Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium 2026 Salary Survey Report

Data collected in March 2026

Report published in July 2026

MINNESOTA
GIS/LIS
CONSORTIUM

Contents

About the Consortium 2
About this Report 2
About the Respondents 3
Salary Breakdowns 4
- General Compensation 4
- Years of GIS Experience 5
- Compensation Type 6
- Job Title 7
- Employment Sector 8
- Experience Areas 9
- Educational Background 10
- Computer Programming 10
- Technical Proficiencies 14
- Geographic Region 24
- GISP Certification 25
- Gender Identity 25
- Disability or other Chronic Condition 26
- Race and Ethnic Identity 27
- Military Service 27

Respondent Comments 28
- Emerging Technologies 28
- Additional Comments 28

Conclusions 28
- Statement on Equity 28
- Acknowledgements 29
- *Report Prepared by* 29

Supplemental Materials 30
- Survey Questions 30
- Survey Response Map – Regions 38
- Survey Response Map – ZIP Codes 39

About the Consortium

Mission statement

To develop and support the GIS/LIS community in Minnesota for the benefit of our people and contributors.

The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium is a forum for communicating information and improving cooperation among those interested in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Land Information Systems (LIS) in the State of Minnesota. Members include surveyors and GIS users in local, state, federal and tribal government agencies, business and industry, educational institutions and nonprofits. Membership is free.

The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium is an official 501c3 non-profit organization. More information about the Consortium is available at www.mngislis.org.

About this Report

Methodology

The Board of Directors assigned the Salary Survey to the Professional Development Committee. Members of this committee modified and updated the 2026 Salary Survey questions and published the survey using ArcGIS Survey123 (version 3.25), an online survey tool available to the Consortium through its Esri ArcGIS software maintenance.

The committee collected survey responses between the dates of March 1st and March 31st, 2026. In addition to announcing the survey on the Consortium's biweekly e-announcement emails, they posted the survey link multiple times on the MN GIS/LIS Consortium's social media channels. Individual Consortium members also publicized the survey through their professional and social networks. The format, timing, and solicitation of the 2026 and previous surveys were similar but not identical.

Privacy considerations

To mask individual respondent data, this report only includes salary trends for individual job attributes that received at least 10 responses. This report summarizes salaries using medians and bottom/top third break points. These numbers were rounded to the nearest hundred dollars for further anonymity.

Limitations

The results of the 2026 Salary Survey reflect the composition of the survey respondent pool. Although the Consortium's membership includes GIS and LIS users in government

agencies, business and industry sectors, and educational institutions, membership is weighted heavily toward public sector employees. There is an assumed level of subjectivity in survey responses. The GIS industry generally uses a common language to describe positions and specialties, but the terminology is not standardized.

No single attribute of a GIS job can fully explain its salary trends. This report explores the relationship between different job attributes and salaries, but these results are not and should not be interpreted as causal or conclusive. With these known limitations, the Consortium now presents this snapshot of GIS/LIS salary trends in Minnesota for 2026.

Accessibility

Some of the data in this report are presented in chart images. In those cases, the data points also appear in table form. If you have any accessibility or other accommodation needs with this report, please email profdev@mngislis.org.

About the Respondents

Response makeup

227 members completed the Salary Survey. This is a smaller sample size than in 2024 (236), 2022 (320) and 2020 (313). 98% of the 2026 respondents work full time. The median age of respondents was 40. Two-thirds of respondents have worked in GIS/LIS for between 5 and 25 years.

Work sector

67% of respondents reported working in the government sector. 26% reported working in the private sector, and the remaining 8% work in the education or nonprofit sectors. This is a higher government representation than in past surveys.

Work environment

57% of respondents reported working in a hybrid work environment with anywhere from 1-2 office days per week to 1-3 office days per month. 12% of respondents work remotely full time. 31% work in the office full time or only work remotely on occasion.

ArcGIS platform

66% of respondents reported using ArcGIS Pro as their main GIS application. 8% reported using ArcGIS Online, and 16% reported using ArcGIS Enterprise. The remaining 10% reported using some other application.

Respondents also provided information about additional GIS software they use along with their primary application. 43% reported that they also use Python. 22% reported also using Google Earth Pro, 17% reported also using ArcMap, 15% reported also using QGIS, and 13% reported also using OpenStreetMap. 6% reported also using PostGIS, and 5% reported also using R.

Education

52% of respondents hold a bachelor's degree. 43% hold a master's degree. The most common degrees held include GIS and Geography by a large margin followed by smaller pool in Environmental Science, Geology, Biology, and other sciences.

Sample overlap

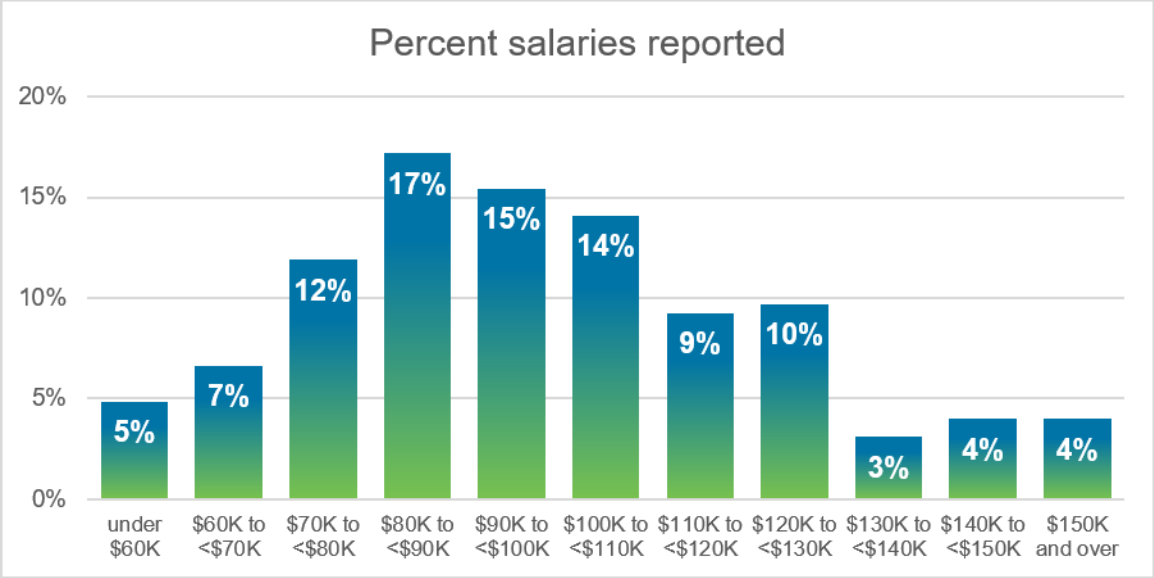
54% of respondents in 2026 reported taking the 2024 and/or 2022 Salary Survey. There are some limited comparisons of salaries over time in this report, but in general the data reported here are intended as a discrete snapshot of the state of GIS salaries in 2026.

Salary Breakdowns

The following sections of this report explore salary trends by job attributes. The reader is reminded that none of this data should be interpreted as causal or conclusive.

General Compensation

The median salary reported in 2026 was $95,300. Adjusted for inflation, this represents a 6% increase from the 2024 survey and an 11% increase from 2022.

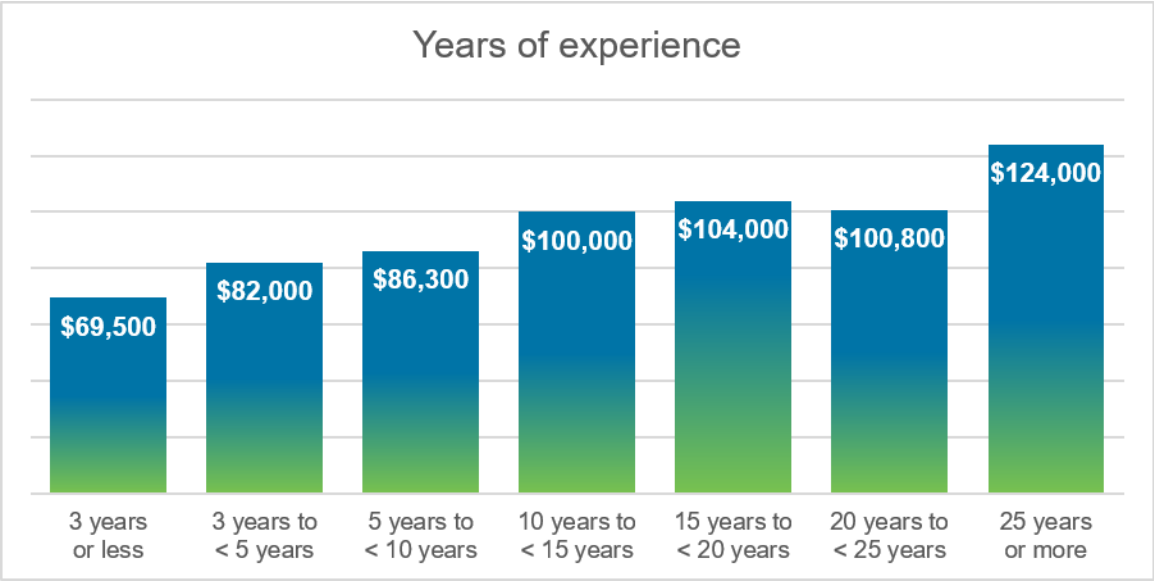


Salary ranges	Share of responses
Under $60,000	5%
$60,000 to under $70,000	7%
$70,000 to under $80,000	12%
$80,000 to under $90,000	17%
$90,000 to under $100,000	15%
$100,000 to under $110,000	14%
$110,000 to under $120,000	9%
$120,000 to under $130,000	10%
$130,000 to under $140,000	3%
$140,000 to under $150,000	4%
$150,000 and over	4%

The mean 2026 salary was $98,400, suggesting a slight upward skew from a smaller group of higher salaries. About one third of respondents reported a salary of $84,300 or below. Another third reported a salary of $108,000 or above, with the middle third reporting salaries between those two break points.

Years of GIS Experience

Median salaries over time suggest a smooth upward trend as years of experience increase. There was a slight plateauing present between 15 and 25 years of experience.



Years of experience	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
3 years or less	8%	$69,500	$60,000	$76,400
3 to less than 5 years	9%	$82,000	$78,000	$89,000
5 to less than 10 years	16%	$86,300	$78,000	$91,200
10 to less than 15 years	26%	$100,000	$91,000	$109,000
15 to less than 20 years	15%	$104,000	$95,700	$119,000
20 to less than 25 years	11%	$100,800	$95,000	$113,000
25 years or more	15%	$124,000	$110,000	$129,000

67% of respondents reported having 10 years or more of GIS/survey work experience. 17% reported having 5 years or less experience.

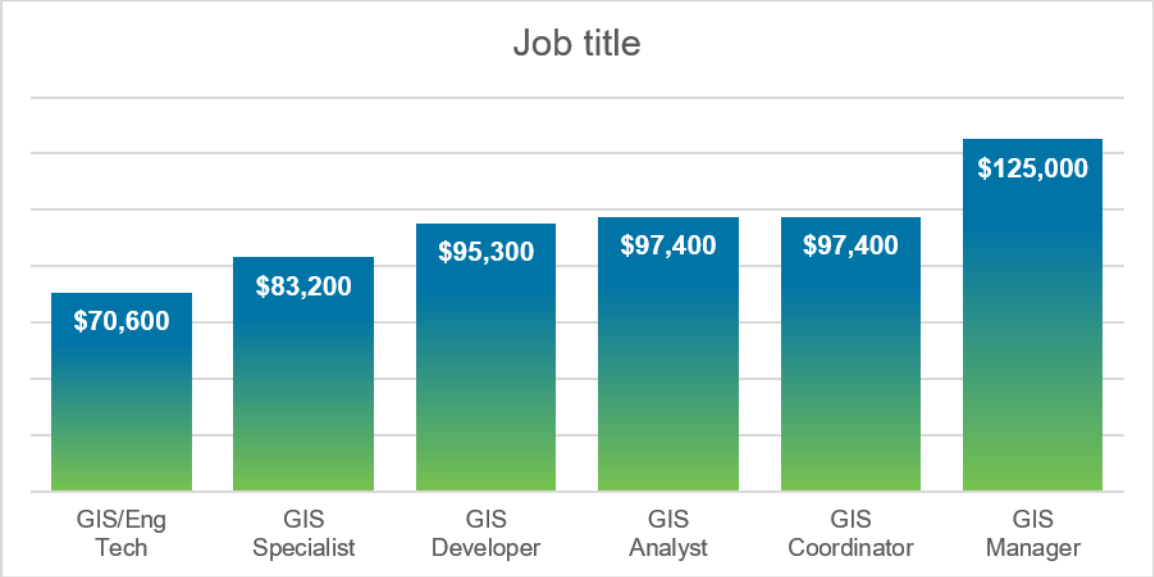
Compensation Type

Salaried employees reported a higher median salary than hourly employees. 70% of salaried employees also reported having at least 10 years of GIS experience, compared to 63% of respondents who are paid hourly. 2% of respondents did not specify their compensation type.

Compensation type	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Annual salary	51%	$104,000	$91,000	$119,000
Paid hourly	47%	$91,900	$81,700	$100,000

Job Title

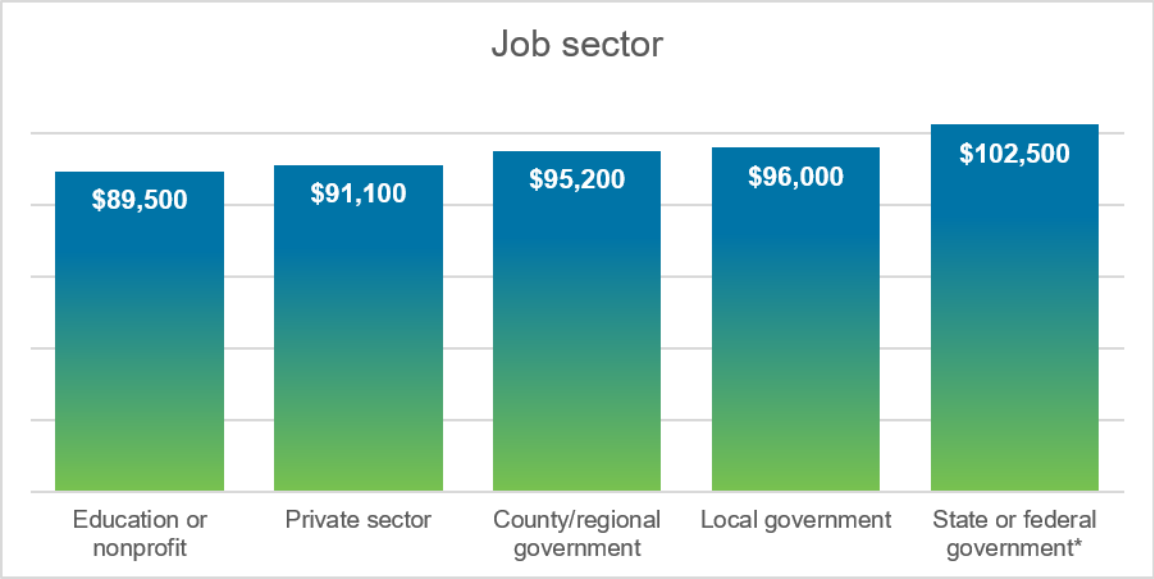
Respondents were given a list of 17 job titles and asked to choose the one that best described their position. 6 titles had a large enough sample size to report. 86% of respondents reported a job title as GIS/Engineering Technician, Specialist, Developer, Analyst, Coordinator, or Manager.



Job title	Share of responses	Median Salary	Bottom third	Top third
GIS/Eng Technician	7%	$70,600	$58,200	$80,000
GIS Specialist	17%	$83,200	$76,000	$99,000
GIS Developer	8%	$95,300	$67,700	$120,000
GIS Analyst	20%	$97,400	$85,000	$104,000
GIS Coordinator	18%	$97,400	$90,000	$106,000
GIS Manager	16%	$125,000	$116,500	$135,000

Employment Sector

67% of respondents work at some level of government. 26% work in the private sector, and the remaining 7% work in education or nonprofit. Respondents from state/federal government reported the highest median salary, followed by local government, county government, private sector, and education or nonprofit. The most common areas respondents in the private sector reported working in were Architecture, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) and Business/Commercial.



Job sector	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Education or nonprofit	7%	$89,500	$78,500	$116,000
Private sector	26%	$91,100	$83,400	$104,000
County/regional govt	25%	$95,200	$83,400	$109,000
Local govt	26%	$96,000	$86,800	$106,100
State/federal govt*	15%	$102,500	$92,000	$120,000

**the bottom and top third salaries for state govt alone are the same. The median adjusts to $101,600.*

Respondents from all sectors reported a wide variety in salaries, and the reader is reminded not to conclude that any one job characteristic is responsible for these trends.

Experience Areas

The experience area with the most respondents was Local or Regional Government (50%), followed by Utilities and Energy Infrastructure (28%) and 25% for Information Technology. The highest median salary by any experience area was in Information Technology at $114,600.

Experience area	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Information tech	25%	$114,600	$100,000	$121,000
Health/human services	7%	$104,000	$91,900	$127,700
Public safety	10%	$100,200	$91,900	$110,800
Surveying and land records	18%	$100,000	$85,500	$110,900
Govt (state or federal)	21%	$99,900	$84,900	$118,300
Water resources and hydrology	16%	$99,800	$80,000	$109,000
Transportation	14%	$98,700	$84,300	$114,700
Elections and politics	10%	$98,700	$83,600	$111,000
Natural resources	22%	$98,300	$80,600	$108,000
E911 or NextGen 911	16%	$97,400	$80,100	$110,000
Utilities and energy infrastructure	28%	$97,100	$84,900	$109,400
Planning and land use	20%	$96,000	$83,400	$106,600
Govt (local or regional)	50%	$95,300	$83,600	$106,000
Recreation	8%	$94,000	$80,100	$104,800
Arch, Eng, and Const (AEC)	16%	$92,000	$86,800	$97,600
Geology	5%	$72,300	$71,000	$81,700

Educational Background

Respondents reported their highest degree overall. Respondents could select multiple degree majors for this question. The most common degree majors earned by respondents were Geography and GIS followed by a smaller pool in Environmental Resources.

Highest degree	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Bachelor's degree	52%	$91,000	$80,100	$102,600
Master's degree	43%	$102,000	$95,000	$109,000

95% of respondents earned either a bachelor's or master's degree. The median salary for master's degree holders is $11,000 above that of bachelor's degree holders. As with all job attributes shared in this report, there is likely more at play. For example, 72% of master's degree holders reported 10 or more years of work experience, compared to 61% of bachelor's degree holders.

Computer Programming

Each question related to computer programming included subtext providing examples for each type of computer programming. This subtext appears in *italics* under each category title.

Each table includes all possible responses so the reader can see the full distribution for each question. Salary data are not provided for any categories that did not include at least 10 responses.

There are some apparent inverse relationships between GIS uses and median salaries. One hypothesis is that GIS and related computer use may decrease as people advance in their careers into more niche or people-focused roles. For example, 72% of GIS Managers and 94% of GIS Developers reported using desktop GIS applications for less than half of their time.

There are some intriguing trends revealed by the survey responses. For example, only 5% of respondents reported performing data analytics for 50% or more of their work time. 6% reported developing GIS scripts or tools for 50% or more of their time, and 4% reported spending 50% or more of their time collecting data in field. While GIS professionals may know or suspect anecdotally that the typical GIS role is a *jack of all trades, master of none* role, these community data points seem to support that idea.

Using GIS and related desktop applications

ArcGIS, QGIS, Maptitude, MapInfo, GRASS, ENVI, Surfer, Global Mapper, Smallworld, etc.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	2%	-	-	-
Less than 10%	11%	$120,000	$107,000	$125,000
10% to less than 25%	17%	$108,200	$92,000	$125,000
25% to less than 50%	19%	$93,000	$83,200	$106,000
50% to less than 75%	22%	$91,500	$81,700	$102,000
75% or more	29%	$83,400	$78,000	$99,900

Using GIS and related web applications

ArcGIS Online, Enterprise, Google Earth, etc.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	1%	-	-	-
Less than 10%	15%	$108,000	$91,000	$129,000
10% to less than 25%	26%	$95,300	$84,900	$103,100
25% to less than 50%	26%	$93,500	$80,100	$108,200
50% to less than 75%	19%	$95,200	$85,000	$108,000
75% or more	11%	$89,500	$83,200	$106,000

Developing GIS scripts and tools

Standalone scripts or tools for use within GIS applications.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	26%	$96,000	$83,400	$109,000
Less than 10%	35%	$91,400	$80,600	$102,000
10% to less than 25%	21%	$95,700	$91,200	$108,000
25% to less than 50%	12%	$105,300	$85,000	$114,500
50% to less than 75%	3%	-	-	-
75% or more	3%	-	-	-

Performing data analytics

Analyzing data using tools such as R, Tableau, or Power BI.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	40%	$84,300	$78,700	$95,000
Less than 10%	35%	$101,300	$94,000	$111,000
10% to less than 25%	13%	$98,800	$91,000	$119,000
25% to less than 50%	7%	$110,000	$100,000	$116,000
50% to less than 75%	3%	-	-	-
75% or more	2%	-	-	-

Computer programming

Application development or other work that involves the writing of computer code, APIs, etc.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	48%	$99,200	$87,600	$114,500
Less than 10%	29%	$97,500	$85,000	$109,400
10% to less than 25%	14%	$101,000	$89,000	$108,000
25% to less than 50%	4%	-	-	-
50% to less than 75%	2%	-	-	-
75% or more	3%	-	-	-

Collecting data in the field

Using tablets, GNSS receiver, or total station to capture or update data in field.

Percent of time	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
None	55%	$99,000	$87,000	$113,000
Less than 10%	33%	$93,000	$81,300	$104,800
10% to less than 25%	7%	$83,200	$80,000	$99,000
25% to less than 50%	3%	-	-	-
50% to less than 75%	1%	-	-	-
75% or more	0%	-	-	-

Technical Proficiencies

Respondents were asked about their proficiencies in 17 GIS and related skill areas. Each proficiency includes a brief description of the salary trends.

Respondents were not given definitions or examples of each skill or proficiency level. As such, these responses should be interpreted as subjective. Increasingly advanced skills are also likely correlated with greater overall career experience.

Desktop GIS software

Virtually all respondents (99%) indicated an intermediate or advanced level of proficiency with Desktop GIS Software. This is not surprising considering the survey's target population.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	1%	-	-	-
Beginner	0%	-	-	-
Intermediate	26%	$91,500	$80,200	$108,300
Advanced	73%	$96,600	$85,000	$108,000

Cartography

There is an increase in median salary as proficiency in cartography increases, suggesting this specific desktop GIS skill has a quantifiable value. The large majority of respondents (93%) reported having intermediate or advanced cartography skill levels.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	1%	-	-	-
Beginner	7%	$72,200	$58,200	$89,000
Intermediate	45%	$93,500	$84,000	$104,000
Advanced	48%	$100,000	$89,000	$110,00

Data analysis

While this is an extremely generic description of a proficiency, respondents who rate their data analysis skills as advanced reported a notably higher salary than Beginner ($25,000 median increase). As with many other data points, years of experience is likely a factor here.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	2%	-	-	-
Beginner	10%	$81,400	$69,000	$91,000
Intermediate	51%	$92,000	$83,400	$102,000
Advanced	37%	$106,400	$95,700	$118,300

Python

Python is a popular programming language and is the language of choice for integrating with ArcGIS and many open-source GIS. Among those with any Python experience, median salary rises $15,000 from beginner to advanced proficiency levels.

The percentage of respondents with no Python experience decreased by 5% from the 2024 salary survey. Beginner and intermediate responses both increased slightly, and advanced held steady.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	7%	$95,800	$78,700	$102,000
Beginner	54%	$93,000	$83,200	$106,000
Intermediate	29%	$97,500	$83,000	$110,000
Advanced	10%	$108,000	$94,200	$119,400

SQL Server or other DBMS (Database Management System)

The difference in salaries between respondents reporting no experience to advanced proficiency in SQL Server or other DBMS is $23,700. This is lower than the 2024 survey's gap of $34,000 but still considerable. In both surveys, there is a positive relationship between this proficiency and years of experience.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	15%	$84,300	$81,000	$90,000
Beginner	41%	$92,800	$80,200	$100,200
Intermediate	36%	$102,000	$87,600	$111,900
Advanced	8%	$108,000	$94,000	$120,000

Remote sensing

While all the proficiencies likely have some skew based on their value and use in different industries, remote sensing is perhaps one of the more niche skill sets. Only 29% of respondents reported an intermediate or advanced proficiency.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	26%	$93,500	$83,400	$104,500
Beginner	45%	$95,000	$82,000	$100,300
Intermediate	22%	$102,000	$89,000	$114,800
Advanced	7%	$94,000	$85,500	$106,600

Web GIS mapping

Respondents indicating an intermediate to advanced proficiency in Web GIS mapping held steady from the 2024 survey at 84%. Interestingly, the same combined proficiency levels were at 68% in 2020, though in that survey web GIS was a single question vs. two as it appears now.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	2%	-	-	-
Beginner	14%	$91,000	$70,000	$114,700
Intermediate	40%	$91,900	$80,200	$102,000
Advanced	44%	$99,800	$90,200	$11,000

Web GIS administration

Web GIS administration was broken out from general web GIS mapping for the 2024 survey. Respondents' reported proficiency level shifted toward more intermediate and advanced representation in 2026. The median salary difference between beginner and advanced proficiency is $25,100, the highest gap in this report.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	11%	$93,500	$76,400	$100,800
Beginner	23%	$81,700	$76,000	$89,400
Intermediate	33%	$96,000	$88,800	$108,300
Advanced	33%	$106,800	$97,100	$119,000

Open-source GIS

As a niche and organization-specific proficiency, open-source GIS experience does not appear to have a significant impact on compensation. There was not a large enough sample size to report compensation trends for respondents with advanced proficiency, so a full picture can't be seen in 2026 responses.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	31%	$95,800	$83,400	$108,300
Beginner	51%	$94,200	$82,000	$108,000
Intermediate	15%	$100,100	$85,000	$108,000
Advanced	3%	-	-	-

Application development

39% of respondents report Intermediate or higher proficiency in this skill set, with a gradual salary increase as proficiency advances. The share is fairly even with the smallest pool reaching advanced proficiency and a balanced pool at the other levels.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	30%	$90,000	$80,000	$100,200
Beginner	31%	$96,000	$87,000	$108,300
Intermediate	28%	$97,400	$83,000	$108,300
Advanced	11%	$104,000	$92,100	$125,000

LiDAR

Only 25% of respondents reported intermediate to advanced proficiency with LiDAR, with a $10,500 median salary difference between no experience and advanced. Similar to Open-source GIS, LiDAR is a niche skill with a small pool of advanced users represented in this survey.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	26%	$91,500	$80,200	$108,000
Beginner	49%	$96,000	$86,900	$108,000
Intermediate	20%	$99,000	$85,000	$103,100
Advanced	5%	$102,000	$87,600	$131,500

GNSS or mobile data collection

Of the respondents reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 66% were from the government sector and 27% were from the private sector. Median salaries appear to increase with proficiency in GNSS or mobile data collection, but this could also be related to other data trends or attributes like years of experience.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	21%	$91,500	$80,200	$100,500
Beginner	26%	$97,500	$83,400	$114,700
Intermediate	39%	$93,500	$83,200	$104,800
Advanced	15%	$104,000	$94,000	$109,000

sUAS drones, mission planning and operation

The majority of respondents have no experience with Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) work, but there was a 3% drop in this category compared to 2024. There was a 3% increase in respondents with beginner proficiency, while reported intermediate and advanced proficiencies held steady.

Of those reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 54% were from the government sector and 39% were from the private sector.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	69%	$95,700	$83,400	$108,000
Beginner	19%	$97,300	$85,000	$110,800
Intermediate	7%	$99,000	$87,600	$110,000
Advanced	4%	$91,500	$85,500	$102,000

uUAS drones, data management and analysis

The majority of respondents have no experience with uUAS drone work, but there was a 3% drop in this category compared to 2024. There was a 3% increase in respondents with beginner proficiency, while reported intermediate and advanced proficiencies held steady.

Of those reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 55% were from the government sector and 37% were from the private sector.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	68%	$95,300	$83,400	$106,100
Beginner	21%	$95,300	$86,800	$111,000
Intermediate	7%	$104,000	$94,000	$110,000
Advanced	4%	-	-	-

3D GIS or digital twins

The majority of respondents have no experience with 3D GIS. These numbers held largely steady from the 2024 survey.

Of those reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 64% were from the government sector and 24% were from the private sector.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	60%	$93,000	$82,000	$104,800
Beginner	30%	$95,700	$87,500	$108,000
Intermediate	8%	$110,300	$91,000	$125,000
Advanced	2%	-	-	-

Machine learning or deep learning

The majority of respondents have no experience with machine learning. There was a 3% decrease from 2024 respondents reporting no experience with machine learning. Respondents reporting advanced proficiency also decreased by 3%.

Of those reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 60% were from the government sector and 30% were from the private sector.

Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	60%	$92,500	$81,300	$104,000
Beginner	30%	$99,200	$87,300	$108,000
Intermediate	9%	$112,000	$92,000	$140,000
Advanced	0%	-	-	-

AI or natural language processing tools

A slim majority of respondents have no experience with AI work, but the number of respondents reporting no experience with AI dropped by 17% from the 2024 survey. Beginner proficiency increased by 7%, and intermediate proficiency increased by 9%.

Of those reporting beginner or higher proficiency, 65% were from the government sector and 24% were from the private sector. Like many proficiency categories, years of experience correlates to proficiency level. For example, 70% of respondents reporting intermediate AI proficiency have 10 or more years of work experience. The same percentage has beginner proficiency and matching years of experience. 63% of respondents with 10 or more years of work experience reported no experience with AI.

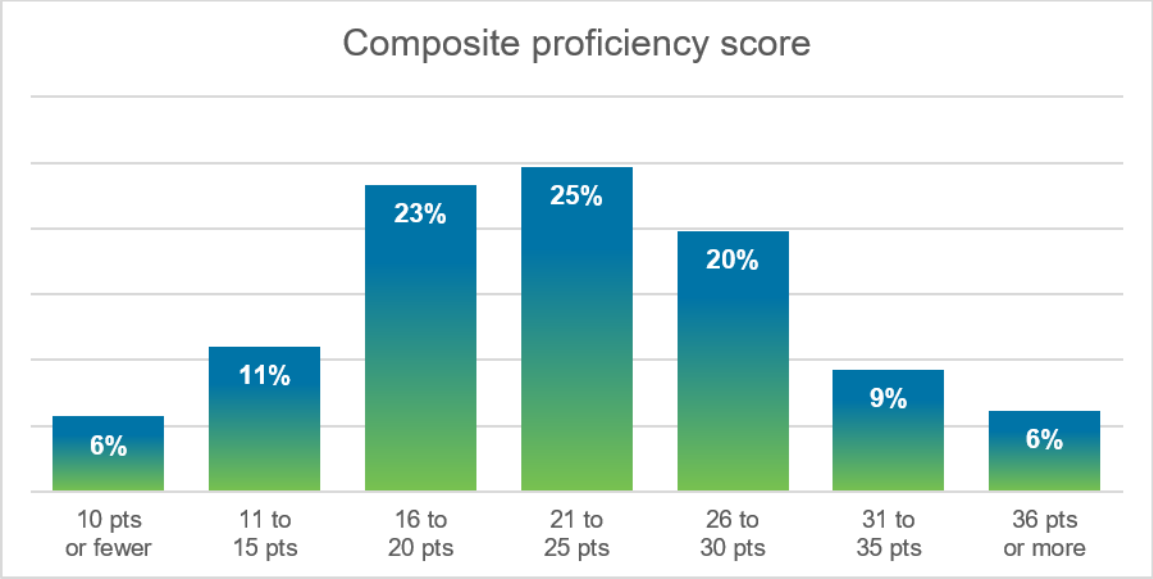
Proficiency level	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No experience	51%	$90,000	$78,700	$102,000
Beginner	33%	$98,300	$89,000	$107,000
Intermediate	15%	$108,500	$91,000	$120,000
Advanced	2%	-	-	-

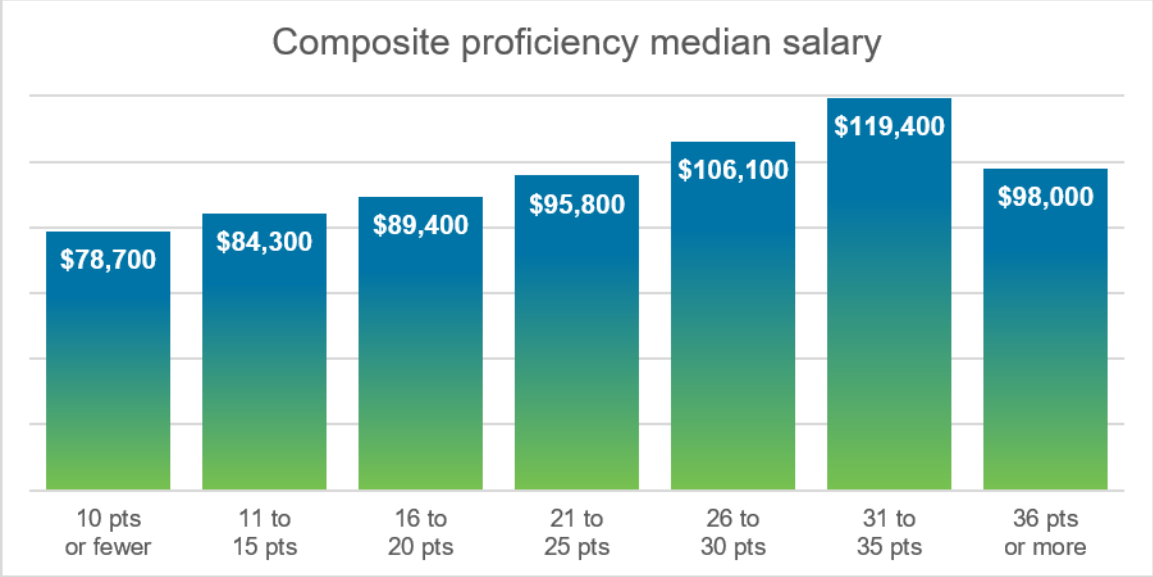
Overall proficiency score

For this analysis, each response for each question was given a point value per experience level (No experience = 0, Beginner = 1, Intermediate = 2, Advanced = 3).

Each respondent's answers were then summed for a composite proficiency score. The median composite score for all respondents was 22 points, with a bottom third break point of 19 points and a top third break point of 26 points.

The distribution appears to roughly fit a bell curve, and there appears to be a positive correlation between the number/level of proficiencies and median salaries. It is not immediately clear why there is a drop-off in the median salary for respondents who score 36 or more composite proficiency points.





Composite proficiency score	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
10 points or fewer	6%	$78,700	$58,200	$99,000
11 to 15 points	11%	$84,300	$69,000	$100,800
16 to 20 points	23%	$89,400	$82,000	$100,000
21 to 25 points	25%	$95,800	$83,200	$107,000

Composite proficiency score	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
26 to 30 points	20%	$106,100	$91,900	$112,000
31 to 35 points	9%	$119,400	$99,300	$131,500
36 points or more	6%	$98,000	$87,600	$106,000

Geographic Region

Respondents were asked to provide their employer's office region using a map included in the survey and in the appendix of this report. Respondents were also given the option of Other for fully remote companies. Of the eight possible regions, five of them had a large enough sample size to report salaries. Two adjacent regions reach the minimum sample size when combined.

Region	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Central	8%	$82,000	$75,000	$95,000
Metro	60%	$100,800	$92,500	$111,800
Northeast	10%	$80,700	$67,700	$85,000
Northwest	7%	$92,100	$80,000	$103,100
Southeast	7%	$87,000	$78,000	$102,000
South central/ Southwest	4%	$91,100	$83,400	$108,000

Of the respondents that selected Other, 44% work remotely full time. The remaining were mostly respondents from bordering states.

GISP Certification

For those unfamiliar with the GISP certification, more information is available from the GIS Certification Institute at www.gisci.org. There is a significant difference in the median salary between those with a GISP certificate and those without.

Received GISP	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
No	84%	$93,000	$82,000	$104,500
Yes	16%	$111,000	$97,600	$129,000

There is some correlation between the GISP and overall work experience as 81% of respondents with their GISP have 10 years or more of experience.

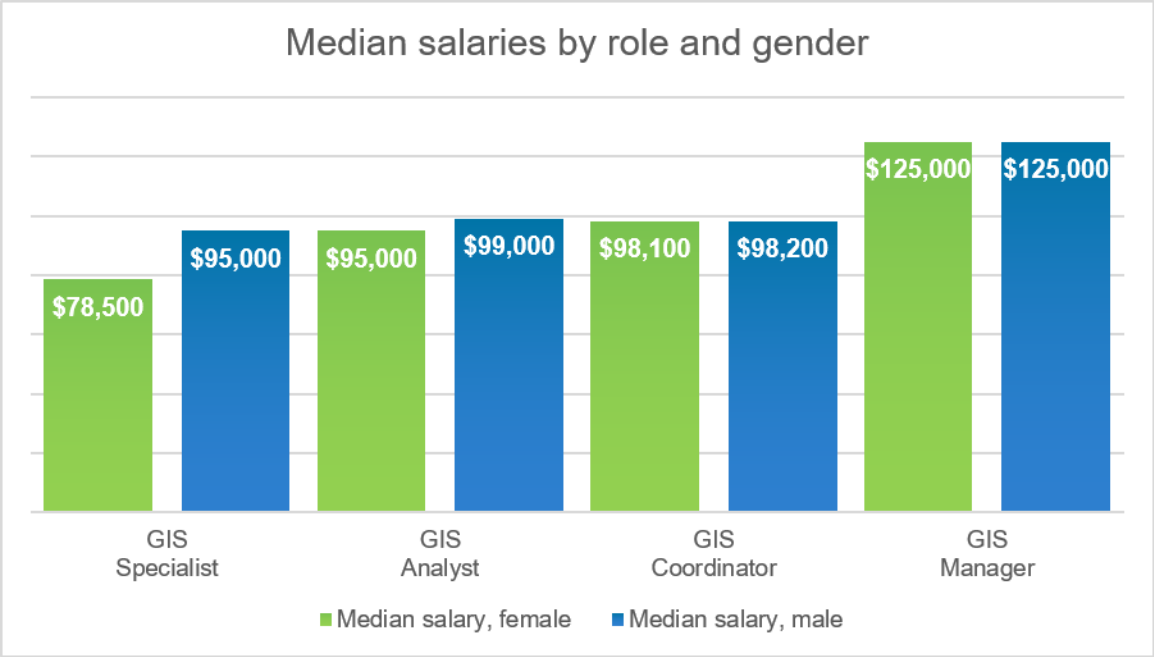
Gender Identity

Respondents were asked to choose one or more gender identities, describe their own identity, or choose not to answer. The numbers reported here include any respondents who included the listed gender identity as either their only gender or one of their selections. 7% of respondents chose other or prefer not to answer.

Gender identity	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Female	33%	$84,900	$76,400	$100,000
Male	59%	$99,000	$88,800	$110,000

GIS professionals who identify as female earn a median salary $14,100 below their male peers (17% less). This is notably worse than the 10% gap reported in the 2024 survey, even though the gender breakdown is similar between the two survey years. As a ratio, female respondents receive 86 cents for every dollar that male respondents receive.

The charts below illustrate the disparities per job titles that had enough respondents to meet the reporting threshold.



Job title	Median salary, female	Median salary, male	Disparity	On-the-dollar
GIS Specialist	$78,500	$95,000	$16,500	$0.83
GIS Analyst	$95,000	$99,000	$4,000	$0.96
GIS Coordinator	$98,100	$98,200	$100	$1.00
GIS Manager	$125,000	$125,000	$5,000	$1.00

61% of respondents who reported being a GIS Manager identify as male. 62% of respondents who reported being a GIS Coordinator identify as male.

Of the respondents reporting a salary of $100,000 or more, 25% are female and 75% are male or preferred not to answer.

Disability or other Chronic Condition

Job titles varied across the board for those respondents that identified as a person with a disability or other chronic condition. There was a $3,300 difference in reported median salary between respondents who did and did not report living with a disability or other chronic condition.

Disability	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Yes	8%	$98,300	$81,700	$100,000
Prefer not to answer	7%	$96,000	$83,000	$116,500
No	85%	$95,000	$84,300	$108,000

Race and Ethnic Identity

Respondents were able to choose one or more racial and ethnic identities, describe their own identity, or choose not to answer. 78% of respondents reported a salary of $100,000 identified as white. 90% of respondents reporting a salary under $60,000 identified as white. There may be disparities between salary and race, but it is not concretely apparent from the salary survey data, especially with such a large predominant response pool.

Race	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
White	83%	$95,000	$83,400	$104,800
Non-white/multi-racial	8%	$104,500	$84,900	$125,000
Prefer not to answer	8%	$111,800	$94,000	$125,000

Military Service

There may be disparities between salary and military service, but it is not concretely apparent from the salary survey data however, especially with such a large predominant response group.

Served	Share of responses	Median salary	Bottom third	Top third
Yes	6%	$110,000	$100,300	$129,000
No	90%	$94,600	$83,400	$106,000
Prefer not to answer	4%	$104,900	$83,000	$125,000

Respondent Comments

Emerging Technologies

41% of responses mentioned AI, though not all comments on it were positive. Other popular topics were LiDAR, drone, remote sensing, accessibility, and 3D/digital twins.

Additional Comments

Respondents could provide open-ended comments at the end of the survey. Along with general gratitude for conducting survey, some reflections included and interest in standardized GIS job titles and roles and how GIS is one part of some respondents' larger roles.

Conclusions

Most responses (67%) to this survey came from GIS professionals working in the Government Sector, while 26% were from the Private Sector and 8% from Education and Nonprofits.

The median reported salary was $95,300, which was up from an inflation-adjusted 2024 reported median of $89,900 and from an inflation-adjust 2022 reported median of $85,900. The middle third of 2026 salaries fell between $84,300 and $108,000. The highest reported salaries by GIS position were GIS Manager, Coordinator, and Analyst.

67% of respondents had at least 10 years of GIS/Surveying experience. 26% had at least 20 years, and 17% had less than 5 years. Median salaries based on experience had a consistent increase over time, with a slight dip around the 20-year mark that recovered at the 25-year mark.

Several GIS skills and proficiencies appear correlated to higher incomes, including but not limited to SQL/DBMS, 3D GIS, and AI/machine learning. A higher collective quantity and level of proficiencies also appear positively correlated to higher median salaries.

Statement on Equity

The Consortium's mission, to develop and support the GIS/LIS community in Minnesota for the benefit of our people and contributors, does and should include every GIS professional. The responses on gender identity reveal that our industry is not immune to the pervasive pay gaps seen in the United States. The Consortium will use this information, along with all the data collected in the survey, to work to ensure that our mission applies to and supports all our members.

Acknowledgements

The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium Board of Directors thanks the 227 members that contributed their data for this report. Without their participation, this report would not have been possible!

Report Prepared by

The MN GIS/LIS Professional Development Committee

Supplemental Materials

Survey Questions

** refers to a required question*

Past participation

Have you previously participated in a MN GIS/LIS Salary Survey? *

choose all that apply

- ☐ 2024 survey
- ☐ 2022 survey
- ☐ 2020 survey
- ☐ An earlier survey
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Your job

Which of the following best describes your job position? *

Choose one

- ☐ GIS Intern/Seasonal
- ☐ GIS/Engineering Technician
- ☐ GIS Specialist
- ☐ GIS Analyst
- ☐ GIS Consultant
- ☐ GIS Developer
- ☐ GIS Coordinator
- ☐ GIS Manager
- ☐ Surveyor
- ☐ Other (please describe)

What is your company's primary sector? *

Choose one

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Government
- ☐ Nonprofit
- ☐ Private

What level of government *

(conditional, if respondent chose Government for primary sector)

Choose one

- ☐ Local
- ☐ County/Regional
- ☐ State
- ☐ Federal
- ☐ Tribal

What level of education? *

(conditional, if respondent chose Education for primary sector)

Choose one

☐ K12
☐ Professional Trainer
☐ Higher education

What areas in the private sector? *

(conditional, if respondent chose Private for primary sector)

Choose one

☐ Architecture, Engineering, & Construction (AEC)
☐ None of these
☐ Business and commercial
☐ Other (please describe)
☐ Software development and engineering

In what areas do you work or specialize? *

Choose all that apply

☐ Agriculture
☐ Insurance
☐ Archaeology or cultural resources
☐ K12 education
☐ Architecture, Engineering, & Construction (AEC)
☐ Mining
☐ Business marketing, sales, siting, and logistics
☐ Natural resources
☐ Contaminated site assessment or remediation
☐ Planning and land use
☐ Defense and intelligence
☐ Public relations
☐ E911 or NextGen 911
☐ Public safety
☐ Elections and politics
☐ Real estate
☐ Geology
☐ Recreation
☐ Government (local or regional)
☐ Surveying and land records
☐ Government (state or federal)
☐ Transportation
☐ Government (tribal)
☐ Utilities and energy infrastructure
☐ Health and human services
☐ Water resources and hydrology
☐ Higher education
☐ None of these areas
☐ Information technology

What is your employment ZIP code? *

☐ 5-digit ZIP code

Which region is your employer's office located in? *

Choose one

View a reference map

- ☐ Northwest
- ☐ Northeast
- ☐ Central
- ☐ Metro
- ☐ Southwest
- ☐ South Central
- ☐ Southeast
- ☐ Outside Minnesota (please describe)

Where do you primarily work? *

Choose one

- ☐ Remote full time
- ☐ Hybrid, in office 1-3 days per month
- ☐ Hybrid, in office 1-2 days per week
- ☐ Hybrid, in office 3-4 days per week
- ☐ In office, occasional remote work
- ☐ In office, no remote work

Your GIS use

What GIS software do you primarily use? *

Choose one

- ☐ ArcGIS Desktop (aka ArcMap
- ☐ ArcGIS Pro
- ☐ ArcGIS Enterprise
- ☐ ArcGIS Online
- ☐ PostGIS
- ☐ Python
- ☐ QGIS
- ☐ R
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Other (please specify

What additional GIS software do you use? *

Choose all that apply

- ☐ ArcGIS Desktop (aka ArcMap
- ☐ ArcGIS Pro
- ☐ ArcGIS Enterprise
- ☐ ArcGIS for Office
- ☐ ArcGIS for SharePoint
- ☐ ArcGIS Online
- ☐ Autodesk Map 3D
- ☐ GRASS
- ☐ MapBox
- ☐ MapInfo Pro
- ☐ Maptitude
- ☐ OpenStreetMap
- ☐ Oracle Spatial
- ☐ PostGIS

☐ Azure Maps
☐ BatchGeo
☐ Bing Maps API
☐ Carto
☐ CityMapper
☐ ERDAS Imagine
☐ Fulcrum
☐ Global Mapper
☐ Google Earth Pro
☐ Google Maps API
☐ Python
☐ QGIS
☐ R
☐ Saga GIS
☐ Salesforce Maps
☐ Scribble Maps
☐ Smallworld
☐ Surfer
☐ None of these
☐ Other (please specify)

What percentage of your time do you spend: *

Choose one

Options

☐ None
☐ Less than 10%
☐ 10% to less than 25%
☐ 25% to less than 50%
☐ 50% to less than 75%
☐ 75% or more

Areas

☐ Using GIS and related desktop applications
☐ Using GIS and related web applications
☐ Developing GIS scripts and tools
☐ Performing data analytics
☐ Computer programming
☐ Collecting data in the field

Your salary

What is your job schedule? *

Choose one

☐ Full time
☐ Part time
☐ Internship
☐ Contract
☐ Seasonal or other temporary

What is your base annual income? *

☐ Dollar amount

Are you paid annually or by the hour? *

(Conditional, if respondent selected full time)

What is your base hourly rate? *

(Conditional, if respondent selected hourly or not full time or contract)

How many hours a year do you work? *

(Conditional, if respondent selected hourly or not full time or contract)

Your work experience

How many years of GIS/Survey work experience do you have? *

Choose one

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 year to less than 3 years
- ☐ 3 years to less than 5 years
- ☐ 5 years to less than 10 years
- ☐ 10 years to less than 15 years
- ☐ 15 years to less than 20 years
- ☐ 20 years to less than 25 years
- ☐ 25 years or more

Do you hold any professional certifications? *

Choose all that apply

- ☐ GISP
- ☐ FAA Part 107 sUAS Certification
- ☐ Professional Surveyor
- ☐ Esri Technical Certification

How would you rate your proficiency in the following areas? *

Options

- ☐ No experience
- ☐ Beginner
- ☐ Intermediate
- ☐ Advanced

Areas

- ☐ Desktop GIS software
- ☐ Cartography
- ☐ Data analysis
- ☐ Python
- ☐ SQL Server or other DBMS
- ☐ Remote sensing
- ☐ Web GIS mapping
- ☐ Web GIS administration
- ☐ Open source GIS
- ☐ Application development
- ☐ LiDAR
- ☐ GNSS or mobile data collection
- ☐ sUAS drones, mission planning and operation
- ☐ uUAS drones, data management and analysis
- ☐ 3D GIS or digital twins
- ☐ Machine learning or deep learning
- ☐ AI or natural language processing tools

What emerging GIS and related trends are you excited about?

Optional

Your education background

Are you currently a student at an accredited institution? *

Choose one

- ☐ Not currently
- ☐ Yes, non-degree coursework
- ☐ Yes, working toward and Associated degree
- ☐ Yes, working toward a Bachelors degree
- ☐ Yes, working toward a Masters degree
- ☐ Yes, working toward a Ph. D.

What is your highest level of education? *

Choose one

- ☐ Did not graduate High School diploma or receive GED
- ☐ High School diploma or GED
- ☐ Some college, no degree
- ☐ Associates degree
- ☐ Bachelors degree
- ☐ Masters degree
- ☐ Ph.D.

In what field(s) did you earn your Associates degree? *

(Conditional, visible if respondent select Associates as highest education level)

Choose all that apply

- ☐ Biological Sciences
- ☐ Business Administration or Management
- ☐ Computer Science
- ☐ Construction Engineering
- ☐ Criminal Justice
- ☐ General Studies
- ☐ Health Care Management
- ☐ Health Information or Medical Records
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Liberal Arts and Sciences or Humanities
- ☐ Medical or Clinical Assistant
- ☐ Nursing or Psychology
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Other (please describe)

In what field(s) did you earn your highest degree? *

(Conditional, visible if respondent selected Bachelors, Master, or Ph. D. as highest education level)

Choose all that apply

- ☐ Anthropology or History
- ☐ Biology
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Cartography
- ☐ Civil Engineering
- ☐ Computer Science
- ☐ Education
- ☐ English
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Environmental Science
- ☐ Forestry
- ☐ Geography
- ☐ Geology
- ☐ GIS
- ☐ Landscape Architecture
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Natural Resources
- ☐ Oceanography
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Political Science
- ☐ Public Administration
- ☐ Recreation Administration
- ☐ Surveying
- ☐ Urban Studies
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Other (please describe)

Have you earned any of the following? *

Choose all that apply

- ☐ AA or technical GIS certificate
- ☐ Undergraduate GIS certificate
- ☐ Graduate GIS certificate
- ☐ GIS minor
- ☐ IT certificate
- ☐ None of these
- ☐ Other (please describe)

Your demographics

What is your age? *

- ☐ Age

Which of the following best describe your gender identity? *

Choose all that apply

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Gender Variant or non-conforming
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe

Which of the following best describe your racial and ethnic identity? *

Choose all that apply

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
☐ Asian or Indian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish-origin
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ Prefer to self-describe

Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition? *

Choose one

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to answer

Has the Consortium been responsive to your requests for accommodations at workshops, conferences, and events? *

(conditional, if respondent chose yes for having a disability or other chronic condition)

Choose one

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ I have not made any requests

Have you ever served in the US Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard? *

Choose one

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to answer

When did you serve? *

(conditional, if respondent chose yes for serving in the armed forces)

Choose all that apply

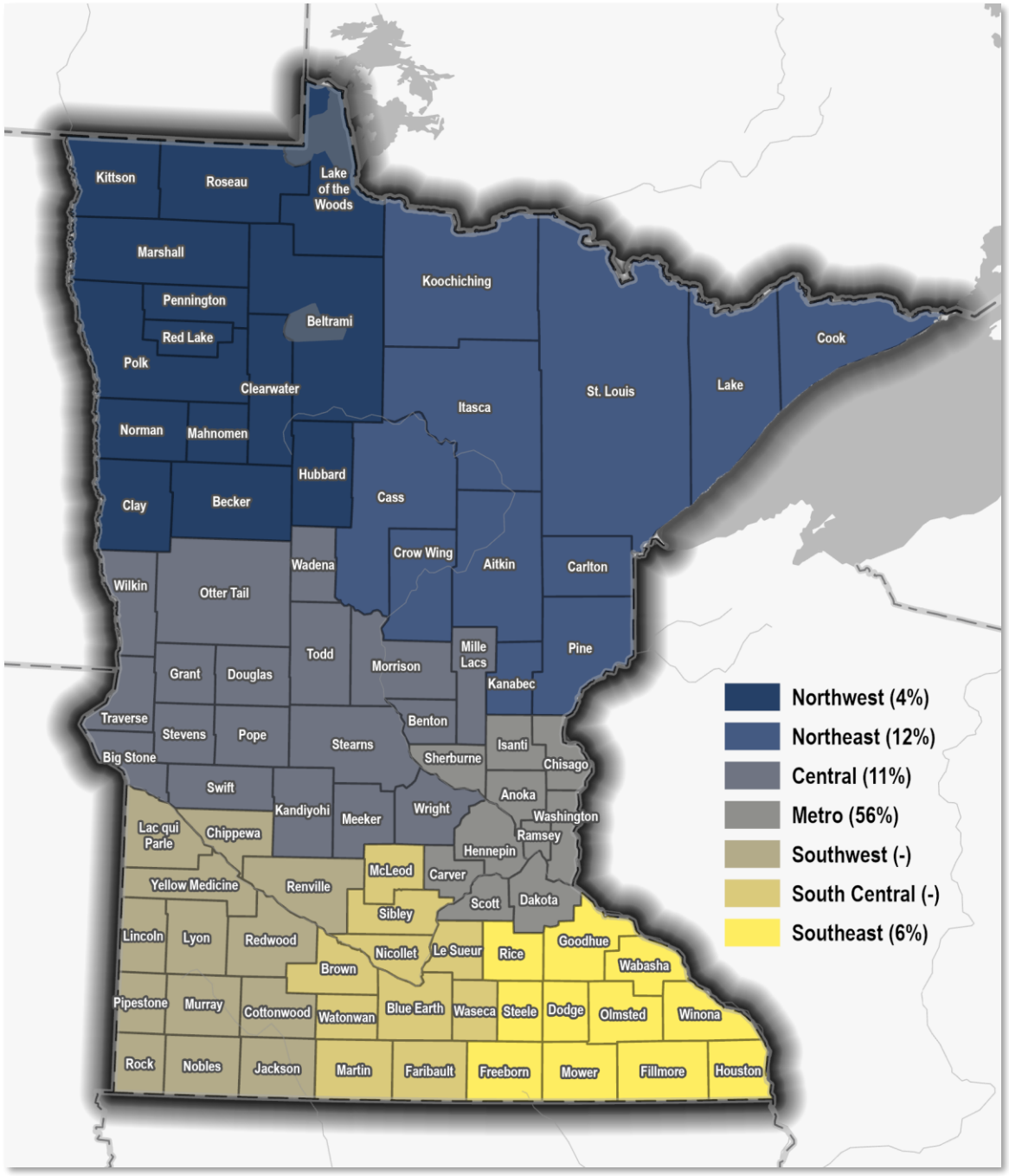
☐ September 2001 or later
☐ August 1990 to August 2001 (including Persian Gulf War)
☐ May 1975 to July 1990
☐ Vietnam era (August 1964 to April 1974)
☐ March 1974 or earlier
☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you have any additional comments related to your responses to this survey?

Optional

Survey Response Map – Regions

This map shows the regions used for the 2026 Salary Survey and the response breakdowns.



Map source: Minnesota Emergency Communications Board (MNECB): www.mnecb.org/148/Regions. Recolored for color blindness using ArcGIS Pro Cividis color ramp.

Survey Response Map – ZIP Codes

This map shows the distribution of 2026 survey responses by ZIP code. To preserve anonymity, the map excludes ZIP codes that reported a single response.

