

# THE JOURNALISM & MEDIA CAREER MAP

Newsroom roles across reporting, editing, and visuals: pay, demand, and who is hiring.

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# YOUR PLACE IN JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

Journalism and media are being remade across formats, from newsletters and podcasts to video and live, and the work rewards people who can report, write, and tell a story in any of them. Whether you are trying to break in or you are already on staff and aiming higher, the same things move you forward: knowing which roles are growing, what they pay, and the exact skills each one rewards. This map lays that out role by role, so your next move is a decision you make with evidence instead of guesswork. It is a competitive field, and technology keeps changing how some of the work gets done. That is not a reason to hesitate. It is the reason craft and a credential matter more at every stage, because the people who keep learning are the ones who keep getting hired. Use the profiles ahead to find where you fit and what to build next.

WHAT EACH PROFILE GIVES YOU

- 1

**COMPENSATION:** What the role pays from entry to senior, drawn from current US job ads where roles disclose pay and US government wage data (BLS) otherwise. Real numbers you can plan a move around.
- 2

**DEMAND:** Where the hiring is heading, so you target roles with room to grow into.
- 3

**AI EXPOSURE:** What technology is changing in the work and what stays human, so you build skills that last.
- 4

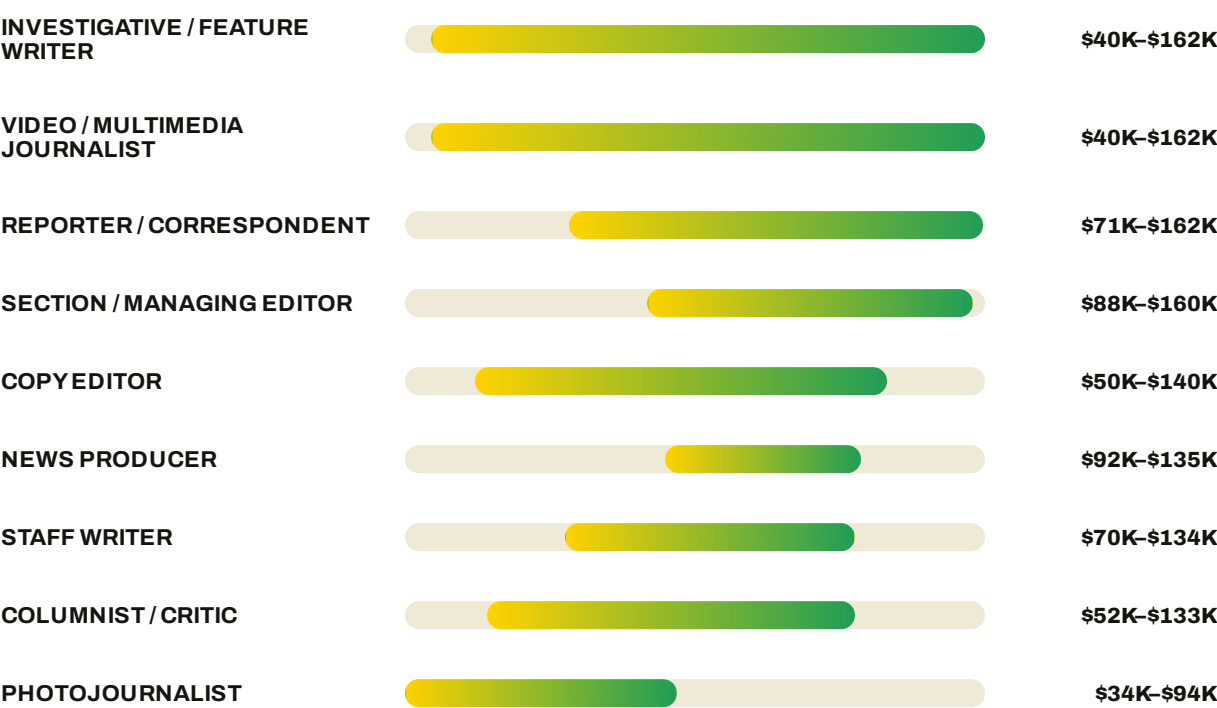
**SKILLS:** The hard and soft skills the role hires for, plus the ones that keep you competitive as you advance.
- 5

**YOUR NEXT MOVE:** One concrete step whether you are entering or leveling up, and the credential that closes the gap.

# EARNINGS AT A GLANCE

This page sets the stage before the role profiles. It shows the pay range for each role in this guide, from a typical entry point to a senior level, so you can see how the field is shaped overall before you read any single role in depth. Read it as a map, not a ranking. Each bar covers one role's own range, drawn from current US job ads and US government wage data, and the roles sit in different parts of the field, so the bars are not meant to be lined up against each other. Use them to find where your interests and your earning goals overlap, then turn to those role pages.

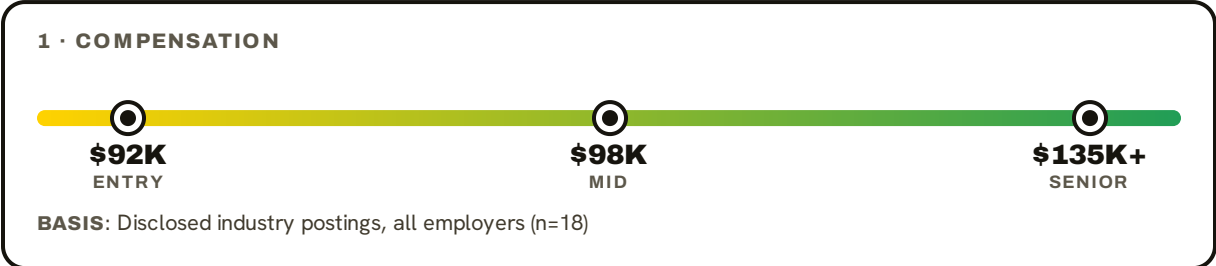
Roles in this guide range from about \$34K at entry to \$162K and up at senior.



These figures come from US government wage data, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) wage survey, and current US job postings (as of June 2026), gathered across many independent employers, not from Yellowbrick. Pay varies by region, employer, and experience, is not guaranteed, and is specific to each role, so the ranges are not comparable from one role to the next.

# NEWS PRODUCER

You call the shots on what airs, shaping every story that reaches the audience before they even know they needed it. As a News Producer, you build the rundown, coordinate live elements, and turn chaos into broadcast clarity. It is creative power under pressure, and the stakes are real.



2 • DEMAND

↗ Growing

Hiring for News Producers is on the rise, with newsrooms actively seeking professionals who can own a broadcast from pitch to air.

3 • AI EXPOSURE

LOW-MODERATE

|                                                     |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AUTOMATING</b>                                   | <b>STAYS HUMAN</b>                                                    |
| Script research, draft writing, and footage logging | Editorial judgment, source negotiation, and live production decisions |

**IN PRACTICE:** AI helps producers scan wire feeds and flag story angles quickly, freeing them to focus on editorial decisions and live execution.

- 4 • CORE SKILLS
- Adobe Photoshop

Canva

Story planning

Rundown management

Live production

- FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS
- Live & digital production

Audience analytics

- EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING
- Hearst

Bloomberg

NPR

*Illustrative examples drawn from recent US job postings, not an endorsement or a guarantee of current openings.*

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a sample rundown and a produced segment reel you can show in any interview room. Sharpen your live production instincts and story planning discipline, since those skills separate candidates at every level.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

You chase the story before it becomes history, camera in hand, finding the frame that makes the world stop and look. Photojournalists turn breaking moments into lasting visual records that inform and move audiences. It is visceral, vital work that puts you at the center of how events get remembered.

1 • COMPENSATION



BASIS: BLS OES 2024 (CareerOneStop): Photographers (27-4021)

2 • DEMAND

→ Stable

Hiring stays consistent as newsrooms, agencies, and digital publishers continue to need skilled visual storytellers who can deliver under pressure.

3 • AI EXPOSURE



LOW-MODERATE

AUTOMATING

Caption drafting, image culling, retouching, and metadata tagging

STAYS HUMAN

News instinct, scene access, ethical framing, and split-second shot decisions

IN PRACTICE: AI-assisted tools can speed up photo culling and basic metadata tagging, but the editorial eye and field instincts remain yours alone.

4 • CORE SKILLS

Photojournalism

Photo editing

Adobe Photoshop

Visual storytelling

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Visual storytelling

Photo & video editing

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

Hearst

Gannett

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a tight portfolio of photo essays that show range across hard news, features, and human-interest subjects. Sharpen your visual storytelling instincts alongside your Photoshop editing craft, and earn a journalism credential to sharpen editorial judgment and open doors to staff and contract.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# COPY EDITOR

You catch what others miss: the misplaced comma, the unverified claim, the headline that almost lands. Copy editors are the final word on accuracy and clarity, and in a media world hungry for trust, that precision is power worth owning.

1 • COMPENSATION



BASIS: BLS OES 2024 (CareerOneStop): Editors (27-3041)

2 • DEMAND

→ Stable

Hiring for copy editors holds steady, with consistent need across print, digital, and broadcast outlets for professionals who can protect accuracy at speed.

3 • AI EXPOSURE



MODERATE

AUTOMATING

Spell-check, fact verification, wire-service selection, basic copy corrections

STAYS HUMAN

Editorial judgment, author negotiation, story development, taste-driven content planning

IN PRACTICE: AI drafts and summarizes copy, but a human editor catches the subtle factual errors and tonal missteps that automated tools routinely miss.

4 • CORE SKILLS

Copy editing   AP style   Fact-checking   Headline writing

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Fact-checking & verification   Digital publishing tools   AI-assisted reporting

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

Dow Jones   The Atlantic

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a before-and-after editing portfolio that shows your command of AP style and fact-checking instincts. Sharpen headline writing on live content, then let a journalism credential back up what your samples already prove.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# COLUMNIST / CRITIC

You shape how people think, react, and argue, writing columns and criticism that cut through the noise with a point of view only you can bring. In a media landscape full of content, sharp opinion and deep beat knowledge are what editors and readers actually come back for.

1 • COMPENSATION

\$52K

ENTRY

\$72K

MID

\$133K+

SENIOR

BASIS: BLS OES 2024 (CareerOneStop): Writers and Authors (27-3043)

2 • DEMAND

→ Stable

Openings for columnists and critics remain steady, with editors consistently seeking writers who can hold a beat and a loyal readership.

3 • AI EXPOSURE

MODERATE

AUTOMATING

First-draft copy, trend data review, slogan brainstorming

STAYS HUMAN

Client persuasion, creative judgment, tone calibration by audience

IN PRACTICE:

AI tools help columnists scan source material faster, but the argument, the angle, and the signature voice remain entirely yours to own.

4 • CORE SKILLS

Opinion writing

Analysis

Beat expertise

Voice & style

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Distinctive voice & analysis

Audience engagement

AI-assisted reporting

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

Dow Jones

The Washington Post

Penske Media

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a byline archive that shows range: a reported opinion piece, a cultural review, and a sharp take on a breaking story in your beat. Honing a consistent voice and earning a journalism credential can move you from contributor to staff writer, or from staff to syndication conversations.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# STAFF WRITER

You pitch stories, chase sources, and file copy that shapes how people understand the world around them. Staff writers sit at the center of editorial life, owning beats and building the kind of byline that earns trust over time. This is craft, accountability, and real influence on the public conversation.

1 · COMPENSATION



**BASIS:** Indicative midpoint · industry postings (n=4)

2 · DEMAND

→ **Stable**

Hiring for staff writers remains steady, with editors consistently seeking reporters who can own a beat and deliver polished, accurate copy on deadline.

3 · AI EXPOSURE



**MODERATE**

**AUTOMATING**

First-draft copy, slogan variants, and trend-data synthesis

**STAYS HUMAN**

Client relationships, creative judgment, and campaign concept origination

**IN PRACTICE:** AI tools help staff writers scan large document sets and surface patterns, but the reporting, verification, and narrative judgment stay entirely yours.

4 · CORE SKILLS

Reporting   Feature writing   Interviewing   Beat coverage

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Multiplatform storytelling   Audience analytics   AI-assisted reporting

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

Penske Media   The Athletic   Bloomberg

5 · YOUR MOVE

Build clips that show range: a hard news piece, a long-form feature, and a Q&A that proves your interviewing chops. Sharpening beat coverage and source development will move you from contributor to indispensable.

**YOUR NEXT STEP** →

# SECTION / MANAGING EDITOR

You shape what stories get told, how they land, and who tells them. As a Section or Managing Editor, you run the editorial engine: assigning, refining, and publishing work that informs and moves audiences. Few roles carry this much creative authority.

1 • COMPENSATION

\$88K

ENTRY

\$122K

MID

\$160K+

SENIOR

BASIS: Disclosed industry postings, all employers (n=34)

2 • DEMAND

→ Stable

Hiring for editors holds steady, with newsrooms consistently seeking leaders who can manage talent, quality, and output across platforms.

3 • AI EXPOSURE

LOW-MODERATE

AUTOMATING

Copy proofing, fact-checking, wire-story filtering, basic layout allocation

STAYS HUMAN

Editorial judgment, writer hiring, story ideation, author negotiation, and publication direction

IN PRACTICE: Editors use AI tools to surface trending topics and flag potential factual gaps, keeping human judgment central to every final call.

4 • CORE SKILLS

WordPress

Figma

Editing

Story assigning

Newsroom management

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Editorial judgment & standards

Audience & analytics strategy

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

The Atlantic

NPR

Hearst

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a portfolio that shows story selection instincts: pitch documents, edited pieces before and after, and a sample editorial calendar. Sharpen newsroom management and visual layout skills to lead cross-functional teams.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# INVESTIGATIVE/ FEATURE WRITER

You chase the story no one else will touch, dig through records, and build the sources who trust only you. Feature and investigative writing shapes public understanding and holds power to account. It is some of the most consequential work in media.

1 • COMPENSATION



**BASIS:** BLS OES 2024 (CareerOneStop): News Analysts, Reporters & Journalists (27-3023). BLS reports these as one occupation (27-3023); band shared across 2 roles in this guide, differentiated by demand, skills, and employers

2 • DEMAND

↘ Cooling

Hiring is selective and competitive, making a sharp, documented portfolio and a distinct reporting specialty more valuable than ever.

3 • AI EXPOSURE



LOW-MODERATE

AUTOMATING

Background research, fact-checking, transcription, and copy error correction

STAYS HUMAN

Source cultivation, editorial judgment, on-scene investigation, and narrative voice

**IN PRACTICE:** AI tools assist with document searches and transcription, while the source-building and judgment calls remain entirely yours.

4 • CORE SKILLS

Investigative reporting

Source development

Records / FOIA

Long-form writing

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

Data & document investigation

Source protection & verification

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

The Washington Post

Gannett

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a clip file anchored by at least one deeply reported piece that shows source development and records work. Advancing pros should pursue a Freedom of Information Act specialty or long-form structure skills to move into senior roles.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# VIDEO / MULTIMEDIA JOURNALIST

You're in the field, camera rolling, turning breaking moments into stories that audiences actually feel. Video journalists shape how people understand the world, frame by frame. It's craft, instinct, and impact all at once.

1 · COMPENSATION

ILLUSTRATIVE

\$40K

ENTRY

\$60K

MID

\$162K+

SENIOR

**BASIS:** Closest standard occupation: News Analysts, Reporters & Journalists (27-3023), BLS OES 2024. BLS reports these as one occupation (27-3023); band shared across 2 roles in this guide, differentiated by demand, skills, and employers

2 · DEMAND

↘ Cooling

Hiring is selective in this space, making a strong reel and sharp field skills the clearest way to stand out to editors.

3 · AI EXPOSURE

LOW-MODERATE

AUTOMATING

Copy error-checking, background research aggregation, transcription

STAYS HUMAN

On-scene reporting, source relationships, editorial judgment, live anchoring

**IN PRACTICE:** AI tools can assist with rough-cut transcription and caption drafts, but the editorial eye behind every shot stays yours.

4 · CORE SKILLS

- Video production
- Premiere Pro
- Field shooting
- Visual storytelling

FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS

- Mobile video production
- Multiplatform storytelling

EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING

- Hearst
- The New York Times
- Dow Jones

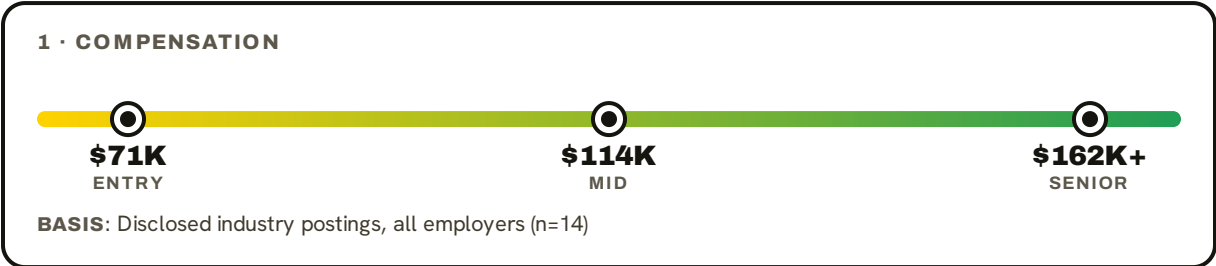
5 · YOUR MOVE

Build a short-form documentary piece that shows your shooting and editing range: that reel opens doors. Deepen your visual storytelling instincts alongside technical production skills, and earning a journalism credential strengthens the case you make to any assignment desk.

YOUR NEXT STEP →

# REPORTER/ CORRESPONDENT

You chase the story, build the sources, and put truth on the record. Reporters shape how people understand their world, and that influence is real. If you want work that demands intelligence, agility, and integrity, this role delivers all three.



2 • DEMAND

↘ **Cooling**

Hiring is selective, which means reporters who bring sharp sourcing skills and verified, publication-ready work stand out in a competitive field.

3 • AI EXPOSURE

**LOW-MODERATE**

| AUTOMATING                                                       | STAYS HUMAN                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Background research, copy-checking, and transcript summarization | Source relationships, on-scene judgment, and interpretive storytelling |

**IN PRACTICE:** AI tools help reporters scan large document sets for leads, but the sourcing, interviewing, and verification that make a story credible remain human work.

- 4 • CORE SKILLS
- Beat reporting
  - Source development
  - Interviewing
  - Fact verification

- FUTURE-PROOF SKILLS
- Verification & fact-checking
  - Multiplatform reporting

- EXAMPLE EMPLOYERS HIRING
- Hearst
  - Gannett
  - Penske Media

5 • YOUR MOVE

Build a beat portfolio with published clips or self-initiated investigations before you apply. Deepening source networks and mastering fact verification moves you up the masthead faster. Earning a journalism credential sharpens the fundamentals that editors actually test for at every level.

**YOUR NEXT STEP →**

# AI IN THE NEWSROOM

AI in this field changes month to month. This page is a snapshot of where it stands now, not a forecast. Companies are adopting these tools to scale their work, while the people whose work trains them are contesting how they are used. Both forces shape the careers in this map.

**Yellowbrick's stance is simple: stay informed to stay competitive. We report only what employers and the industry are doing in practice, so you can judge your next move for yourself.**

**WHAT IS SHIFTING**

Generative tools are taking on repeatable, high-volume tasks, which changes what a day's work is made of faster than it changes which roles exist.

**THE OPEN QUESTION**

Consent and credit, whether training data was licensed and whether the people who made it share in what the tools earn. Courts, unions, and regulators are still deciding.

**WHAT STAYS YOURS**

The parts that do not automate are what this map is built on: judgment, taste, relationships, and the authority to decide when something is good. Tools generate options; they cannot tell you which is right.

**WHERE EARLY-CAREER SITS**

Automation reaches entry-level tasks first, the rungs people use to break in. That makes a strong portfolio and a clear specialty matter more, not less.

**HOW TO READ ANY AI HEADLINE IN THIS FIELD**

1. Who benefits, and who carries the cost?
2. Is the use licensed and consented, or contested?
3. Does it automate a task, or replace a role?
4. Which skills does it make more valuable?

These examples illustrate the dynamics above and change as deals and cases resolve. Sources are numbered on the Sources and References page.

| ADOPTION                                                                                                                                                                                    | OBJECTION                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The New York Times signed its first generative-AI licensing deal, letting Amazon use Times journalism, including NYT Cooking and The Athletic, in products such as Alexa. <a href="#">1</a> | Penske Media, the owner of Rolling Stone, Billboard, and Variety, sued Google, alleging its AI Overviews republish publishers' work and cut the search traffic that funds reporting. <a href="#">3</a> |
| UK news publisher Reach licensed its content for Amazon's Nova AI models and Alexa, with payment tied to how often its journalism is used. <a href="#">2</a>                                | A federal judge in the New York Times case ordered OpenAI to turn over a sample of about 20 million anonymized ChatGPT logs to the news plaintiffs. <a href="#">4</a>                                  |

Whether you are breaking in or already on staff, your leverage is the same: the reporting, the judgment, and the trust no model can manufacture, paired with enough fluency to use the tools on your terms. That keeps you the author of your career.

# YOUR MOVE IN JOURNALISM & MEDIA

Wherever you are right now, breaking into journalism or moving up in a newsroom, the next step is the same: proof you can report, write, and tell a story across formats, and a credential that gets your work in front of editors. The right program gives you both faster than figuring it out alone. Think of the program below as a starting point rather than a finish line: a structured way to build the skills, the clips, and the contacts that the roles in this guide ask for.

- **Breaking in?** Start with the program below to build core reporting and storytelling craft.
- **Already working?** Add the multiplatform skills and credential that move you up and keep you competitive.
- **Either way,** you come away with published-ready work, a recognized certificate, and a network of people hiring across this map.

# MODERN JOURNALISM

This online certificate course is developed with NYU journalism school faculty and journalists from Rolling Stone and other news organizations. It covers investigative tools and techniques, interviewing, journalistic ethics, audio and visual storytelling, and using social media for newsgathering and distribution. The program consists of six self-paced modules, each three to five hours, completed through on-demand video lessons and skill-building assignments.

## WHAT STANDS OUT

- NYU Certificate of Completion you can add to your resume and LinkedIn
- Six flexible online modules with self-paced projects
- Instruction from NYU faculty and working journalists

## WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

You build practical reporting skills by working through real-world case studies, hands-on projects, and assignments that span audio, visual, and digital storytelling formats.

*Maps to in this guide: Investigative / Feature Writer, Photojournalist, Video / Multimedia Journalist, News Producer, Copy Editor, Columnist / Critic, Staff Writer, Reporter / Correspondent, Section / Managing Editor.*

**EXPLORE THE PROGRAM →**



SCAN TO EXPLORE

# HOW WE BUILT THIS

This page explains how the guide is built and where each number comes from. Pay is drawn from current US job ads and US government wage data; demand, skills, and the companies hiring come from those same job ads. Every figure traces to a named source, and the guide is reviewed by qualified people before publication. The full source list and references are on the Sources and References page at the back. Data current as of June 2026.

- 01 Pay.** Each range is the pay shown in current US job ads for that role, gathered from many employers. Where ads do not show enough pay, we use US government wage data instead, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (the federal agency that tracks pay). If we cannot ground a role's pay either way, we leave that role out rather than guess.
- 02 Demand.** Whether hiring is growing, steady, or cooling, based on how many ads we see and US government job-growth projections. When there is not enough to call a direction, we say so and show how active hiring is right now instead.
- 03 Skills and employers.** The tools and skills each role hires for, and the example employers, come from recent job ads. They show what the market is asking for; they are not official statistics.
- 04 AI exposure.** A plain read of what the technology is changing in the role and what stays human, based on the standard list of tasks each job involves.
- 05 Review.** This guide draws on several current sources and was reviewed by qualified people before it shipped.

# SOURCES & REFERENCES

Every figure in this guide traces to a named source. The data sources below feed the pay, demand, skills, and hiring signals throughout the guide; the references support the claims on the AI page.

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## DATA SOURCES

US Bureau of Labor Statistics, via CareerOneStop: government wage data and job-growth projections. We use these to ground pay where job ads do not show enough, and to read demand.

O\*NET: the US government's catalog of what each occupation does. It grounds the skills and the AI-exposure read.

TheirStack: a database of current job ads. It drives the pay ranges, the example employers, and the in-demand skills.

Pay ranges are role-specific and reflect each role's own market, so they are not directly comparable from one role to the next. The full note on the pay figures is on the earnings page.

Where neither job ads nor government data fits a role, pay is researched from third-party, methodology-backed sources and checked by people before it appears, never published automatically.

The AI page lists its own sources, used only for the claims on that page, not for the pay figures here.

All trademarks, logos, and brand names are the property of their respective owners.

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## AI PAGE REFERENCES (INDEPENDENTLY VERIFIED)

1. The New York Times Company, 2025-05. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/05/29/media/new-york-times-amazon-ai-nyt-cooking-athletic-licensing-deal>
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4. U.S. District Court, S.D.N.Y. (reported by the National Law Review), 2026-01. <https://natlawreview.com/article/openai-loses-privacy-gambit-20-million-chatgpt-logs-likely-headed-copyright>