Mid- and late-career salaries in optics and photonics

Mid- and late-career professionals earn a combined worldwide median salary of $91,138 working in optical engineering, electrical engineering, physics, and other light-focused fields.

Where do mid- and late-career professionals work?

FOR-PROFIT COMPANIES:
- Mid-career: 47% Median Salary: $94,474
- Late-career: 54% Median Salary: $125,000

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:
- Mid-career: 36% Median Salary: $15,490
- Late-career: 31% Median Salary: $50,421

GOVERNMENT/MILITARY:
- Mid-career: 17% Median Salary: $10,000
- Late-career: 15% Median Salary: $10,867

What are the most popular engineering degrees for mid- and late-career professionals?

Mid-career: 47%
- Electrical Engineering: 22%
- Optical Engineering: 22%
- Mechanical Engineering: 16%
- Engineering Physics: 14%
- Materials Science: 6%
- Biomedical Engineering: 4%
- Other: 2%
- Computer Engineering: 1%
- Chemical Engineering: 1%
- Aerospace Engineering: 1%

Late-career: 54%
- Electrical Engineering: 25%
- Optical Engineering: 20%
- Mechanical Engineering: 17%
- Engineering Physics: 12%
- Materials Science: 5%
- Biomedical Engineering: 4%
- Other: 3%
- Computer Engineering: 2%
- Chemical Engineering: 2%
- Aerospace Engineering: 1%

Where did mid- and late-career professionals find their current jobs, and how do their salaries break down across countries?

Mid-career: 53%
- Networking or referral through personal contact: 30%
- Online job advertisement: 13%
- I was recruited: 19%
- I contacted the employer directly (no job was advertised): 10%
- University career office: 7%
- I founded or started the company: 3%
- Printed job advertisement (newspaper or journal): 2%

Late-career: 47%
- Networking or referral through personal contact: 33%
- Online job advertisement: 13%
- I was recruited: 23%
- I contacted the employer directly (no job was advertised): 10%
- University career office: 9%
- I founded or started the company: 7%
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Average Mid/Late Career Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>Late</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$127,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$85,315</td>
<td>$106,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>$75,373</td>
<td>$95,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>$74,276</td>
<td>$98,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>$68,094</td>
<td>$75,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>$58,634</td>
<td>$79,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>$55,390</td>
<td>$71,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
<td>$48,825</td>
<td>$65,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>$64,608</td>
<td>$82,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>$41,681</td>
<td>$61,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>$118,218</td>
<td>$24,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>$17,371</td>
<td>$20,696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Half of mid-career professionals earn over $74,563 per year, with the top 25 percent earning $119,002 or more. Late-career professionals have a median salary of $127,822, while the top 25 percent earn $195,000 or more.