

Salaries of PhD Physicists and Related Scientists during Spring 2006: Summary Report

Salaries are often used as an indicator of demand and the salaries of PhD physicists remain strong.

The 2006 AIP Membership Survey is the latest in a series of studies on the U.S. resident members of the American Institute of Physics (AIP) Member Societies conducted by the Statistical Research Center of AIP. Initiated in 1982, the series provides reliable nationwide data on the salaries of society members. In the past, society members-at-large, employers, and H1-B visa applicants have found this resource useful. The following are highlights of this year's findings:

- AIP society members with PhDs, not including postdoctorates, reported a median annual salary of \$97,700 in 2006, up from \$90,000 in 2004.
- Respondents with PhDs working in hospitals or medical services again reported the highest median salary at \$135,000. The lowest median salary was reported by society members working in 4-year colleges with 9-10 month contracts, at \$60,000.
- Salaries along the coasts continue to be the highest. The Pacific states lead the way with the highest salaries range (\$76,500 to \$124,000), while the West

North Central reported the lowest (\$55,000 to \$100,000).

- Society members with PhDs working in industry reported a median salary of \$110,000 in 2006. The median salary of PhDs in industry was \$104,000 in 2004.

Typical salaries and median age for major employment sectors, PhDs 2006. (a)

Academic sector	Typical salaries (in thousands \$)	Median Age
University		
9-10 month salary	64 to 100	49
11-12 month salary	64 to 115	48
4-Year college		
9-10 month salary	51 to 75	47
Non-Academic sector		
Hospital, medical services	105 to 170	49
Government	100 to 135	50
FFR&DC (b)	92 to 135	53
Industry, self-employed	93 to 136	49
UARI (b)	70 to 120	49
Nonprofit	65 to 117	47

(a) Employed U.S. resident members only. Postdoctorates excluded.

(b) FFR&DC=Federally-Funded Research and Development Center

UARI=University-Affiliated Research Institute or Observatory

- Within the first two years since earning their PhDs, respondents on university postdoctoral appointments reported typical salaries ranging from \$36,000 to \$43,000.
- Society members reported unemployment at a rate (1.7%) that remained level within the past few years.

Typical salaries for selected university ranks, PhDs, 2006. (a)

Academic rank	Typical salaries (in thousands \$)
Professor	
9-10 month salary	80 to 120
11-12 month salary	103 to 174
Associate professor	
9-10 month salary	64 to 85
11-12 month salary	73 to 102
Assistant professor	
9-10 month salary	54 to 69
11-12 month salary	61 to 76
Research Faculty (11 to 12 mos)	
Postdocs within 2 yrs of PhD	36 to 43
Postdocs 2-3 years since PhD	38 to 45
Other research faculty	53 to 80

(a) Employed U.S. resident members only.

Methodology

The data presented here are based on a stratified random sample of more than 17,490 individuals, approximately one-fifth of the U.S. members of AIP's Member Societies. In the spring of 2006, every individual in our sample received an invitation to complete the online questionnaire and were asked to report their salary and employment data as of March 2006. Nearly 9,300 responded after three e-mail requests for an overall response rate of 53%.

The data represent responses from members of the American Physical Society, Optical Society of America, Acoustical Society of America, The Society of Rheology, American Association of Physics Teachers, American Crystallographic Association, American Astronomical Society, American Association of Physicists in Medicine, AVS The Science and Technology Society, and American Geophysical Union. Within the research portion of its mission, the SRC collects, analyzes, and disseminates data on education and employment in physics and related fields.

Detailed salary data from this survey are currently available for purchase on the AIP Store on the web www.aip.org/statistics/salaries. The salary data are presented in twelve tables that each focus on different aspects of PhD employment.