SALARY SURVEY OF SCRUM PROFESSIONALS

2017-2018

SPONSORED BY SCRUM ALLIANCE

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HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE SALARY SURVEY OF SCRUM PROFESSIONALS.

This year, Scrum Alliance® conducted an evaluation of Scrum's impact on employees' salaries. Our goal was to provide a quantifiable resource to our members that demonstrates the impact Scrum has on earning potential, as well as productivity, output, and overall benefit to the organization.

The data clearly indicate that accumulated number of certifications and years of Scrum-related experience are rewarded with higher salaries (or rates for contractors). We also discovered a typical Scrum professional follows a career journey that builds on initial certification with professional practice and ongoing education.

Whether you're in your second decade practicing Scrum or are just beginning to consider how the Scrum framework could enrich your career, I want to encourage you to see Scrum more broadly as a long-term endeavor.

At Scrum Alliance, we are committed to helping with that journey with path-centric courses developed to grow with you.

I hope this survey adds to the conversations between your HR team and the rest of the organization and helps your company hire and build upon employees' talent for innovation, adaptation to change, and ability to foster a unique and meaningful workplace culture.

Thank you so much for reading and for being part of our growing Scrum community.

Bennie Covington
DIRECTOR OF TALENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT SCRUM ALLIANCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across all age groups, experience levels, number of certifications and roles, Scrum professionals have an average annual base salary of $100,500. Moreover, 55 percent saw an increase in their annual base salary from 2016 to 2017.

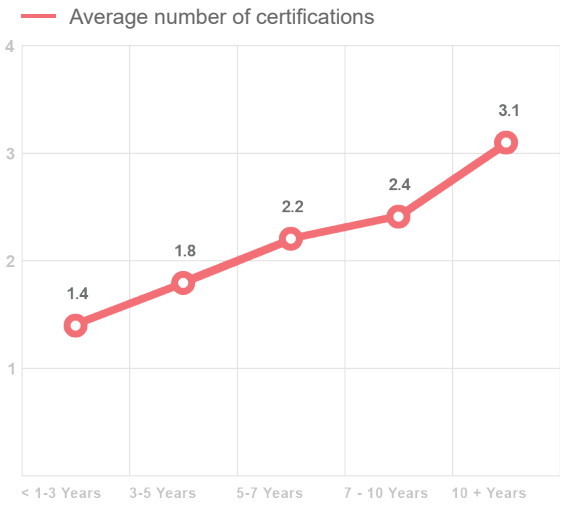
The data point to an accumulative career trajectory in Scrum: Age, years of experience, and number of certifications tend to increase together.
In the following report, respondents are analyzed in three distinct phases of a Scrum professional journey: those just entering a Scrum career, those growing their practice, and the experienced Agile practitioners leading the way.

Roles vs. years of Scrum-related experience and age

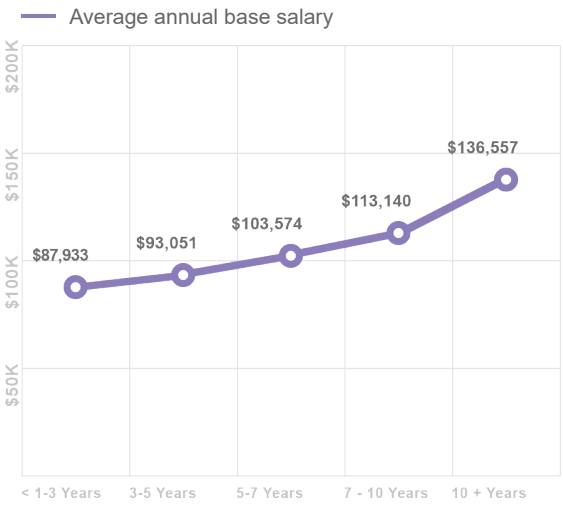
With increased Scrum experience, professionals transfer to coaching roles, which report salaries higher than averages for ScrumMaster and Product Owner roles. Similarly, younger Scrum professionals are more likely to hold a team member roles, while older professionals are more often coaches.

Years of Scrum-related experience vs. certification and salary

As practitioners gain more years of experience, they are more likely to increase their portfolio of certifications. Likewise, as their years of Scrum-related experience increase, so does their average annual base salary.



Scrum-related experience vs. number of certifications



Scrum-related experience vs. expected 2017 salary

EDUCATION

The survey found that lack of formal education posed minimal or no barrier to entry, nor did differences in education lead to significant variations in annual base salary. Scrum professionals of all academic backgrounds — from some college to graduate degrees — found themselves on a level playing field.

COMPANY SIZE

Like education, company size showed no correlation with salary growth. It's likely that organizations seeking Agile expertise while emphasizing innovation and flexibility will value and reward Scrum professionals, regardless of company size.

INDUSTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS

Industries outside of IT and software are putting unprecedented value on their Scrum professionals. In 2017, Scrum practitioners had higher salaries in industries like entertainment than they did in IT.

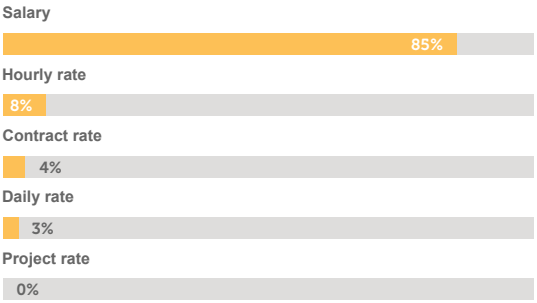
Similarly, respondents in the product development and IT department report salaries on par with the average; however, Scrum professionals working primarily in departments such as sales or consulting report above average earnings. This may be due to the fact that Agile and Scrum-related skills are expected in software development and IT, but in other sectors are more likely to add unique value to a business.

WOMEN IN SCRUM

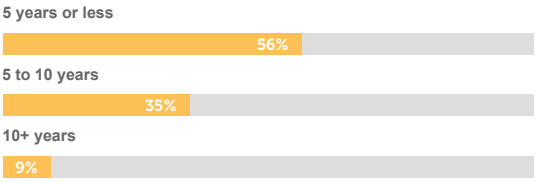
Female respondents reported annual base salaries around $5,500 less than men on average. Females more often reported their primary role as ScrumMasters on the Scrum Team (54% to 43%) and less often as coaches (21% to 31%), when compared to males.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

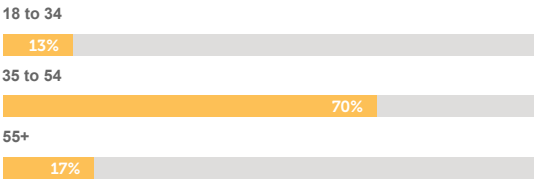
Compensation method



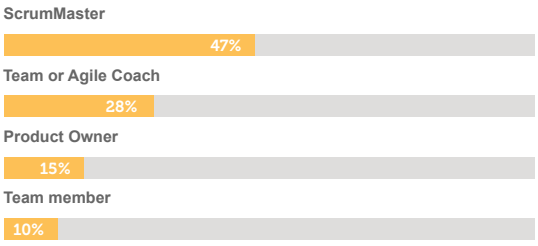
Years of Scrum-related experience



Age range



Primary role on the Scrum Team



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SCRUM SALARY JOURNEY

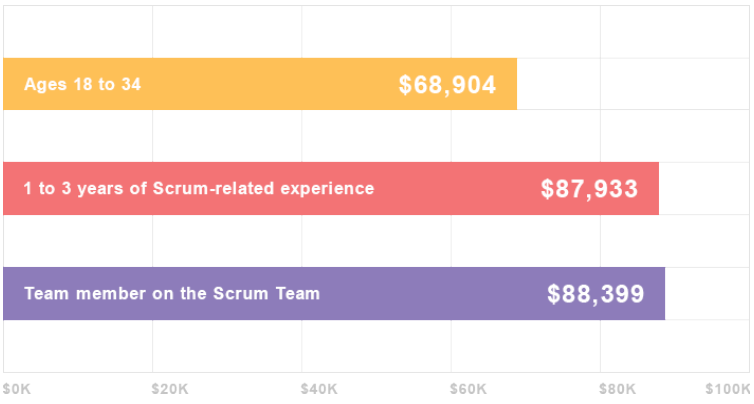
ENTRY TO SCRUM

Scrum certification sets even the young professional apart, and those with a few years of experience and/or just one certification earn between $60,000 and $65,000 more on average than the typical entry level applicant in the United States. As addressed later, this is not necessarily contingent on standardized education.

Younger Scrum professionals with fewer certifications and years of experience tend to hold the primary role of team member on the Scrum Team.

In general, the average annual base salary for an individual just beginning their career in Scrum rose in 2017: 18 to 34-year-olds received the most increases in annual base salary and younger respondents were more likely to receive promotions than older respondents.

Average annual base salary



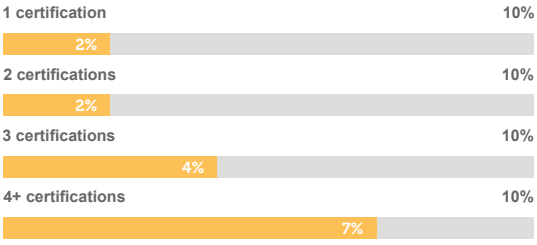
[1]Glassdoor reports a U.S. national average for entry base pay at $28,000 as of February 23, 2018. Rounded annual base salary averages for Scrum professionals with 1-3 years of experience and 1 certification were used to calculate. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/entry-level-salary-SRCH_KO0,11.htm

EDUCATION

Education does not tend to be a key differentiating factor in annual base salary for Scrum professionals. While earning a master's degree did, as would be expected, increase salaries by nearly $6,000 from those with only a bachelor's degree, and by over $12,000 from those with only a high school education, other variants saw less remarkable change.

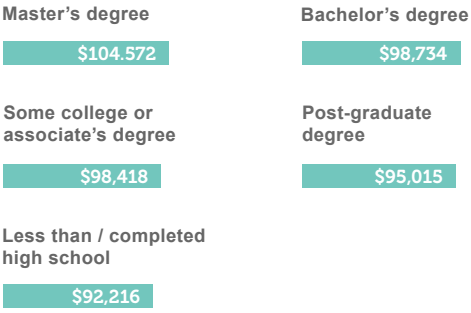
Those reporting below high school or high school only education levels still earned competitive salaries in the Scrum field. Additionally, those with bachelor's degrees differed in average annual base pay from those with either an associate's degree or some college by less than $350.

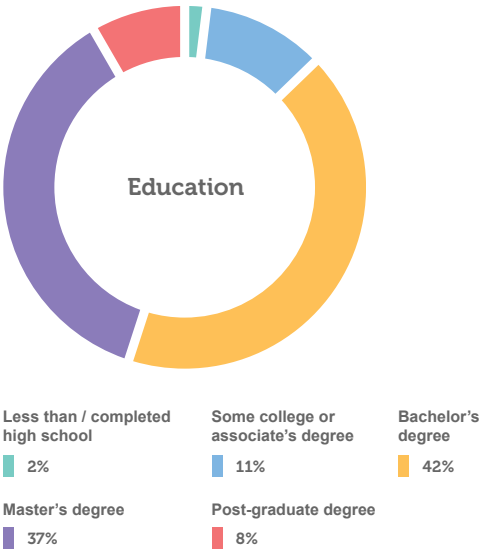
Higher commissions or billing rates increased significantly with the number of certifications



% increase in commission or billing rates by certification number

Average annual base salary by standardized education level





When education isn't a key differentiator, certification becomes that much more important. Globally recognized certifying bodies with courses developed according to certification standards and options for accumulating learning and certification distinguish job candidates as committed to lifelong learning and educated on a high standard.

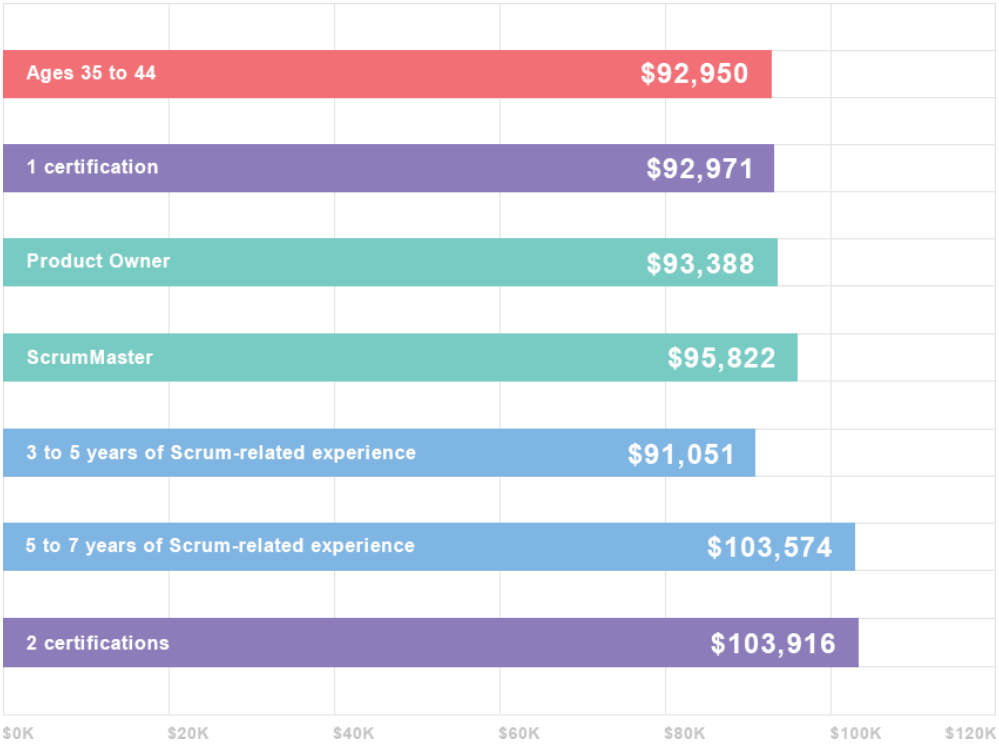
GROWTH OF SCRUM PRACTICE

As the demand for Agile expertise grows, so will the number of certifications earned and salary for Scrum professionals. A second certification showed an average salary increase of nearly $11,000. Likewise, making the leap from team member to ScrumMaster or Product Owner typically facilitates a raise up of nearly $7,000.

At the outset of 2018, there are thousands of open jobs for ScrumMasters in the United States alone and hundreds of others worldwide. More and more companies are beginning to better understand the value a Certified ScrumMaster, Product Owner or Agile Coach brings to their organization.

Experience is still a significant factor in average annual base pay. Salaries increase by approximately $2,000 for three to five years of Scrum practice, and $12,500 for five to seven years. Scrum is only a few decades old, and these rates may flatline over time as more Scrum professionals age in their careers.

Average annual base salary



[2]In the United States, a job search for "ScrumMaster" turns up over 22,000 matches on Glassdoor, just under 5,000 on LinkedIn, nearly 6,000 on Indeed and over 400 on a worldwide search from Monster.

EXPERIENCED AGILE LEADERSHIP

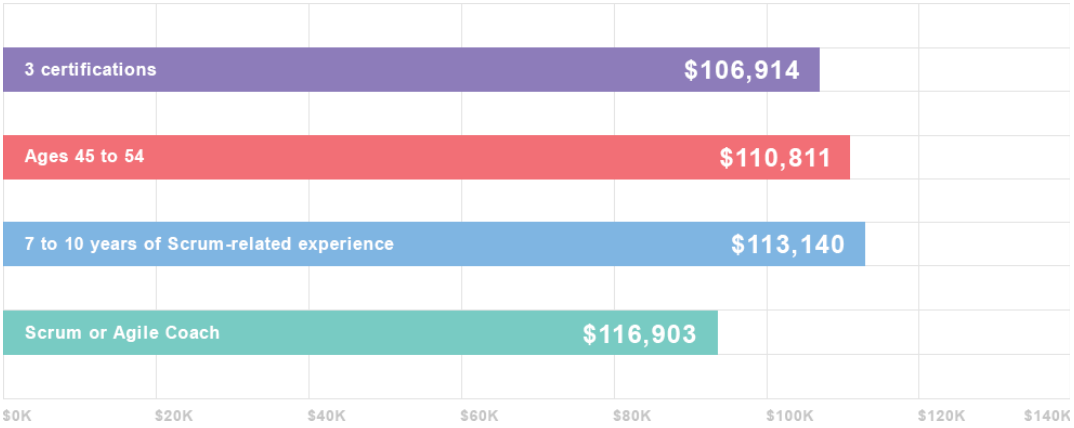
Team or Agile Coaches reported the highest earnings for primary Scrum roles, ranking above team members, ScrumMasters and Product Owners. Additionally, C-level Scrum professionals tended to have an average annual base salary over $140,000, coming in at the top of the salary range for Scrum professionals.

Those with three or more certifications are slightly more likely to be self-employed, as are respondents with over 10 years of Scrum experience, males aged 45 and older, and those with post-graduate degrees.

Annual salaries for Scrum professionals increase with age, while hourly rates peak between ages 45 and 54.

Average annual base salary

The emerging leader



The seasoned leader

OTHER FINDINGS

Average annual base salaries by industry

Telecommunications	Software development
$88,074	$89,629
IT	Education
$91,608	$91,850
Media & entertainment	Retail
$103,181	$102,516
Oil, gas & energy	Finance & banking
$101,703	$105,135
Manufacturing	Insurance
$107,770	$107,954
Healthcare	Government
$114,132	$114,338
Consulting	
$114,561	

Average annual base salaries by company size

1 to 99 employees	100 to 499 employees
$96,655	$93,201
500 to 4999 employees	5000 to 19,999 employees
$95,582	$109,860
20,000+ employees	
$106,701	

Average annual base salaries by department

Product development	IT/software
$99,376	$98,195
Finance	Sales/marketing
$105,217	$105,959
Consulting	C-level
$119,946	$140,535

Average annual base salaries regionally

South America	Asia
$56,751	$70,254
Europe	North America
$83,245	$116,544
Australia and Oceania	
$123, 305	

THE JOURNEY OF A SCRUM PROFESSIONAL

Entry to Scrum

Ages 18 to 34
$68,904

Team member on the Scrum Team
$88,399

Ages 35 to 44
$92,950

1 to 3 years of Scrum-related experience
$87,933

3 to 5 years of Scrum-related experience
$91,051

1 certification
$103,574

Experienced Agile Leader

3 certifications
$106,914

7 to 10 years of Scrum-related experience
$113,140

4+ certifications
$117,385

10+ years of Scrum-related experience
$136,557

Ages 45 to 54
$110,811

Team or Agile Coach on the Scrum Team
$116,903

55+ years old
$122,375

C-level executives
$140,535

Growth of Scrum Practice

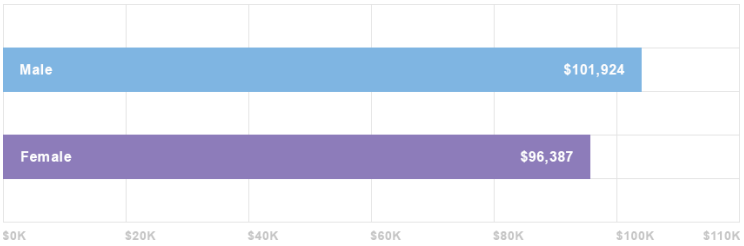
Product Owner on the Scrum Team
$93,388

5 to 7 years of Scrum-related experience
$103,574

ScrumMaster on the Scrum Team
$95,822

2 certifications
$103,916

Salary data by gender



ABOUT SCRUM ALLIANCE

Founded in 2001, Scrum Alliance® is the largest, most established and influential professional membership and certification organization in the Agile community. We are a nonprofit association with more than 500,000 certified practitioners worldwide.

Our vision is to “Transform the World of Work” with a mission to guide and inspire individuals, leaders, and organizations with practices, principles, and values that create workplaces that are joyful, prosperous, and sustainable.

INSPIRE

We inspire individuals, leaders, and organizations to adopt Agile mindsets. We support their transformations with training and shared stories of change and innovation in companies around the world.

ENABLE

We enable the work of our certificants and members through a global network of Agile peers, trainers, and coaches. We develop content and learning opportunities, including webinars, global and regional events, local user groups, and more.

GUIDE

We guide the application of Agile practices, principles, and values through our career-long certification path. Our community of coaches and trainers are focused on providing knowledge, skills, and experience that support Agile transformations for both individuals and organizations.

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