Tech salaries rise in SA but gender gap remains, report finds

OfferZen recently released its *2022 State of the South Africa Software Developer Nation* report. It is a large data report on developer careers in South Africa, and the third annual report of its kind released by the developer job marketplace.

Based on a survey of over 3,200 local developers, the report found that cryptocurrency is gaining ground as one of the most promising industries for local software developers while AI and cloud computing retain the highest level of interest.

"As the pandemic and remote work continue, there is an ongoing shift towards a more digital world. This is reflected in the industries we see becoming popular with developers," says Philip Joubert, OfferZen's co-founder and CEO.

Salaries are on the rise for senior developers, but the gender gap persists

According to the 2022 report, developer salaries have increased, on average, by 7.4% since OfferZen's first report in 2019. Senior developers have seen the biggest win in the same time period with a 19% increase, reflecting an increasing demand for more experienced developers.

Backend developers command the highest average salaries among local developers – 27% more compared to their frontend counterparts – followed by full stack and frontend developers.

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Developers in Cape Town reported earning the highest salaries for the third year running, while Pretoria has overtaken Johannesburg as the second highest-earning city for local developers.

OfferZen's data also shows that the gender pay gap remains persistent across all experience levels, and is widest at the senior level. Female developers earn 17% less on average than their male counterparts, despite female survey respondents being proportionately represented in higher-paying languages, industries and locations.

"We hope that, by providing salary transparency in our jobs platform and in reports like these, we will equip all developers with the knowledge and confidence to earn the salary they deserve," says Joubert.

AWS, Javascript and Python take top spots for developers

Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft and Google are the three top competitors in the "cloud wars" – the battle to be the most used cloud service. South African developers tend to use AWS the most, well ahead of Microsoft Azure, which is more popular at companies with a team size of 5,000-10,000 people.

JavaScript remains the most used programming language in South Africa and TypeScript was a noticeable mover, overtaking Java to claim fourth place.

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Python is still the most desired programming language across frontend, backend and full stack developers in South Africa. TypeScript is the second most desired language, but only just: it's getting some tough competition from Go, which has overtaken JavaScript to claim third place.

Sourcing great talent still a challenge, and remote work remains a popular choice

2022 is looking to be another good year for the local tech industry, which means increased competition for the best developers. Almost 30% of local developers are looking to move jobs within the next 12 months. This is a smaller percentage of developers on average than in 2021, meaning that sourcing developers will become even harder.

However, developers are clear on what they are looking for in a job. Work-life balance is the number one reason developers stay in their current jobs, followed by growth and learning opportunities. When it comes to changing jobs, developers consider earning potential and challenging projects the most important factors.

Remote work continues to be the new norm among local developers, with 92% having the option to work from home and one in five developers working for companies based in a different city to where they reside. Fewer than 15% say they receive a budget for their remote set-up.

"If companies want to recruit and retain skilled developers, they need to be cognisant of developers' priorities," says

Joubert. "Lots of companies can offer a competitive salary, but they also need to focus on holistic work environments that encourage growth and balance."