

Press release
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Australian tech teams race to hire AI talent as demand surges

- 92% of Australian tech leaders say they need AI-related roles in their organisation
- Most sought-after roles include AI Product Manager (35%), AI Governance Specialist (29%), and Data Scientist with machine learning expertise (28%)
- 91% of tech leaders expect demand for AI/ML talent to increase in the next 12 months
- High salary expectations (41%) and scarcity of qualified candidates (36%) are the biggest barriers to AI hiring
- 97% of tech teams are turning to innovative strategies beyond traditional recruitment to secure specialised AI talent

Sydney, 23 October 2025 – Australia's tech leaders are accelerating their adoption of artificial intelligence, with nearly all (92%) now reporting they have a need for AI-related roles in their organisation, according to new independent research commissioned by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#).

Demand for AI talent has skyrocketed

According to tech leaders, the most in-demand AI roles businesses are hiring for or have recently filled include:

- AI Product Manager (35%)
- AI Governance Specialist (29%)
- Data Scientist with a machine learning focus (28%)
- AI Engineer (28%)
- AI Architect (28%)
- LLM/NLP Engineer (22%)
- Robotics Engineer (AI-driven) (19%)

Only 8% of companies report no current need for AI talent, yet most (5%) of these expect they soon will.

The appetite for AI expertise is intensifying, with 91% of tech leaders expecting demand for AI/ML talent to increase in the next 12 months. Larger organisations are leading this trend, with 95% anticipating growth, compared to 87% of SMEs.

*"AI is rapidly transforming from an experimental capability to a core business necessity," said **Soni Huzefa, Senior Practice Director at Robert Half**. "The breadth of in-demand roles shows that companies are embedding AI into strategy, governance, and operations rather than limiting it to technical development. We are approaching a tipping point where AI skills shift from optional to essential across organisations of all sizes."*

Hiring obstacles are intensifying

Despite demand, almost every employer (99%) hiring AI talent is running into hurdles. The top challenges cited include:

- High salary expectations (41%)
- Scarcity of qualified candidates (36%)
- Competition from other companies (32%)
- Candidates lacking the right mix of technical and soft skills (32%)

- Difficulty assessing true AI capabilities during interviews (30%)
- Lack of relevant industry experience (28%)

The creative approaches to sourcing AI talent

With traditional recruitment pipelines unable to keep pace, 97% of employers are turning to alternative strategies to secure AI expertise. These include:

- Using AI-powered tools to accelerate candidate matching (50%)
- Hiring career changers or self-taught engineers with non-traditional backgrounds (49%)
- Promoting continuous business process evaluation (42%)
- Hiring remotely to tap into broader or global tech talent pools (37%)

“The competition for AI talent is increasingly about finding professionals who combine technical expertise with business insights and strong soft skills. Employers are responding pragmatically by broadening their candidate search sources, moving beyond traditional candidate pipelines. As demand increases in the world of AI, transferable skills and adaptability are commanding a premium, giving employers that prioritise potential over credentials a distinct advantage in navigating this new landscape,” concludes **Huzefa**.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in July 2025, by an independent research company of 500 hiring managers in finance and accounting, IT and technology, and human resources. Respondents are drawn from a sample of SMEs as well as large private, publicly-listed and public sector organisations across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management, and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Melbourne South East, Perth, and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com/au.

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