

Clean Energy & Sustainability

Salary and Sentiments 2025: Summary Edition

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Foreword: Resilience in Transition

After years of extraordinary growth across the clean-energy sector, 2025 brought a different kind of moment, one that's required all of us to pause, pay attention, and navigate more carefully. The industry is still moving forward, but the pace has changed. Policy changes and uncertainty, interest-rate pressure, slower capital deployment, and extended development timelines have created real headwinds for companies and professionals alike.

We feel that every day in the conversations we have. With candidates who are optimistic about the long-term future but more cautious than they used to be, and with hiring leaders who are under pressure to do more with less, build smarter, and get every talent decision right.

What continues to stand out for us, and what comes across clearly in this survey, is the resilience of the people who make up this industry. Even in a year of recalibration, optimism is still there. The mission still matters. The belief in the long-term trajectory of clean energy is as strong as ever. All people want are clarity, stability, and honest information to make good decisions.

That's exactly why we created this report in collaboration with WRISE. At root/edge, we've centered our approach around one simple belief: people come first.

In a market like this, that's maturing, tightening, and shifting our core belief matters even more.

The organizations that succeed are the ones that invest intentionally in their teams, in leadership, and in building cultures that retain the kind of talent the energy transition depends on. The professionals who thrive are the ones who understand their value, seek transparency, and stay open to growth even when the path forward isn't linear.

Our role is to help both sides through these moments. To give candidates confidence and clarity. To help clients find not just available talent, but the right talent.

We bridge the gap between uncertainty and opportunity with real data, real conversations, and a human-centered approach.

The insights in this guide come directly from the people powering clean energy every day, and we're grateful for their honesty and participation. We're also grateful to WRISE for partnering with us to bring more transparency and equity to an industry that needs both as it moves through this next chapter.

We hope this report provides you with perspective, direction, and a reminder that even in more challenging years, this industry remains full of passionate, capable people. All of you are its greatest strength.

root/edge and WRISE: A Shared Commitment to Transparency and Equity

WRISE and root/edge have partnered to bring greater transparency to compensation and industry sentiment across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability sectors. Together, we are working to build an equitable and informed industry where professionals can benchmark their value, employers can make data-driven decisions, and the sector as a whole can continue to grow sustainably.

root/edge brings deep expertise in energy and infrastructure recruitment, while WRISE provides a powerful platform for connection, education, and advocacy. This collaboration combines data and community to support the shared goal of empowering professionals and organizations driving the clean energy future.

The Summary Edition

This Summary Edition which is accessible to the general public provides a high-level view of key compensation and sentiment trends across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability industries.

The Full Edition which is accessible to WRISE Sponsors expands on these findings with detailed percentile data, DEI analysis, market segmentation, and in-depth commentary. For more information, please contact root/edge or WRISE to learn more.

High Level Compensation Trends

Base Salary by Job Title



*Median Base Salary

About the Research

This guide is based on the 2025 Salary & Sentiments Survey, conducted in June through to August 2025 and completed by over 500 professionals working across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability sectors.

For a detailed explanation of the survey design, data processing, and analysis methods, please see the Research Methods section at the back of this report.

root/edge’s annual survey and report could not take place without the insight, honesty, and engagement of professionals across the clean energy and sustainability community. Each response helps build a clearer picture of how the industry is evolving and ensures that pay, progression, and opportunity remain transparent and equitable. By taking part, you contribute to a collective effort to shape a stronger, fairer workforce for the future. Join the root/edge community to share your experience, stay informed, and play a part in advancing the clean energy workforce.

Base Salary by Specialization

Salaries across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability industries show modest growth rather than stagnation in 2025. External reports (Global Energy Talent Index, 2025) indicate that nearly half of professionals received pay increases this year, though most were moderate, typically under five percent. This aligns with root/edge and WRISE survey findings, where median salaries across most levels remained relatively stable compared to prior years. While compensation at senior and specialist levels continues to edge upward, overall salary growth appears to be steady but slowing, reflecting a market that has matured and faced headwinds through 2024 into 2025.

| Function | 0–4 years* | 5–8 years | 8+ years |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Asset Management | \$100,000 | \$135,000 | \$200,000 |
| Construction / Project Execution | \$117,000 | \$170,000 | \$195,275 |
| Engineering (Design, Electrical, Civil) | \$100,000 | \$141,000 | \$173,500 |
| Environmental / Permitting and Project Development | \$103,000 | \$142,500 | \$176,000 |
| Finance / Investment / M&A | \$103,500 | \$184,000 | \$225,000 |

*Data excludes field workers

Do professionals receive a bonus as part of their current package?

No 16%

Yes 84%

How much PTO do professionals receive?

6%

2 Weeks

22%

3 Weeks

28%

4 Weeks

15%

5 Weeks

8%

6+ Weeks

What are bonuses paid on across the sector?

63%

Company performance

53%

Personal performance

23%

Team performance

13%

Project Milestones

2%

Commission based

3%

Other

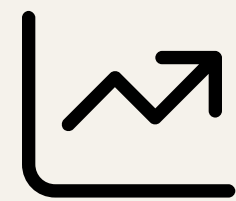
*Respondents were able to multi select answers to this question.

Bonuses play a significant role in total compensation across the clean energy and sustainability industries. With 84% of professionals receiving some form of bonus, performance-based incentives are now an established expectation rather than an exception. The majority of these are linked to company and personal performance, reflecting a sector that rewards results and accountability. However, far fewer professionals report bonuses tied to team success or project milestones, suggesting that while collaboration is central to the industry's mission, recognition and reward structures remain largely individual and company driven.

The rise in performance-based bonuses may be partly linked to the surge in private equity investment across the clean energy sector. As more developers, operators, and service providers move under PE ownership, compensation models are shifting toward performance and return-driven structures. Bonuses tied to company performance mirror the metrics that investors care about most, such as profitability, growth, and project delivery milestones. This trend reflects broader market dynamics: in 2024, private equity and venture capital deal value in renewables rose by about 64% year over year, reaching \$25.91 billion (S&P Global Market Intelligence, 2025). As investment accelerates, performance-linked pay structures are becoming more common, aligning individual incentives with investor outcomes and long-term business success.

Industry Sentiment

Stand-out Trends



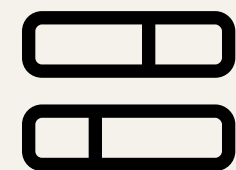
Development gap

Women are significantly less likely to have a formal growth plan.



Motivational contrast

Men place higher value on long term incentives; women emphasize inclusivity and leadership representation.



Career confidence parity

Both genders show similar confidence in career progression potential.

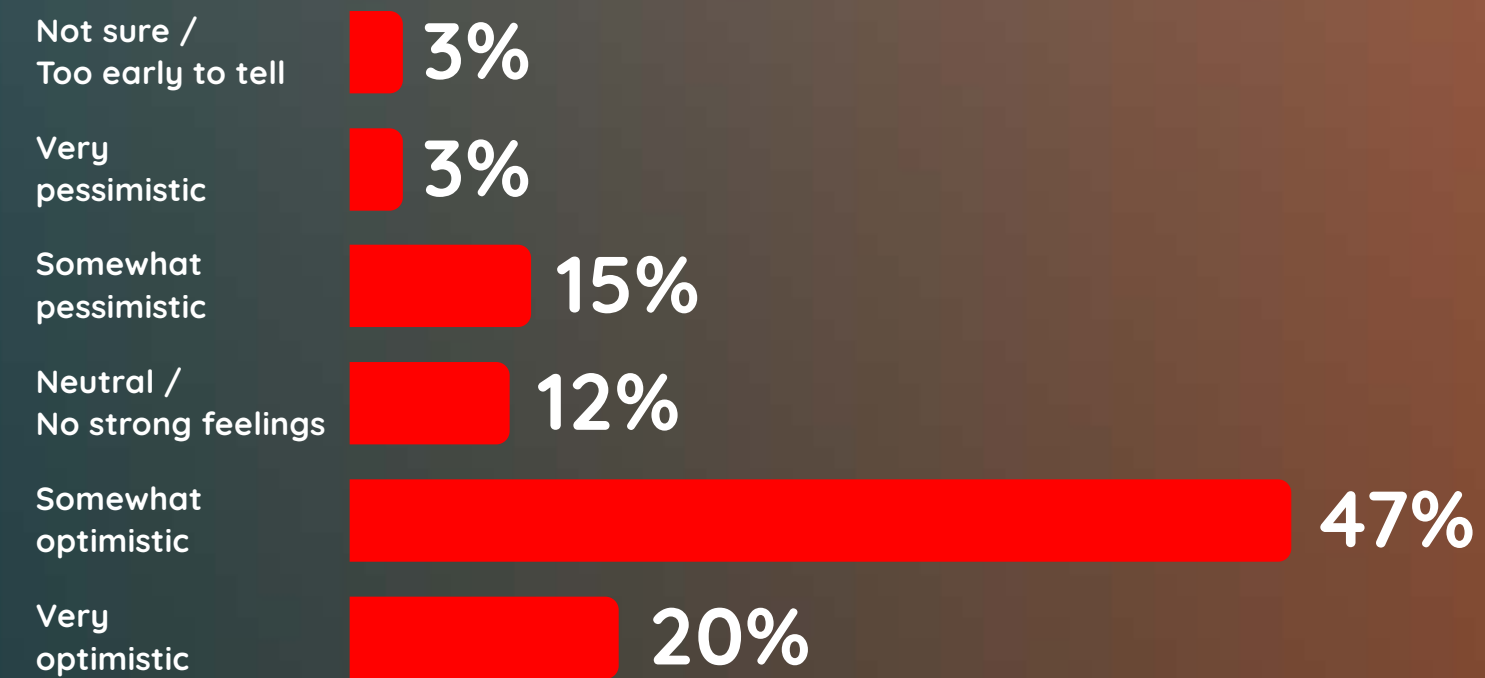


Industry Concern

89% of respondents are concerned about recent proposals to reduce clean energy tax credits and 39% of respondents considered leaving the industry in the last 12 months.



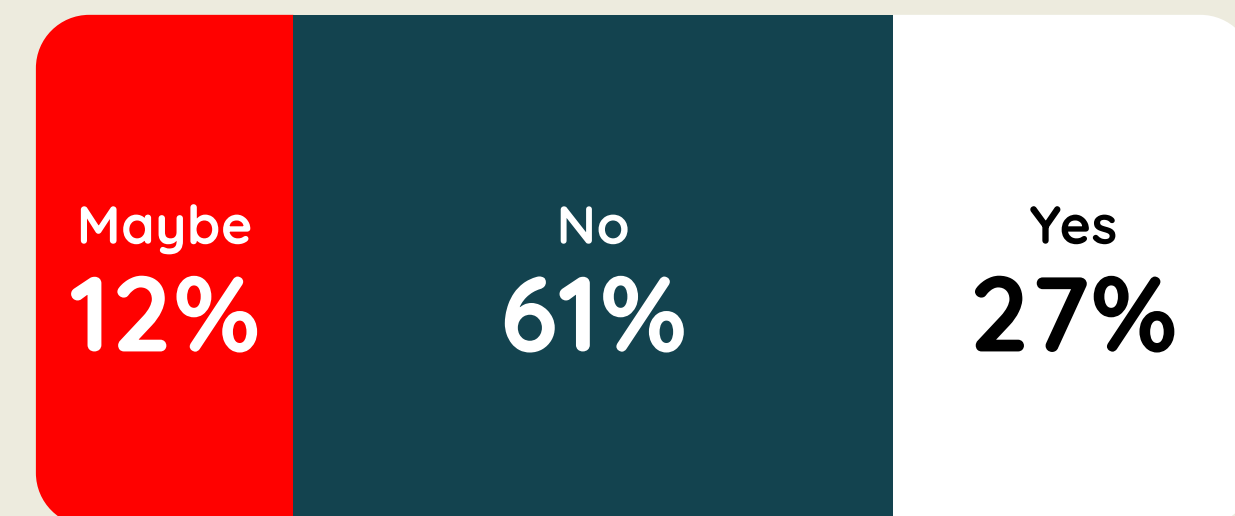
How optimistic are professionals about long-term careers in renewables?



Do professionals have development plans in place outlining a plan for their next promotion?



Have professionals considered leaving the industry in the last 12 months?



Based on the current market situation, have professionals considered leaving their employer in the next 6 months?

| | |
|--|-----|
| No, I plan to stay in the industry | 36% |
| Unlikely, but I'm concerned about long-term stability | 32% |
| Possibly, I'm exploring opportunities outside the industry | 19% |
| Yes, I'm actively planning to leave the industry | 3% |
| Not sure | 4% |
| Other | 6% |

How important is it that professionals have a development plan in place?



What percentage (%) base salary increase, if any, do professionals require to move to a new employer?

| % base salary increase needed to move roles | % of respondents |
|---|------------------|
| 1-9% | 6% |
| 10-19% | 33% |
| 20-29% | 24% |
| 30% or more | 9% |
| I would move for the same or less if the role was right | 16% |
| I'm not open to a new role at this time | 10% |
| Other (please specify) | 1% |

Sentiment across the clean energy and sustainability workforce remains largely positive, with two-thirds of professionals (67%) feeling optimistic about their long-term careers in renewables. Only a small minority (6%) describe themselves as pessimistic, suggesting continued confidence in the sector's direction despite shifting policy and market conditions. When asked about short-term career plans, over two-thirds (68%) intend to stay in the industry, though one in five are exploring opportunities elsewhere. This mix of optimism and cautious mobility reflects a market that remains attractive but is increasingly shaped by concerns over long-term stability and growth visibility.

Research Methods

Survey Design and Structure

The 2025 Salary & Sentiments Survey was conducted in June 2025 to capture a current and comprehensive view of compensation, sentiment, and workforce trends across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability sectors. The survey explored key themes including compensation, benefits, mobility, diversity, inclusion, and overall confidence in the industry.

All responses were collected anonymously to ensure accuracy and candor in the data.

Sample and Respondents

A total of 500 professionals participated in the survey, representing a broad cross-section of the U.S. clean energy workforce. Respondents came from sectors such as solar, wind, energy storage, power delivery, and sustainability.

The data includes a range of experience levels and seniority, with respondents grouped by years of experience to highlight compensation and sentiment trends throughout career stages.

Data Processing and Analysis

Responses were reviewed for consistency and completeness before analysis. Outlier data was examined for validity to ensure a representative dataset. Salary reporting is presented using percentiles (25th, 50th, and 75th) to show the spread of compensation across different levels and roles, with the 50th percentile representing the median. Two outputs will be produced: a high-level summary using median figures and a more detailed percentile-based analysis for deeper insight. Open-text responses were reviewed and thematically coded to identify key patterns and sentiments.

Partnership and Purpose

WRISE and root/edge have partnered to bring greater transparency to compensation and sentiment across the clean energy and sustainability industries in 2025. Together, the organizations aim to provide a reliable benchmark for professionals and employers, promote equity and inclusion, and inform future workforce planning in a rapidly evolving sector.

Data Integrity and Limitations

All data was self-reported and participation was voluntary. The survey achieved a balanced sample across job levels and experience bands, and no significant data limitations were identified.



Contact us

For more information about this research or to access the Salary & Sentiments 2025: Full Edition, please contact the root/edge team.



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The Full Edition includes complete percentile data, DEI analysis, market segmentation, and deeper commentary to help employers and professionals benchmark compensation and understand workforce sentiment across the U.S. clean energy and sustainability sectors.