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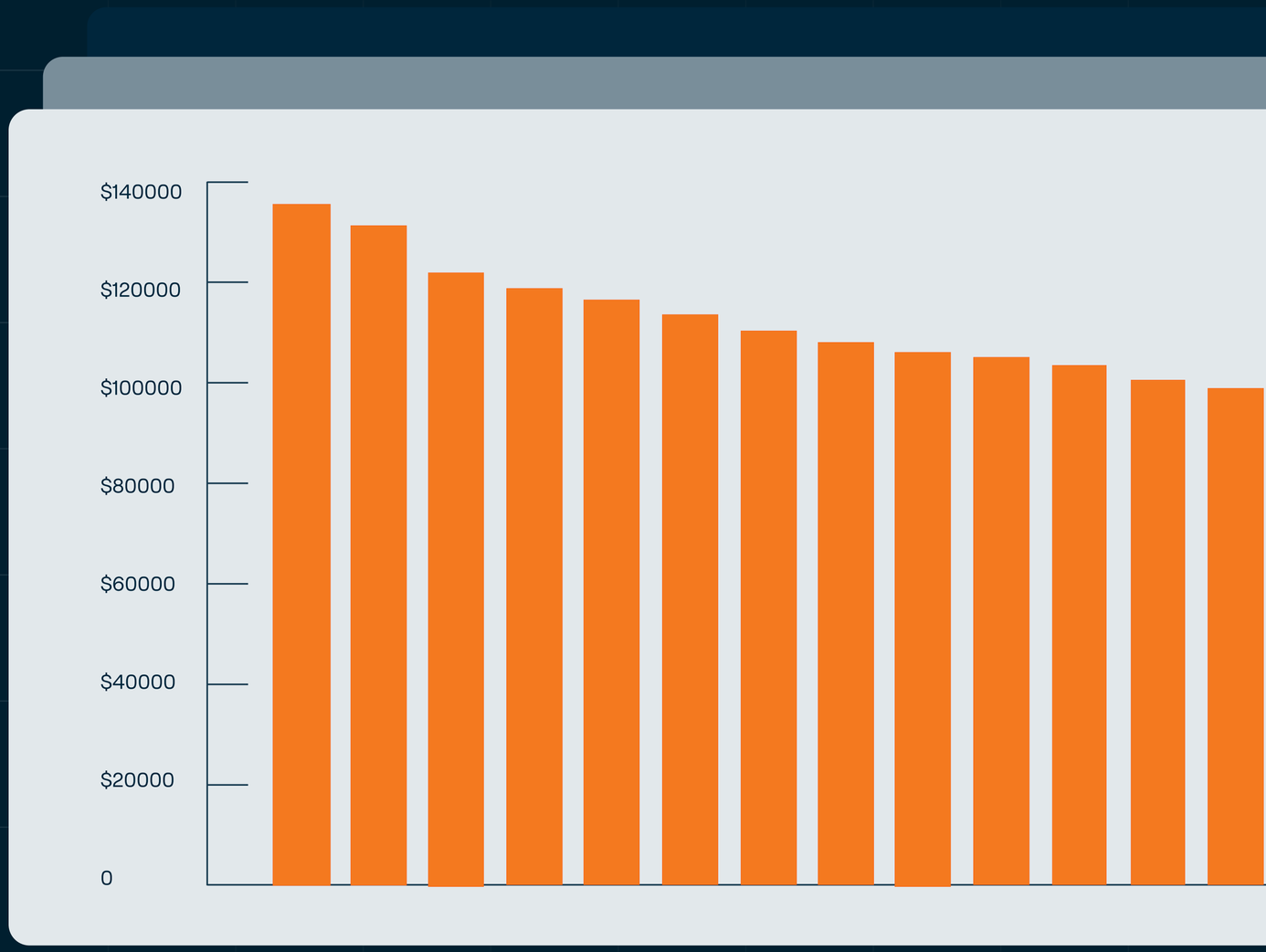
Architecture Salary Report 2025

Real Salaries. Real Data. A Clearer View of the Architecture Workforce.



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BQE CORE Customer:

INC ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Salary Insights to Build a Stronger Architecture Profession

In an industry where talent is your greatest asset, understanding compensation trends is critical. This report delivers a clear, data-backed view of salaries across U.S. architecture firms, drawn from anonymous, aggregated data in BQE CORE and trusted industry sources.

For firm leaders, these insights guide smarter staffing strategies, competitive offers, and stronger retention. For individuals, they empower career planning and confident salary negotiations. And for the industry at large, transparency helps set fair standards and build a more sustainable, competitive profession.

At BQE CORE, we believe better data leads to better business decisions. By sharing these anonymous insights, we aim to help firms and professionals not only understand today's pay landscape but also improve the outlook for tomorrow.

About the Data

This report aggregates compensation data from over 41,000 anonymized salary records in the Architecture and Engineering industry in the USA, covering the years 2013 to 2025. It blends firm-reported data from BQE CORE with self-reported entries from Archinect's salary survey to provide a broad and balanced view of industry pay. All figures are adjusted to 2025 U.S. dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to enable meaningful comparisons over time.

The result is a reliable snapshot of salary trends across roles, regions, and experience levels. This report is built to help firms benchmark pay, support equity, and plan with confidence.

Learn More About Data →

This report and the salary visualization tool was created in collaboration with Desai Wang. Desai has a degree in architecture, is a designer and software developer with a passion for turning complex data into clear, engaging stories.

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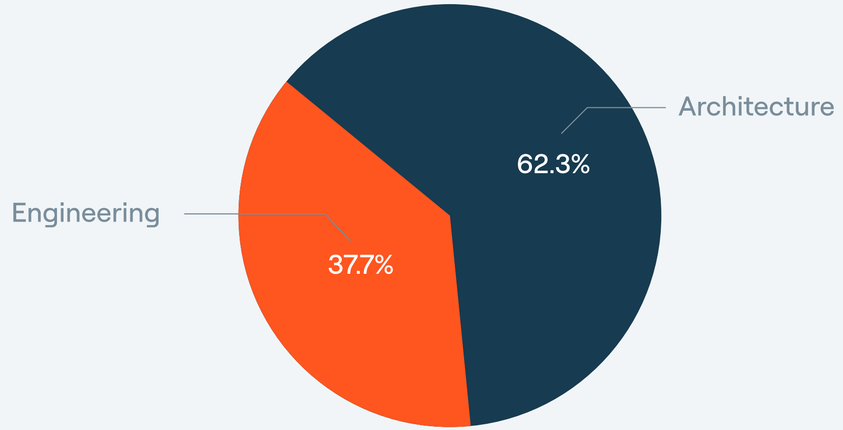
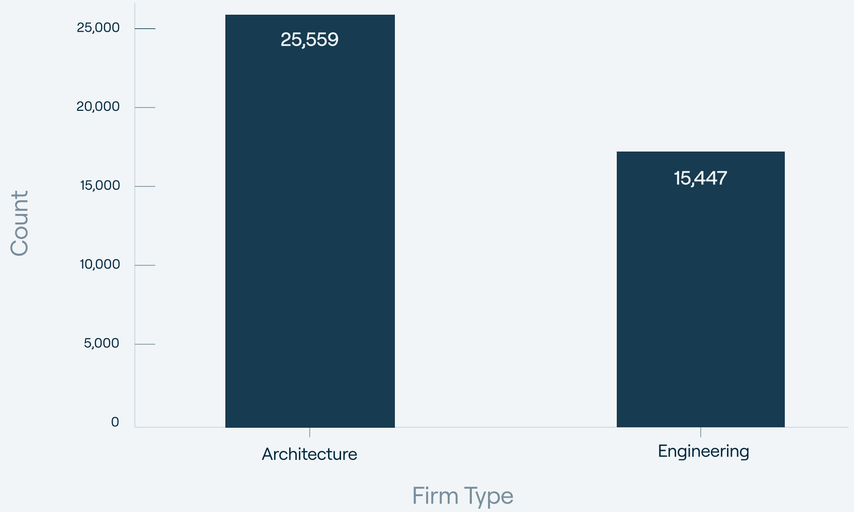
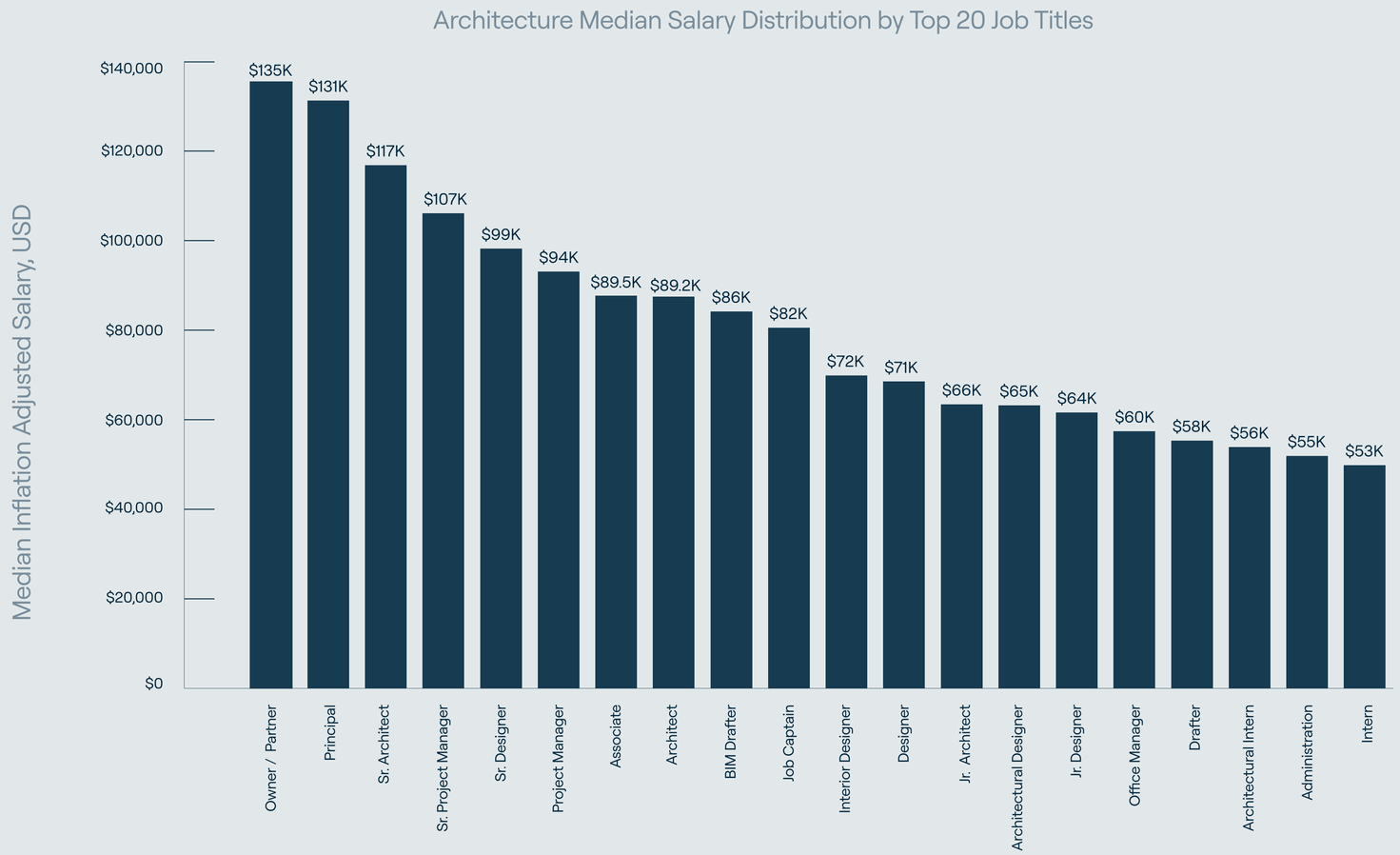




1. Salary Data By Role

Architecture Median Salary by Top 20 Job Titles

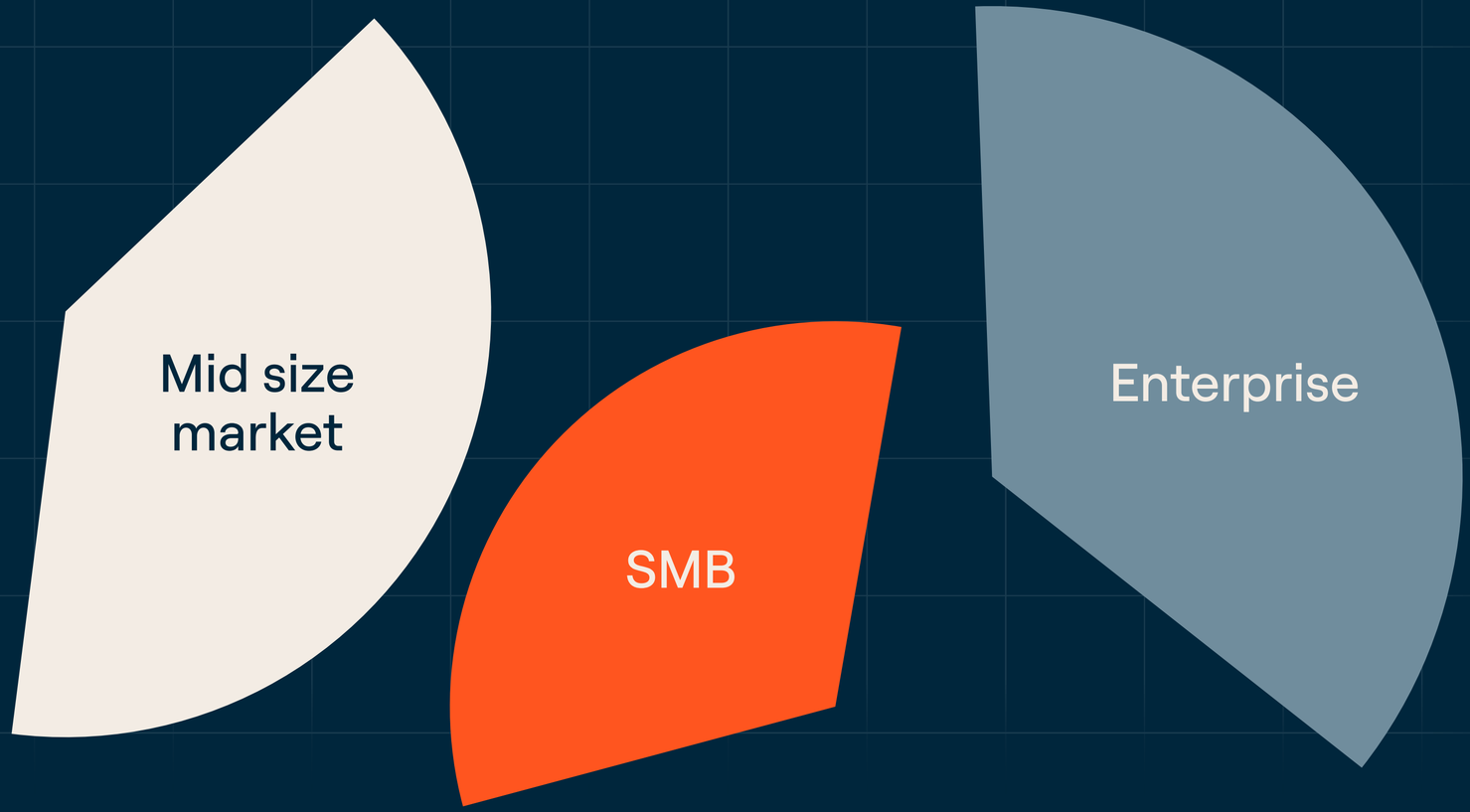
This chart ranks the top 20 architecture job titles by median salary. It reveals a slow but steady compensation increase with experience. Salary growth occurs at a much steeper rate when people get to senior level and leadership positions, which is to be expected.



Architecture Salary Distribution by Top 20 Job Titles

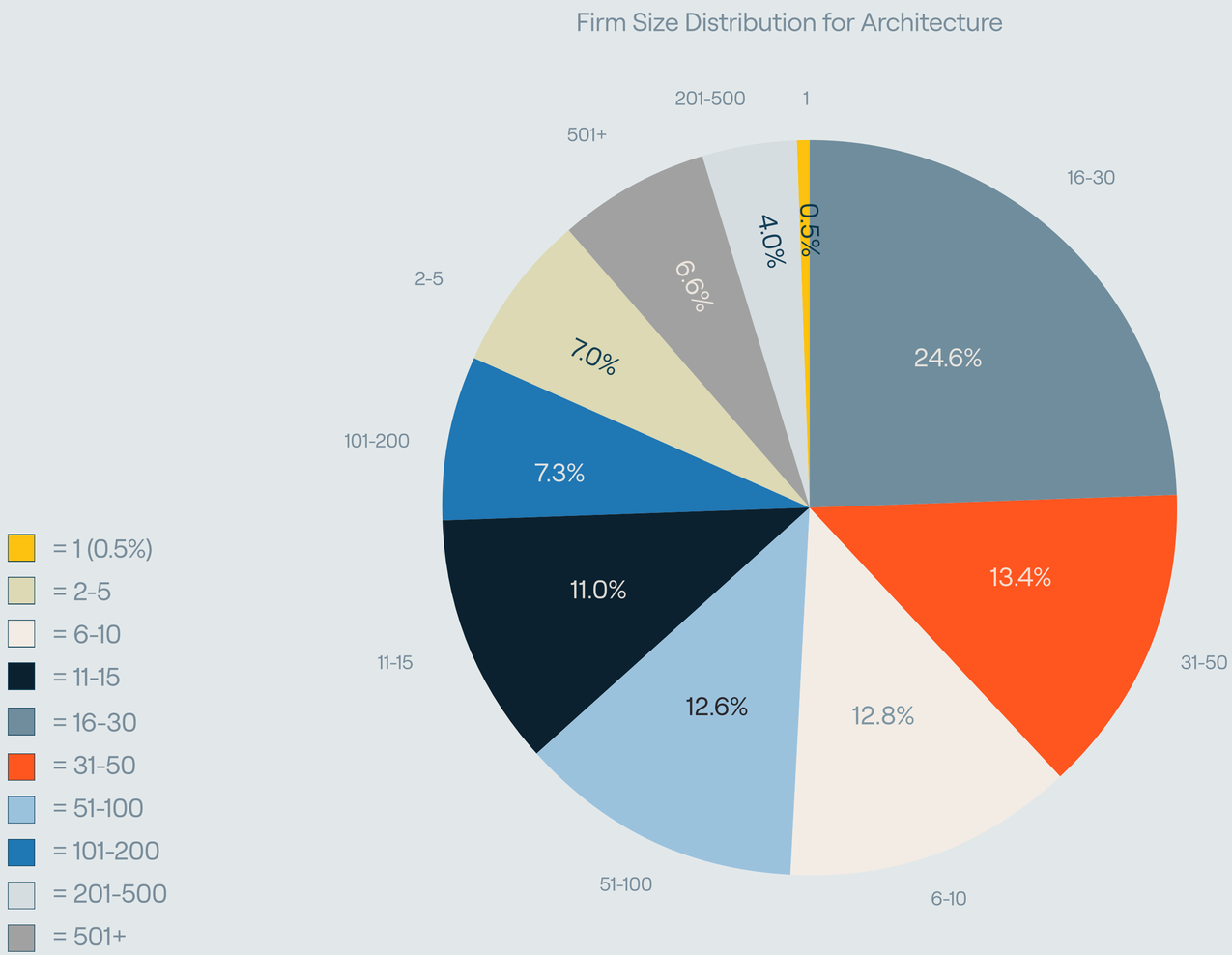
This chart displays the full salary distribution for the top 20 architecture roles, showing not just median pay, but the spread between lower and higher earners. Distribution charts like this expose variability within each role, shaped by experience, firm size, location, as well as different definitions or role responsibilities. Seeing the spread offers a more complete picture than medians alone.

2. Salary Data By Firm Size



Architecture Median Salary by Firm Size in This Data Set

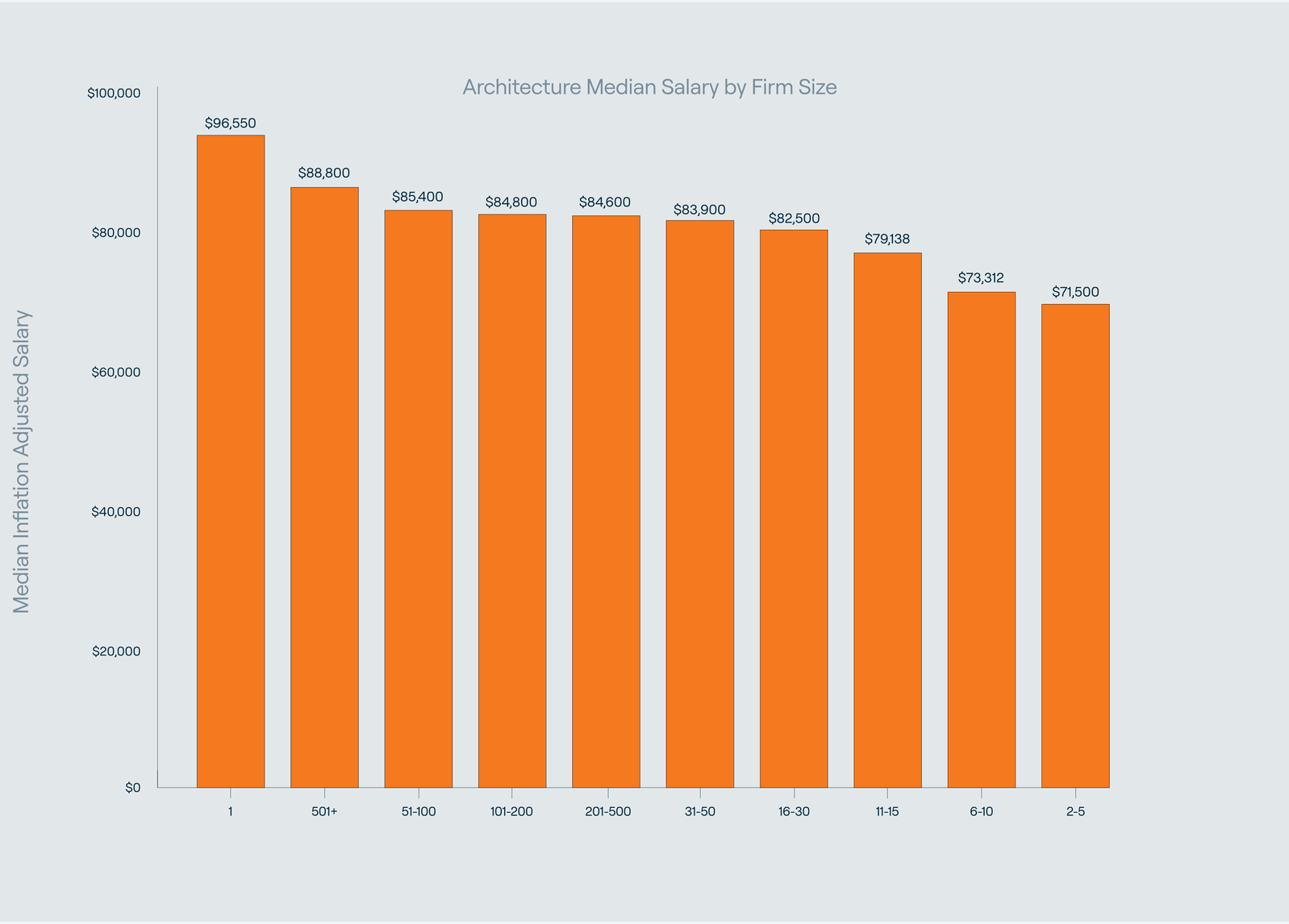
This chart shows the distribution of architecture salary records by firm size, offering insight into how the dataset is weighted across small, mid-sized, and large firms. The vast majority of records come from firms with more than 5 employees, meaning salary benchmarks reflect those working at more established firms.



Note: Because this dataset comes primarily from firm management software, one-person firms are underrepresented. Sole practitioners make up about 28% of architecture firms, although they account for a smaller share of licensed architects, as larger firms employ most practitioners.

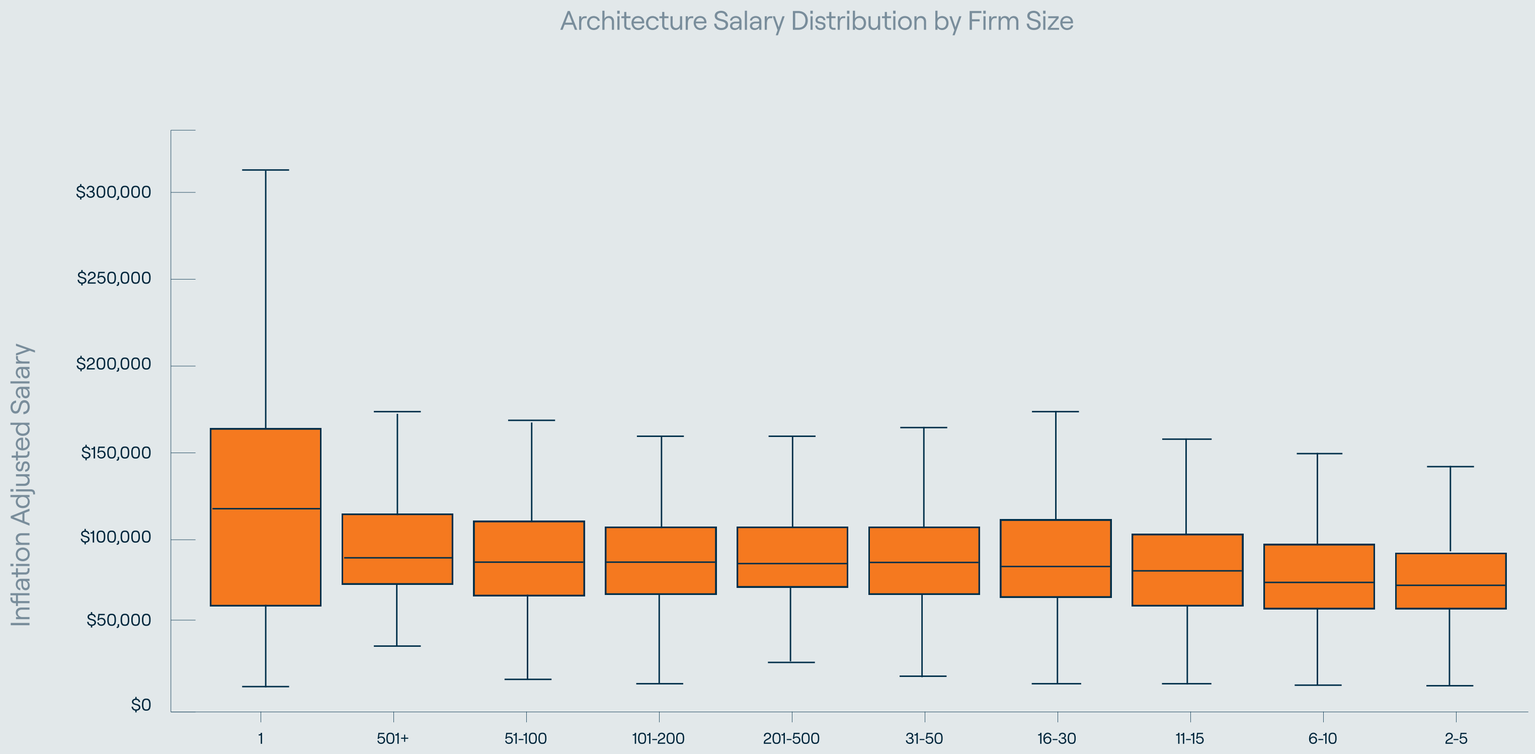
Architecture Median Salary by Firm Size

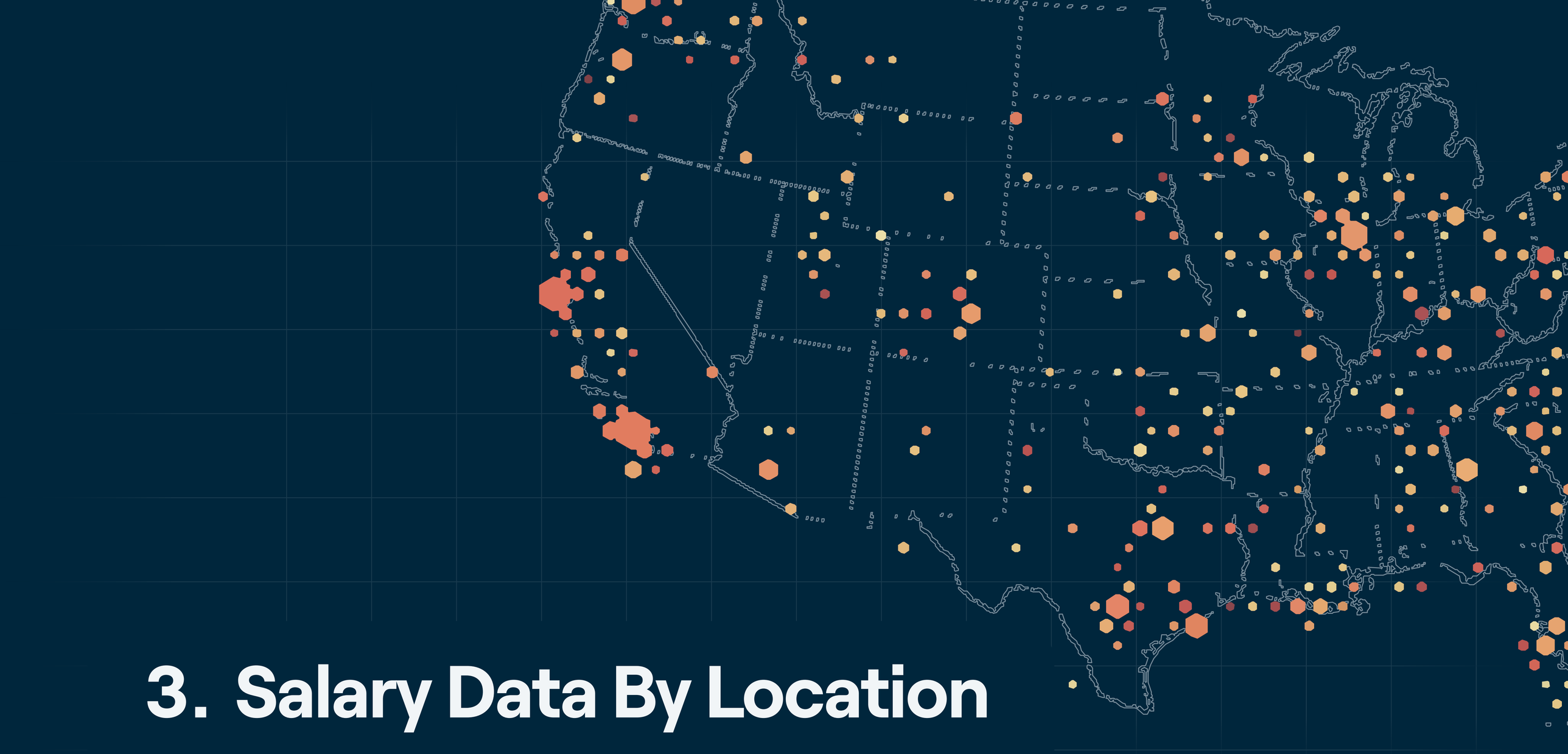
Median salaries generally increase with firm size, reflecting larger project scopes, more defined role hierarchies, and greater financial resources. However, one-person firms stand out as an exception to this trend. Because sole practitioners often take on both creative and administrative responsibilities, and their income may vary based on project flow, business development success, and how they pay themselves, their reported compensation tends to fall outside typical salary structures.



Architecture Salary Distribution by Firm Size in This Data Set

Most firm sizes exhibit similar salary distribution ranges, suggesting consistent compensation patterns across the industry. One-person firms, however, stand out with a much wider spread - likely due to the varied responsibilities and income structures of sole practitioners, who often juggle both creative work and firm ownership.

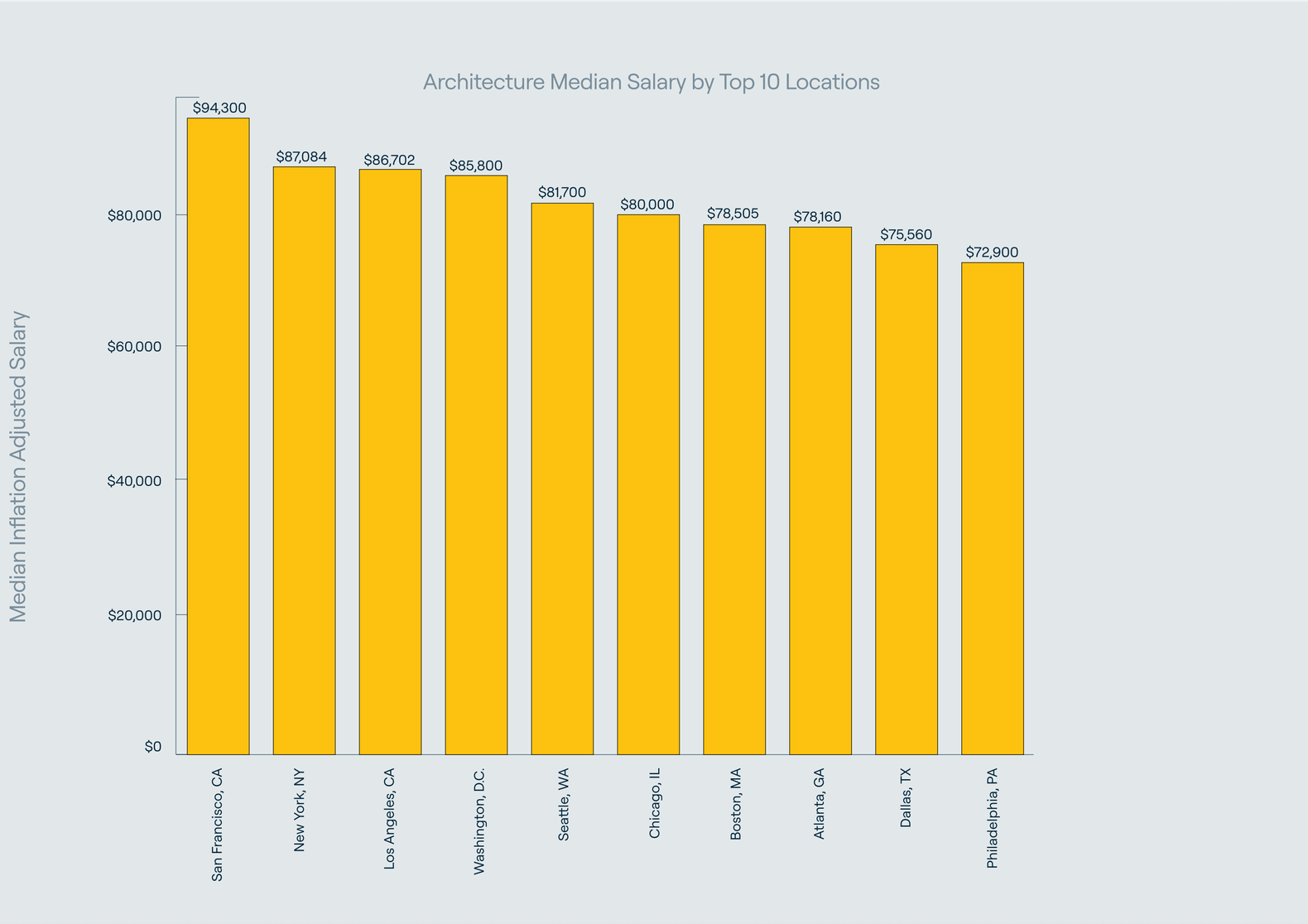




3. Salary Data By Location

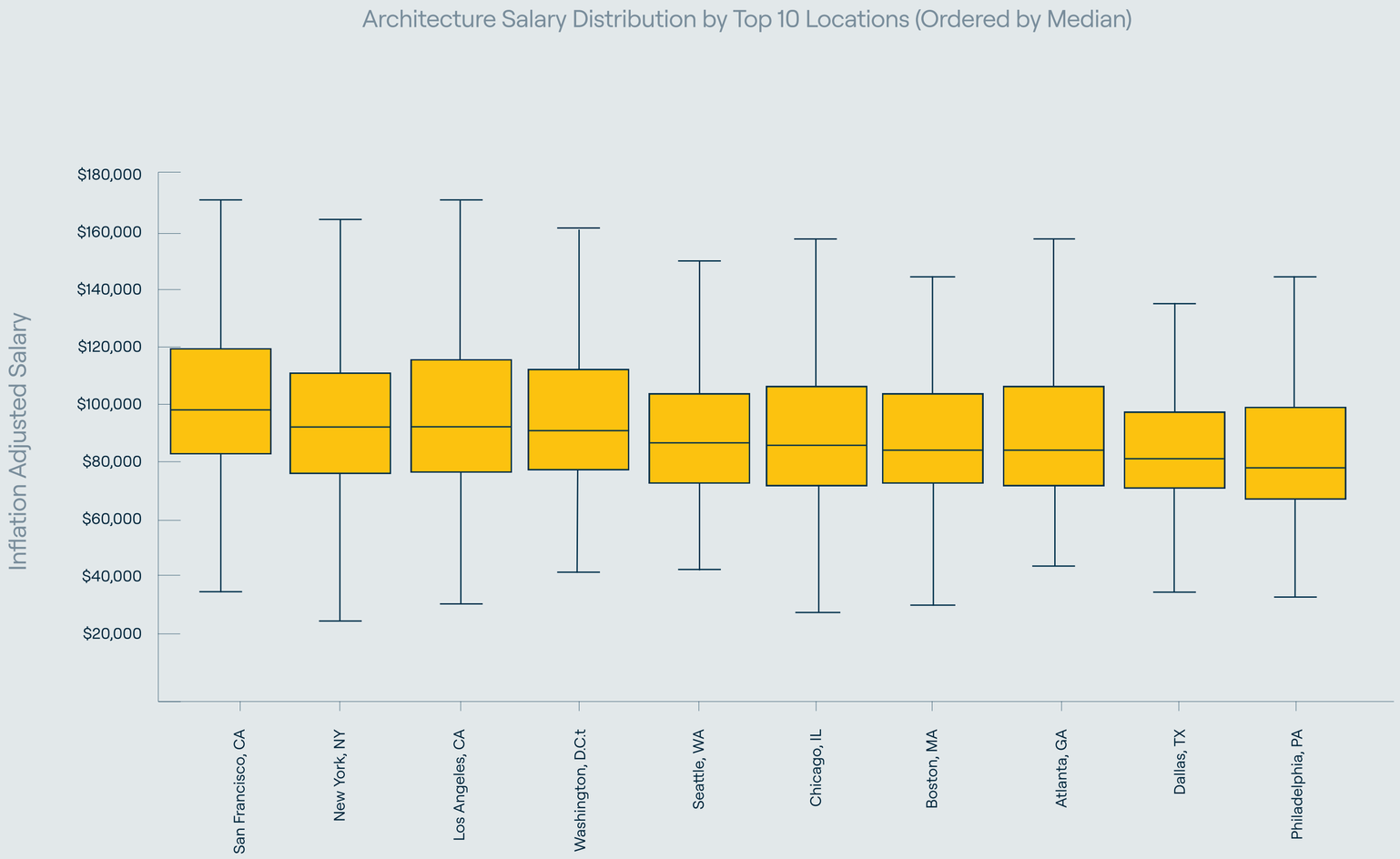
Architecture Median Salary by Top 10 Locations

This chart highlights the top 10 locations with the highest median architecture salaries, reflecting regional differences in demand, firm density, and market rates. These geographic benchmarks help firms and professionals evaluate how local compensation stacks up against national standards. The results are closely aligned with the major metro areas across the country.



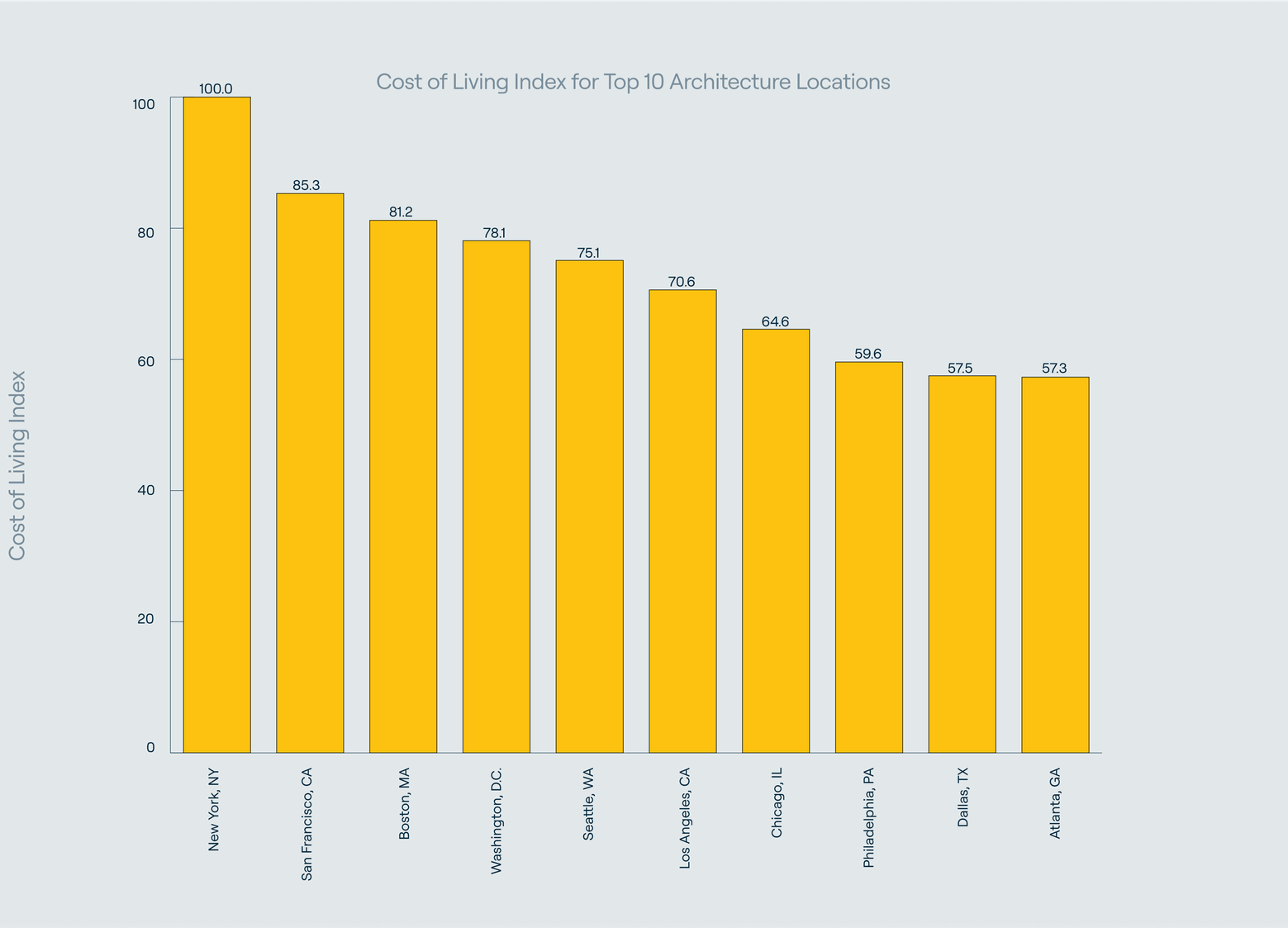
Architecture Salary Distribution by top 10 Locations

This chart reveals the full salary range for the top 10 highest-paying locations in architecture, providing deeper insight into compensation variability within each region. While median salaries offer a baseline, distribution patterns show how factors like experience, firm type, and local market conditions influence pay across roles. It’s interesting to look at the spread, especially comparing salary floors to potential ceilings. For example, Seattle has relatively high starting salaries, but the earning potential is lower than in cities like New York, Los Angeles, or San Francisco.



Cost of Living Index for Top 10 Architecture Locations

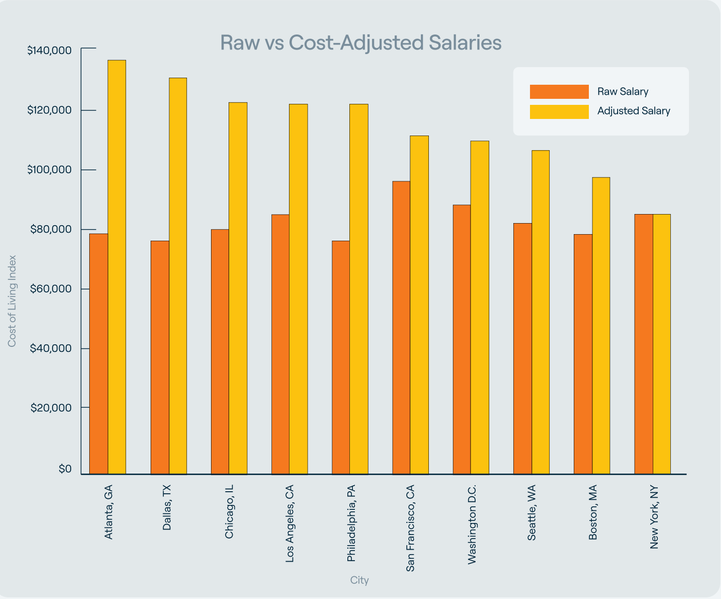
This chart compares the cost of living index across the top 10 highest-paying architecture locations, using New York City as the baseline (100). Regional differences in living expenses are essential context for interpreting salary data, as higher nominal pay doesn't always translate to greater financial well-being.

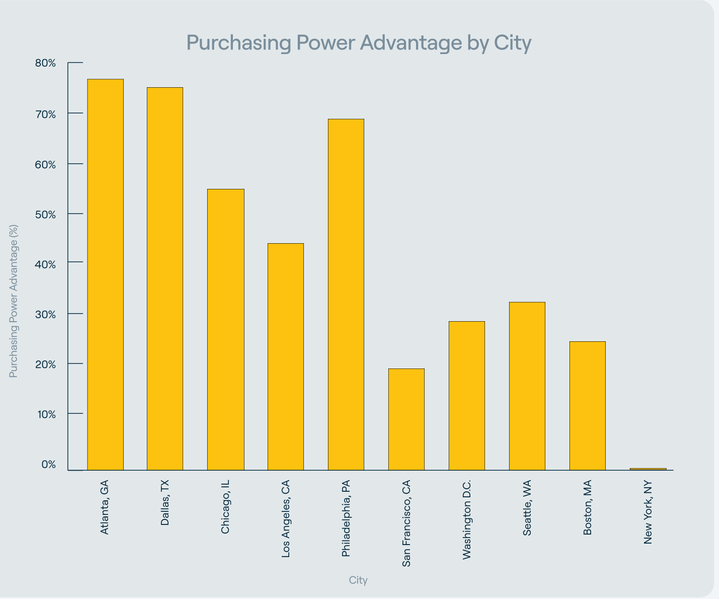


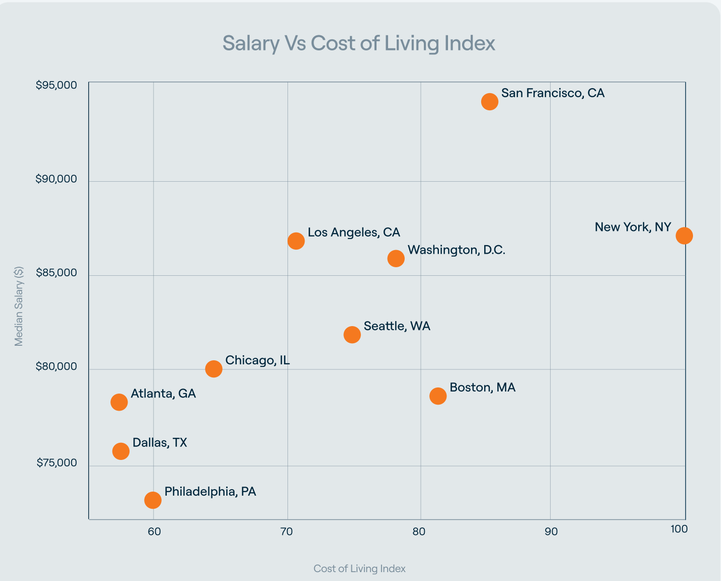
Salary vs Cost of Living Analysis

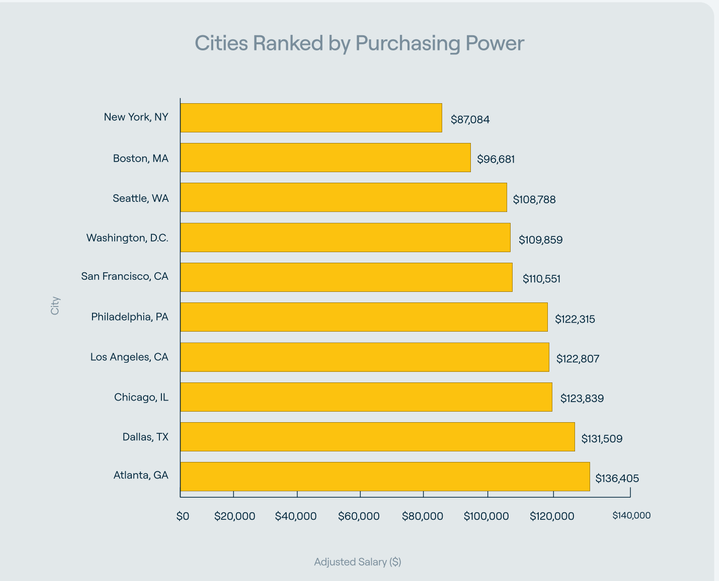
This section analyzes how architecture salaries compare to local cost of living across the top markets. There's a strong correlation between higher salaries and higher living costs, indicating more regionally calibrated compensation.

New York City has the highest cost of living in the dataset, and despite relatively high salaries it nets out to low cost-adjusted compensation. However, when adjusting for cost of living, cities like Atlanta and Dallas emerge as standouts, offering strong salaries relative to expenses—and delivering the greatest purchasing power for architects.









Additional Resources

- Salary Data Map
- Benchmarking Report
- Case Studies
- Tools & Templates
- Reports & Ebooks

BQE CORE Customer:

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About BQE CORE

BQE Software builds business management tools that help architecture and engineering firms run more efficiently and profitably. Our platform, BQE CORE, centralizes time tracking, billing, project management, and financial reporting, giving firm leaders real-time visibility into performance and the insights they need to make smarter decisions.

Beyond software, BQE is committed to supporting the A&E industry with resources that drive transparency, equity, and growth. This salary report and the accompanying visualization tool are some of many ways we aim to deliver value by turning data into knowledge that helps firms benchmark, plan, and lead with confidence.

Schedule A Demo →