

SALARY GUIDE

MANUFACTURING



Salary & Insights Report
2025-2026

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Introduction

The Australian Manufacturing sector stands at a pivotal point in 2025/26. As the industry continues to evolve in response to supply chain pressures, automation trends, sustainability goals, and shifting workforce expectations, the need for accurate, data-driven insights into salary benchmarks and employment trends has never been greater.

To help employers attract, retain, and reward top talent, and to empower professionals with transparency in their career planning, we've compiled this Salary Guide based on direct survey responses from Manufacturing professionals across the country. This year's guide draws on the perspectives of individuals working across a range of seniority levels, job types, company sizes, and geographies within the manufacturing space.

Beyond salary benchmarks, this report explores how professionals feel about their current roles, covering pay satisfaction, promotion opportunities, work-life balance, benefits, and career motivation. We also uncover how work arrangements and employer value propositions are influencing career movement and job satisfaction in a highly competitive labour market.

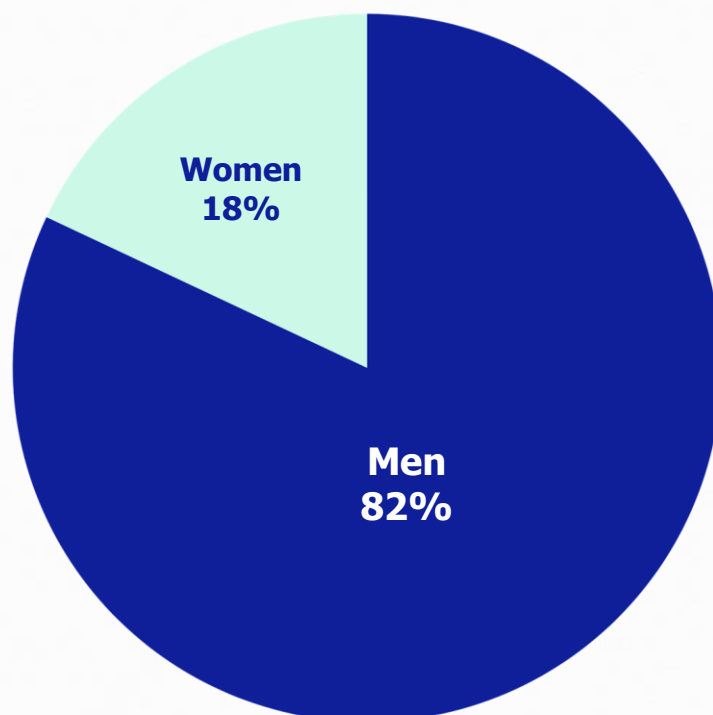
Whether you're a hiring manager benchmarking salaries, a business leader seeking to understand workforce sentiment, or a professional evaluating your next move, this guide offers the insights you need to make informed decisions in 2025 and beyond.



Demographics & Workforce Composition

The manufacturing workforce remains predominantly male, with **82%** of survey respondents identifying as men and only **18%** as women. This gender imbalance highlights an ongoing diversity challenge in the sector. While there have been efforts to attract more women into manufacturing, these figures suggest there is still significant ground to cover in terms of representation and inclusion.

In terms of seniority, the industry demonstrates a broad distribution of roles, though there is a clear concentration at the mid-to-senior levels. One in five respondents is either a Senior Specialist or a Manager, and nearly as many hold Team Leader or Department Head titles. This maturity in job seniority aligns with the high level of experience reported across the workforce, suggesting a well-established but potentially ageing talent pool.



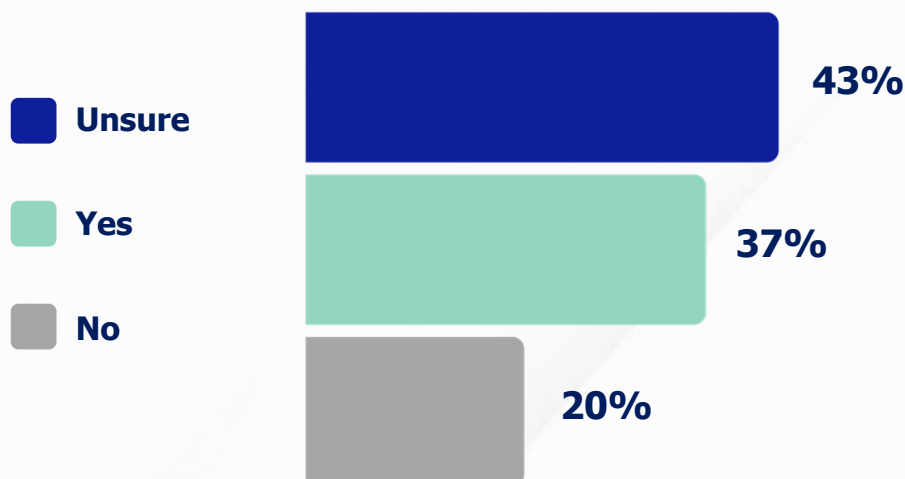
Experience & Career Progression

Experience levels in the industry are notably high, with **37%** of respondents having worked in their field for more than 20 years, and another **37%** falling in the 11–20-year range. Only **13%** of the workforce reported having 0–3 years of experience, indicating a concerning pipeline gap for junior-level talent. If unaddressed, this could pose long-term succession challenges for manufacturers, especially as senior staff begin to transition out of the workforce.

Despite the wealth of experience, upward mobility appears limited. Over **70%** of professionals have not received a promotion at their current company, and just **12%** have progressed in the past year. On the other hand, half of all respondents received a pay rise in the past 12 months, reflecting a strong commitment from employers to reward performance and retain talent. While **42%** did not report an increase or chose not to disclose, this presents a valuable opportunity for organisations to continue strengthening their retention strategies through clear, transparent reward pathways.

Despite the pay rise volume, when asked whether they believe they are being paid a market rate, just **25%** answered yes. **Nearly half said no**, and another **27%** were unsure, highlighting a perception gap between employee expectations and employer offerings. This sense of being undervalued could become a major driver of turnover if not addressed through more transparent benchmarking and internal salary reviews.

Are you expecting a pay rise this year?



Workplace Environment & Structure

Most survey respondents are employed in large organisations. An additional 28% are in medium-sized companies, and the remainder are across small businesses and startups. This distribution suggests that the sector is still largely dominated by legacy players and established firms with complex operational structures.

Job mobility is relatively high, with over half of respondents (**57%**) having been with their current employer for less than two years. Only **8%** have remained in the same company for over a decade. This data may reflect increasing churn in the workforce or a shift in employee expectations post-pandemic, with professionals now more willing to explore new roles for better conditions, benefits, or flexibility.

Flexibility, however, remains limited. The majority of roles (**73%**) are fully on-site, with **20%** offering hybrid arrangements and a small number in site-based project roles. This is understandable given the hands-on nature of many manufacturing jobs, but it does present a challenge in attracting candidates who now expect at least some level of workplace flexibility.



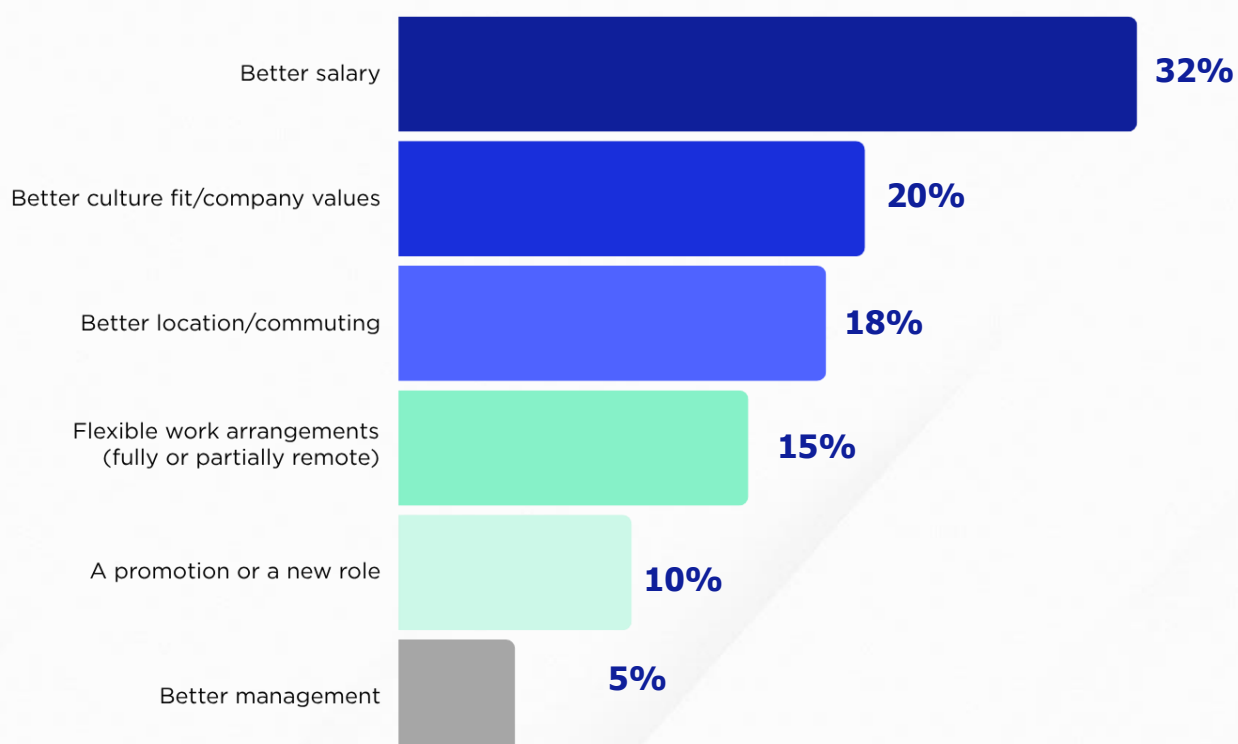
Job Market Sentiment & Mobility

Despite most respondents being currently employed, **90%** are open to new opportunities. An equal number of professionals are either actively looking for a new role or passively open to offers, both of which signal a mobile and opportunity-driven workforce. **10%** report no interest in exploring new roles.

The top motivators for job movement are unsurprising but critical: salary leads the pack (cited by nearly one-third of respondents), followed closely by better culture, location, and flexibility. Only a handful prioritised promotions or better management. These findings highlight that professionals are primarily driven by tangible benefits and lifestyle improvements rather than hierarchical advancement.

Employers who fail to adjust their value propositions, particularly around pay and flexible work, may find themselves losing talent to more progressive competitors.

What would make you consider a new offer?

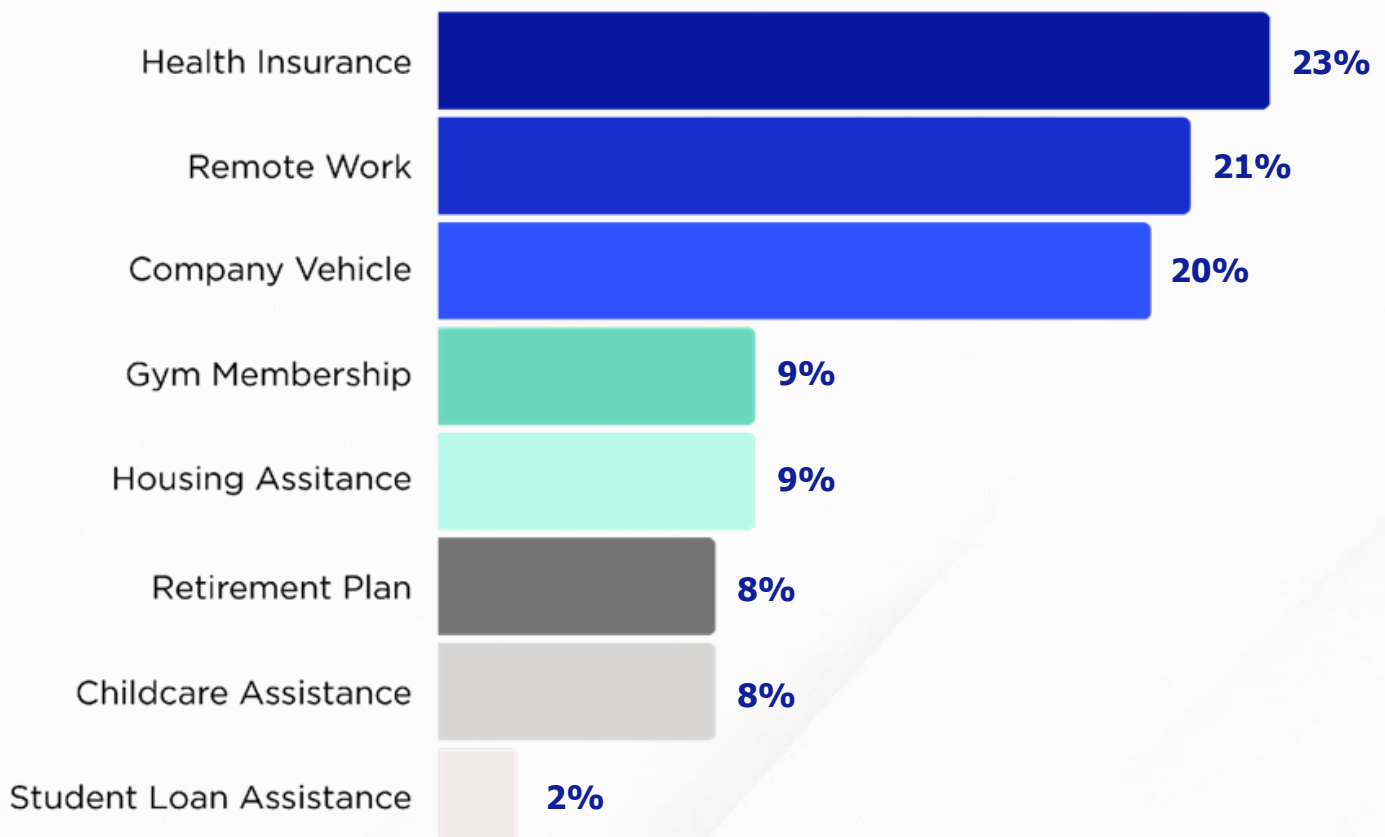


Benefits, Bonuses & Recognition

While salary is a key factor, non-financial benefits also play an important role in retention. However, current offerings appear limited. More than half of respondents reported receiving no bonus at all, and just **15%** receive bonuses tied to company or individual performance. This suggests a missed opportunity to motivate and reward contributions beyond base salary.

When asked which benefits they would most like to see, responses highlighted a strong preference for practical perks that enhance quality of life. Health insurance was the most sought-after benefit (35%), followed closely by remote work options (32%) and company vehicles (30%). Other popular choices included housing assistance, gym memberships, and childcare support, indicating that many manufacturing professionals would value a more holistic approach to total remuneration.

What benefits would you like the most?

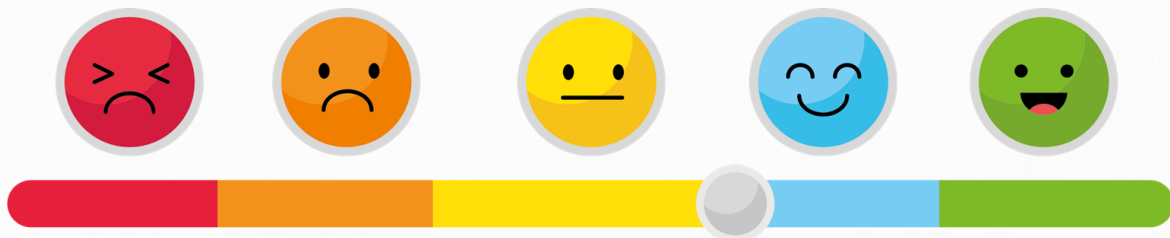


Work-Life Balance & Satisfaction

The overall sentiment around work-life balance in manufacturing is relatively positive. Nearly half of the respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied, while a small minority (**17%**) expressed dissatisfaction. However, with some respondents stating a neutral stance, there's still room to enhance wellbeing programs, particularly for those in demanding, site-based roles.

This area, if improved, could become a meaningful differentiator for employers in a sector that historically offers limited remote or hybrid options. As expectations shift across all industries, manufacturers will need to find creative ways to support employee well-being without compromising operational delivery.

How satisfied are you with your current role?



6.4 / 10

Conclusion

The 2025/26 Manufacturing Salary Guide reveals a workforce that is experienced, committed, yet increasingly conscious of their value and open to change. With more than half of respondents either actively or passively open to new opportunities, the market is clearly mobile, and expectations are shifting.

Salary remains a primary driver of job movement, but it is no longer the only one. Professionals are also seeking flexible work arrangements, better cultural fit, and long-term career progression. At the same time, employers face mounting pressure to bridge perception gaps around pay equity, provide meaningful benefits, and modernise work environments in what has traditionally been a highly on-site industry.

For hiring managers, this guide highlights the importance of offering competitive, transparent packages and investing in long-term workforce strategies that prioritise recognition, retention, and succession planning, especially given the relatively low volume of junior talent entering the field.

For professionals, the insights here provide valuable benchmarks to help evaluate current roles, explore new opportunities, and better understand how your expectations align with wider industry trends.

As the sector continues to adapt to global change and local pressures, one thing is clear: retaining top talent in manufacturing will depend not just on what employers pay, but how they engage, support, and grow their people. For expert advice, contact our specialised team by clicking below.

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SALARY GUIDE

Project Engineering

AVERAGE BASE SALARY
FOR 12 MONTHS
AUD
EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Project Engineer	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$145,000 - \$210,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$130,000 - \$190,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$140,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$190,000

Project Engineer (Mechanical)	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$105,000 - \$160,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$95,000 - \$145,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$95,000 - \$145,000

SALARY GUIDE

Project Engineering

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12
MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Project Engineer (Electrical)

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$105,000 - \$160,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$95,000 - \$145,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$95,000 - \$145,000

Project Engineer (Process)

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$105,000 - \$160,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$95,000 - \$145,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$95,000 - \$145,000

SALARY GUIDE

Projects

AVERAGE BASE SALARY
FOR 12 MONTHS
AUD
EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Project Manager	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$140,000 - \$200,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$130,000 - \$190,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$140,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$190,000

Project Scheduler	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$105,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$95,000 - \$135,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$140,000
WA - Perth	\$95,000 - \$135,000

SALARY GUIDE

Automation Engineer / Technical Writer

AVERAGE BASE SALARY
FOR 12 MONTHS
AUD
EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Automation Engineer	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$105,000 - \$160,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$95,000 - \$145,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$95,000 - \$145,000

Technical Writer	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$80,000 - \$120,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$75,000 - \$115,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$80,000 - \$120,000
WA - Perth	\$75,000 - \$115,000

SALARY GUIDE

HSE

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12
MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Environment Health & Safety	
Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$100,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$85,000 - \$135,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$90,000 - \$140,000
WA - Perth	\$85,000 - \$135,000

SALARY GUIDE

Maintenance

AVERAGE BASE SALARY
FOR 12 MONTHS
AUD
EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Maintenance Supervisors

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$80,000 - \$120,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$75,000 - \$115,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$80,000 - \$120,000
WA - Perth	\$75,000 - \$115,000

Engineering/Maintenance Managers

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$140,000 - \$210,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$120,000 - \$190,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$130,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$120,000 - \$190,000

SALARY GUIDE

Maintenance

AVERAGE BASE SALARY
FOR 12 MONTHS
AUD
EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Maintenance Electricians

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$90,000 - \$120,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$65,000 - \$95,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$70,000 - \$100,000
WA - Perth	\$65,000 - \$95,000

Maintenance Fitter

Location	Salary Range
NSW - Sydney	\$100,000 - \$130,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$70,000 - \$100,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$70,000 - \$100,000
WA - Perth	\$85,000 - \$110,000