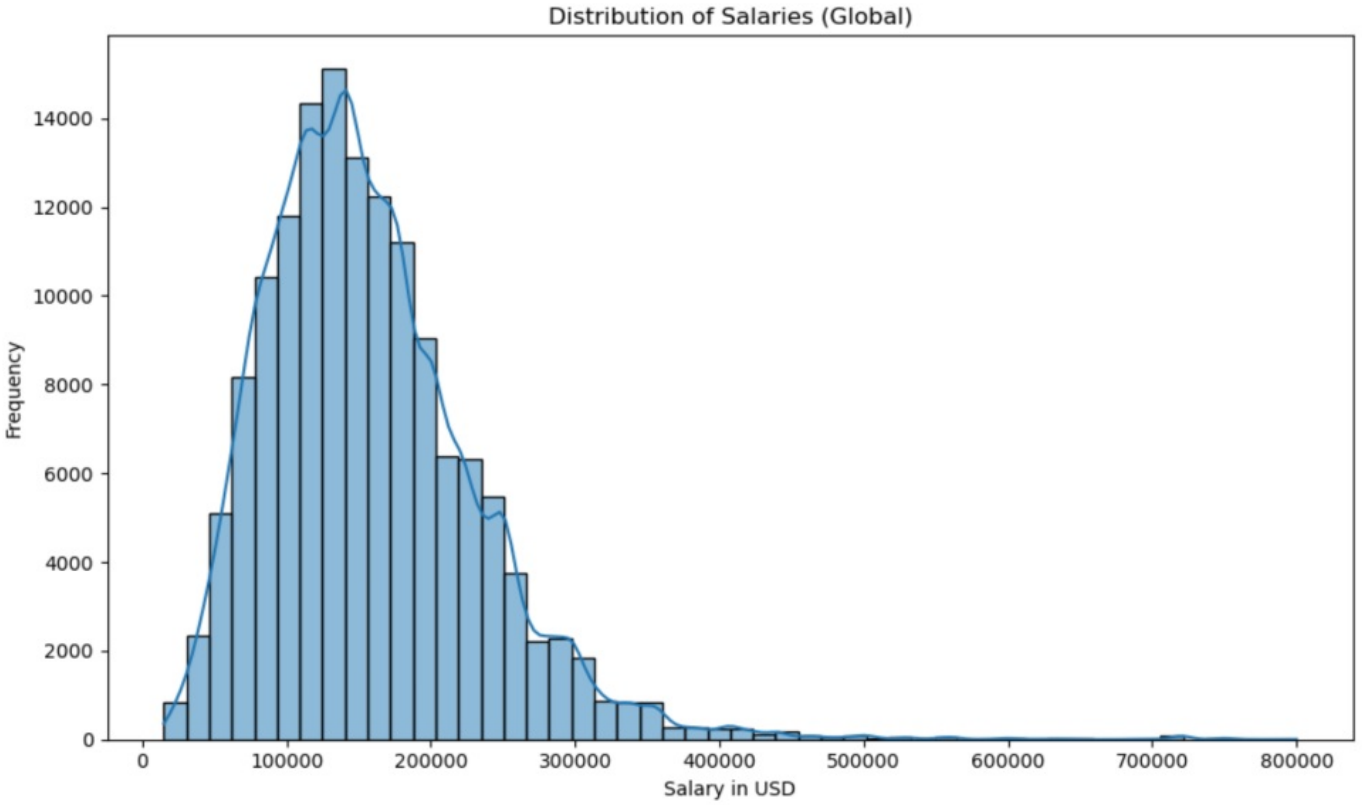
Understanding the Talent Pyramid

While data science is often associated with six-figure paychecks, the reality is more nuanced. Around **70%** of data science salaries fall below **$150,000,** with only a small fraction crossing into high-earning territory. A long tail exists above **$200,000**, representing high but rare compensation levels, where a few outliers skew the perception of average compensation. Use **median compensation** benchmarks when designing pay structures, not averages. Failing to do so risks underpaying mid-tier talent and overpaying outliers.



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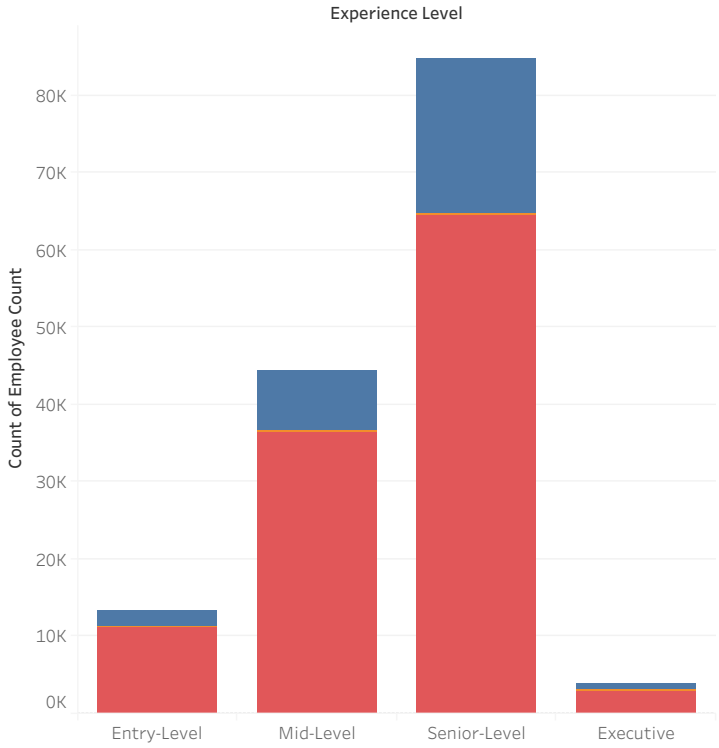
Remote Work Impact – Flexibility Matters, But So Does Pay

On-site roles dominate at senior levels, accounting for **44.16%** of employees, while remote roles are more common at lower experience levels. The heatmap shows on-site employees consistently earn more, especially in large companies **($168,609 average)**. Fully remote roles offer competitive pay in mid-sized firms for senior level employees, but hybrid roles have the lowest salaries across all sizes. Experience, location flexibility, and company size all significantly shape salary outcomes. Promote **remote or hybrid flexibility for junior roles** to widen the talent funnel, but offer **on-site or high-structure environments** for top-performing senior talent with corresponding pay incentives.

Remote Status vs Experience Level



Average Salary by Remote Status and Company Size

Remote Sta..	Company Size: Large	Medium	Small
Fully Remote	120,494	151,915	85,292
Hybrid	86,328	68,756	78,712
On-site	168,609	159,102	100,873

Remote Status Category
Fully Remote
Hybrid
On-site

Avg. Salary In Usd
68,756 168,609

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High-Paying Roles – Follow the Leadership and Engineering Trail

The left bar chart shows the **10 highest-paying job titles** in data science, with **Research Team Leads** and **Engineering Managers** earning over **$400K** on average. The box plot on the right shows salary distribution across the top 10 countries by company location, where the U.S. leads with the highest median and upper-range salaries. While global opportunities exist, there is a clear regional gap. To secure elite talent, prioritize leadership-track roles in research and engineering. Offer clear promotion pathways into these high-value positions, especially for U.S.-based professionals.

Top 10 Highest Paying Job Titles