

Community Highlights

CRA Surveys CS Researcher Salaries in Industrial Labs

By William Gear

In November 1998, CRA conducted its second salary survey of computer science researchers with Ph.D.s who are employed in industrial laboratories. CRA initiated the survey in 1997 in response to the need for a survey that explicitly addressed the salaries paid to these researchers.

Eight companies, representing 644 employees in CS, completed the 1998 questionnaire, although not all respondents answered all questions. Companies that completed the survey received a summary of the data in January 1999.

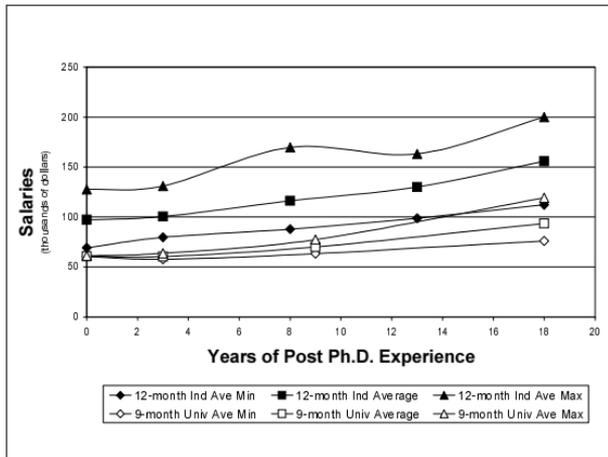
The 1998 survey asked respondents to provide minimum, average, and maximum starting salaries, as well as salary figures for researchers with post-Ph.D. experience of 1 to 5, 6 to 10, 11 to 15, and 16 to 20 years. The averages of these numbers are shown in the accompanying graph.

The graph plots the "base plus variable" 12-month salaries against post-Ph.D. experience. Fringe benefits are not included in the

survey. *Base salary* is the annual salary that is specified in the job offer; *variable salary* includes items such as bonuses and the value of stock options (which respondents were asked to estimate).

Because companies adjust salaries at different times of the year, respondents were also asked to indicate the month in which annual salary adjustments were made. In order to compare these data with those of the annual CRA Taulbee Survey of academic computer science salaries (which usually cover the period September to August), the data were adjusted so they approximate the pay scale for the same period. (This was done by assuming that the average company will adjust its scales for computer science by 4 percent from 1998 to 1999; this is not the same as assuming an average salary increase of 4 percent because the actual salary increases people receive also factor in an additional year of experience.)

The graph also shows the corresponding data for 9-month academic salaries of all U.S. CS



Departments responding to the latest Taulbee Survey (see CRN, January 1999, Table 1). The experience levels assumed for assistant, associate, and full professors are 3, 9, and 18 years, respectively.

CRA is currently conducting its survey of 1999-2000 industrial lab salaries. Results will be available in

December 1999 to companies that complete the survey.

The industry information in the graph is distributed with the permission of the companies that participated in last year's survey.

Dr. Gear, President of NEC Research Institute, Inc., chairs CRA's Industry Committee. ■