

AltProtein.Jobs 2025 Career & Hiring Report

Data-Driven Insights on the Global Talent and Job Market

Alt Protein .Jobs

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AltProtein.Jobs is dedicated to empowering the Alternative Protein sector by connecting top talent with industry-leading employers. This report provides insights into the global talent and job market within the Alternative Protein industry, drawn from the AltProtein.Jobs platform. Previously, we published another study based on similar data, spanning the period of October 2023 to October 2024, which can be found here. For this report, we analyzed the information spanning January 2025 to December 2025 from thousands of job listings worldwide.

This report covers diverse categories, including the current state of the job market, hiring and role insights, geographical trends, trend fluctuations throughout the year, comparative analyses with previous years, applicant preferences, employment types, and product focus. These findings provide a valuable resource for businesses, investors, and job seekers who are exploring opportunities and trends in the evolving Alternative Protein talent and job market.

If you have questions or comments, please reach out to the contributors of the report:

Birte Kemper-Ehrhardt, birte.ehrhard@altprotein.jobs

Nadja Milivojev, nadja.milivojev@altprotein.jobs

Liliia Lisina, liliia.lisina@altprotein.jobs

Oliver Boldt, product@altprotein.jobs

Pia Voltz, pia.voltz@altprotein.jobs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3
2. CONTEXT AND LIMITATIONS OF THE REPORT 4
3. CURRENT STATE OF THE JOB MARKET 5
4. HIRING INSIGHTS 8
5. ROLE AND SKILLS ANALYSIS 12
6. GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS 15
7. EMPLOYMENT TYPE 17
8. TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCT TYPE TRENDS 18
9. KEY TAKEAWAYS 19



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an analysis of the current talent and job market within the Alternative Protein sector. The study is based on tens of thousands of data points from job postings on AltProtein.Jobs, the primary job board and talent pool for the Alternative Protein sector.

Geographical trends show growth in job postings across North America, Brazil and India reflecting increased investment and activities in these regions. Meanwhile, Europe's and Asia/Pacific's share of job postings has declined.

There is strong **demand** for entry- and mid-level roles, along with a slight rise in internship positions. The sector shows a preference for full-time, long-term employment.

Notably, **roles** in business, production, biology & food science, and sales & marketing are highly popular among applicants, while positions in machine learning, software engineering, and legal and compliance experience longer hiring timelines, indicating a large talent gap and a potential opportunity for the job seekers. Larger companies, such as Ingredion Incorporated and Coperion continue to dominate hiring.

Looking ahead, the global Alternative Protein sector is expected to not grow significantly in 2026, retaining or shrinking its size compared to the years before; however, the job profile diversity is expected to increase. External factors, including the global funding landscape, local political and economic conditions, alongside the increased use of AI in recruitment, will further shape the hiring landscape. For job seekers, competition is likely to intensify in fields with more candidates than job openings, such as food science R&D, engineering and policy & advocacy.

Key takeaways

- AI technology is continuing to find more uses in foodtech and Alternative Protein industries; we have recorded a global uptick in AI-related vacancies.
- Job seekers and employers should focus on developing skills for in-demand roles, particularly in machine learning, software engineering, law, and compliance.
- While the numbers of roles in cultivated meat and (precision) fermentation have gone down, roles related to plant-based proteins and accompanying services (ingredients, equipment, packaging etc.) are in demand.
- Opportunities for large-scale talent intake and diversifying employment types exist in high-growth regions, while employers in other regions should focus on more strategic and specific need-based hiring.
- Ecosystem stakeholders should prioritize adapting to the recent developments in the growth trajectory of the industry and help ensure that Alternative Proteins remain resilient in the face of changing political and economic landscapes.



2. CONTEXT AND LIMITATIONS OF THE REPORT

While the study draws on data from the industry's most comprehensive job board and talent pool, AltProtein.Jobs, there are some limitations due to data availability and sample biases.

Previous insights into the Alternative Protein talent and job market mostly consisted of workforce projections based on financial outlooks and growth forecasts, as well as this comprehensive article by the Good Food Institute (GFI), based on a survey. In 2024, we published our first data study, spanning the period of October 2023 to October 2024.

This year's report complements these insights through a data-driven approach based on up-to-date information. This allows for a practical, current perspective on hiring trends and workforce gaps.

While we have made every effort to use high-quality data and draw well-supported conclusions, this report has several limitations.

1. DATA SCOPE & SAMPLE BIAS: Despite efforts to capture a comprehensive picture, we cannot guarantee that 100% of job listings in the industry were covered, leading to potential data gaps.

2. BROADER ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRY DYNAMIC: Factors such as broader economic conditions, supply chain dynamics, regulatory changes, investment trends, and shifts in market demand influence hiring trends in the Alternative Protein sector. These variables differ across regions, product types, and technologies and may not be fully represented in this report. Additionally, job opportunities and job searches in the Alternative Protein sector are subject to seasonal variations, such as summer breaks.

3. COMPANY TURNOVER: The dataset includes new companies entering the industry while others become inactive. The dynamic nature of the sector impacts data consistency, as we regularly add new companies in batches to keep our database up to date.

4. AI DISCLAIMER: We did not use generative AI for the data, analysis, and content within this report. While we have used generative AI as a tool to assist with the refinement of written English, all insights, findings, and conclusions are derived from the data collected and analyzed by real humans.

3. CURRENT STATE OF THE JOB MARKET

In this section, we provide an overview of current job market trends in the Alternative Protein sector, highlighting hiring fluctuations, high-demand roles, and regional growth driven by investment and expanding global interest.

a. JOB MARKET SIZE AND TRENDS

An analysis of new jobs posted each month since January 2025 showed that these job postings have demonstrated dynamic fluctuations. In total, 15,404 jobs were posted from January 2025 through December 2025, which is comparable to the previously analyzed period of October 2023 to October 2024, with 16,010 total jobs. For 2025, monthly breakdowns reveal specific hiring surges, such as those in February and July, relatively similar to the previous peaks in January and August of 2024. Job postings peaked in February with 1,480 openings and saw another high in July with 2,027 positions. In contrast, May and December showed lower hiring activity, with 1,081 and 1,063 postings, respectively. The average number of new jobs over the analyzed period was 1,283. The number of all open jobs peaked in July 2025 at 3,671, while hitting a low of 2,560 in May 2025, with an average of 3,006 positions available over the analyzed period.

While the exact reasons for these fluctuations can not be determined based on the available data, it is possible that they are influenced by factors such as investment rounds or seasonal budget allocations.

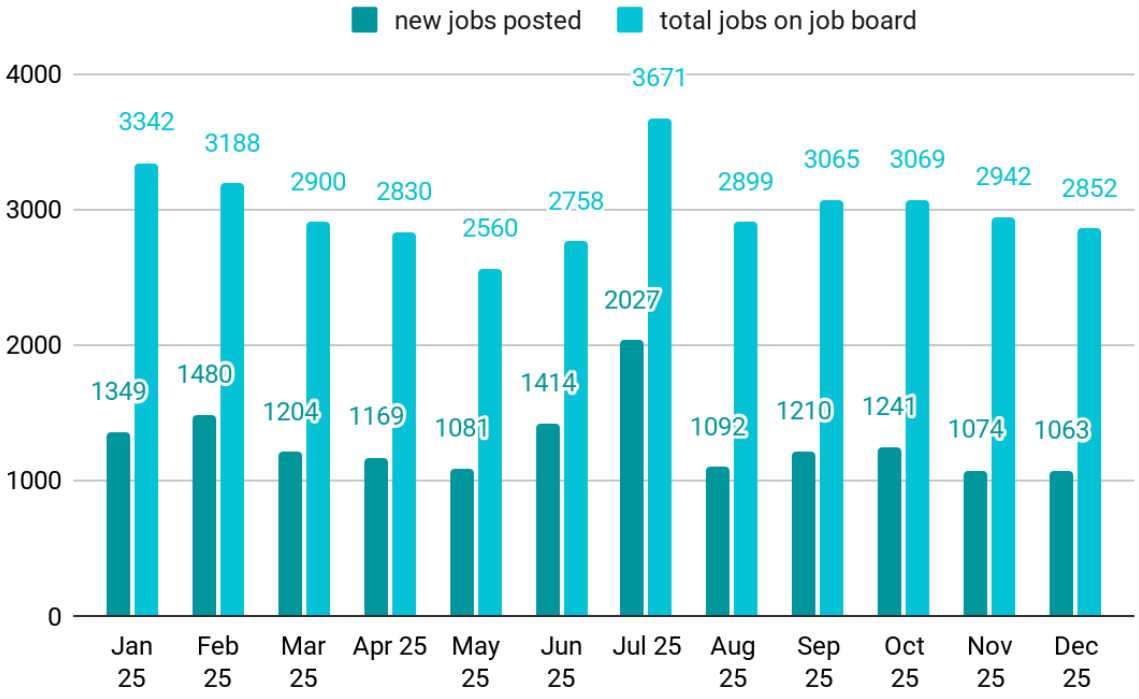

Figure 1: Total amount of jobs and new jobs per month in 2025

Looking at the growth within each job function category[1] of the Alternative Protein sector, the data reveal fairly consistent monthly job postings, with certain functions showing particularly strong demand. These categories have been defined to encompass all detailed job functions posted on AltProtein.Jobs while being mutually exclusive.

Below is a breakdown of job postings by each job function category from January to December 2025, showcasing the cumulative demand for specific skill sets.

Below are the amounts of **total job postings in different job function categories** since the beginning of 2025:

1. **Business** – 6,915 jobs
2. **Production** – 5,444 jobs
3. **Biology and food science** – 4,483 jobs
4. **Sales & Marketing** – 4,421 jobs
5. **Software engineering** – 739 jobs
6. **Engineering** – 629 jobs
7. **Policy & Advocacy** – 83 jobs

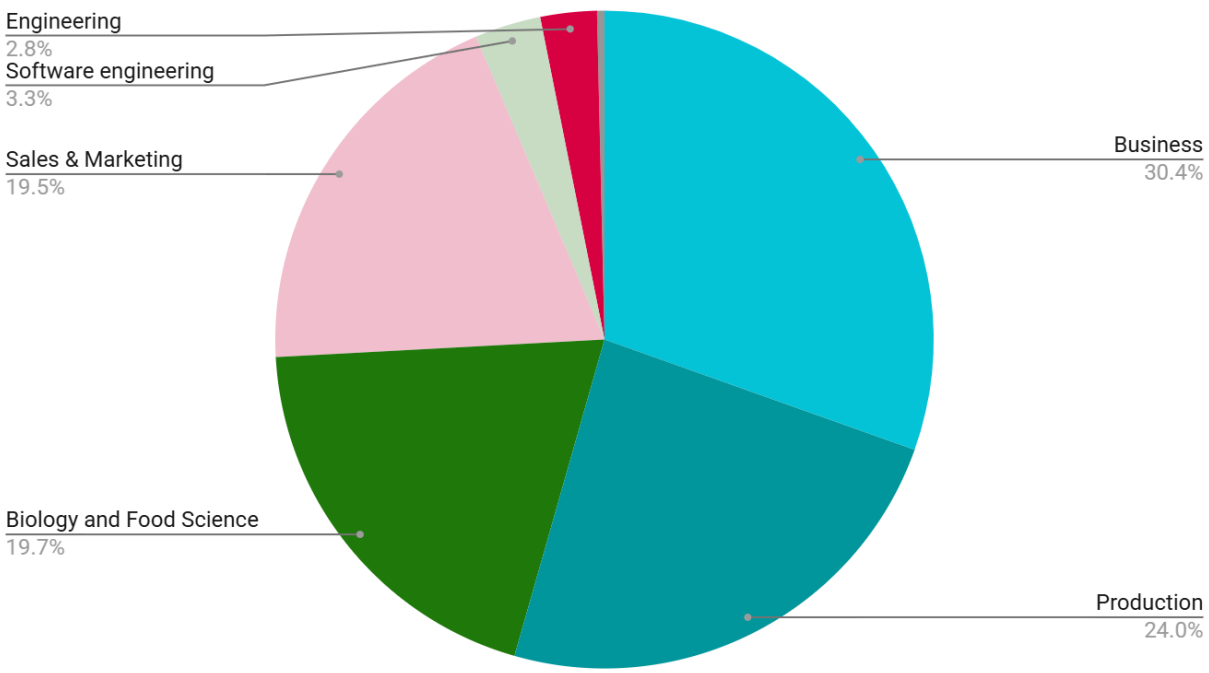

Figure 2: Percentage of jobs per job function category

[1] - **Biology and Food Science** includes the job functions Food Science, Biochemical Engineering, Food Safety, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Agricultural Science, Cell Line Development, Downstream Processing, Tissue Engineering, Bioinformatics, and Growth Medium Development.
- **Production** includes the job functions Manufacturing and Quality Assurance.
- **Sales & Marketing** includes the job functions Sales & Business Development and Marketing & PR.
- **Business** includes the job functions Project Management, Business Administration, Finance & Accounting, Supply Chain, People & HR, Procurement, and Legal & Compliance.
- **Software Engineering** includes the job functions Software Engineering and Machine Learning and Data Analysis.
- **Policy & Advocacy** includes the job function Policy & Advocacy only.

The job board data reveals that **11.1%** of job postings are **hybrid** roles. **Fully remote positions**, however, represent only **6.1%** of the total postings. In contrast, **on-site roles** dominate the landscape, making up approximately **82.8% of all job listings**, indicating a strong preference among employers for in-person work environments.

Our analysis of application rates reveals that job seekers are **equally interested in on-site and hybrid roles**, with about 1.6 times more applicants than available roles for both. **Remote roles**, however, were notably **more popular**, with 2.6 times more applicants than roles. This may be the consequence of **professionals seeking flexibility in** their work hours and professional environment, or could reflect the **unequal distribution of attractive on-site opportunities globally**, resulting in candidates **seeking work at remote or foreign companies and organizations**.

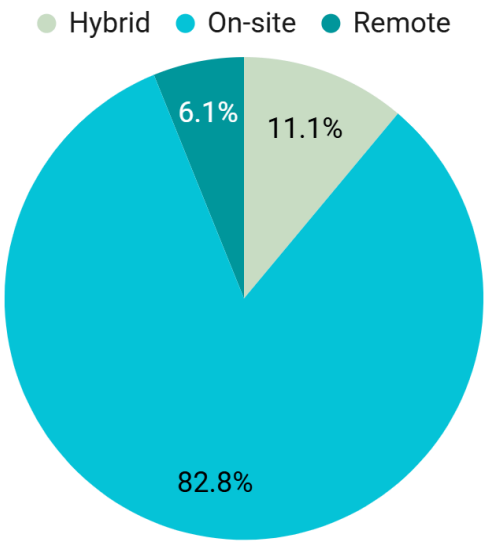

Figure 3: Job remote policies



b. JOB MARKET AND INDUSTRY SHRINKAGE

While 2024 recorded some instances of lay-offs and investment decreases, the industry still showed resilience, and we identified minimal workforce adjustments, as well as general upward trends in vacancies related to R&D, production and commercialization.

However, 2025 marked the beginning of a market decline. As the investment trends from previous years continued on a downward slope, several large, medium, and small companies and startups terminated their operations, especially in the cultivated meat sector. In addition, the year witnessed multiple mass lay-offs and branches downsizing, changing their course of operation (including AltProtein.Jobs), or closing altogether.

Unsurprisingly, we recorded a decline in available job numbers in all global regions except North America, with the hiring trends in the EU reducing the most drastically compared to 2024 and 2023. The trends indicate that investors are backing out due to the longer-than-promised market path of innovative Alternative Protein products, and the companies are citing inflation and a skewed supply-demand ratio as reasons for the reduced market demand of existing products.

Nevertheless, while 2025 saw state- and country-wide bans of cultivated meat and restrictions on labeling of plant-based products, more and more countries are approving cultivated meat and fermentation products for sandbox programs, public tastings, and market sale, and consumer studies show a growing interest in Alternative Protein.

4. HIRING INSIGHTS

In this section, we explore which companies are hiring most in the industry, with large firms leading job growth and smaller companies showing more variable hiring patterns.

WHO'S HIRING?

The ten companies with the most positions open this year are large businesses with over 1,000 employees. However, they typically do not operate exclusively in the Alternative Protein field but rather have many different branches. These are the top 10 companies with the most jobs posted in 2025:

Ingredion Incorporated

Jobs Posted: 573

Location: United States

Description: Headquartered in the Chicago suburbs, Ingredion Incorporated is a global ingredient solutions provider with annual net sales nearing $8 billion. Operating in over 120 countries, the company transforms grains, fruits, and vegetables into value-added ingredient solutions for the food, beverage, and industrial markets.

Coperion

Jobs posted: 482

Location: Germany

Description: Coperion is a global industrial and technological company, with 50 locations worldwide. In the three divisions Performance Materials, Food, Health & Nutrition as well as Aftermarket Sales & Service, Coperion strives to create product solutions for a more sustainable future.

Griffith Foods

Jobs Posted: 442

Location: United States

Description: Based in Alsip, Illinois, Griffith Foods is a product development partner for food companies worldwide, specializing in creating solutions that meet consumer needs sustainably. With operations in over 30 countries, the company develops a wide range of products, including seasonings, sauces, and food safety solutions.

Ardent Mills

Jobs Posted: 424

Location: United States

Description: Ardent Mills is North America's leading flour supplier, producing multi-use flours, whole grains, supported by 40+ flour mills and bakery-mix facilities that specialize in flour, quinoa, pulses, and organic and gluten-free products located in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

Roquette Inc.

Jobs posted: 409

Location: United States

Description: Roquette fosters innovation for the use of natural materials to produce a variety of high-quality plant-based ingredients, products and solutions. This particularly includes the areas of food and nutrition, as well as animal nutrition and renewable plant-based alternatives for bioindustries.

Amy's Kitchen

Jobs posted: 365

Location: United States

Description: Amy's kitchen is a family owned food company, with various production sites across the US. They produce over 260 different organic and vegetarian ready-made meals, with many vegan and gluten free offerings. They are also one of the largest tofu makers in the US.

GenScript

Jobs Posted: 361

Location: United States

Description: GenScript is a leading biotech company in the United States. With products and services cited in over 103,600 scientific papers globally, GenScript specializes in gene synthesis, protein expression, and antibody services.

Tereos

Jobs Posted: 360

Location: France

Description: Tereos is a cooperative group comprising 10,700 members and is recognized for its expertise in processing sugar beets, sugar cane, alfalfa, and cereals. With 41 industrial sites in 15 countries and around 15,800

employees, Tereos offers a diverse range of products and reported revenues of €7.1 billion in the 2023/24 fiscal year.

AAK

Jobs Posted: 345

Location: Sweden

Description: AAK is a global Sweden-based company with over 4,000 employees that specializes in plant-based oils and fats, providing value-adding ingredients for various food products, including chocolate & confectionery, bakery, plant-based foods, and special nutrition.

The top hiring companies list has changed since 2024. These companies had the most jobs posted **in 2024**:

Royal Cosun | Netherlands | 355 jobs

Ingredion Incorporated | United States | 309 jobs

Tereos | France | 294 jobs

Flora Food Group | Netherlands | 240 jobs

Griffith Foods | United States | 218 jobs

Ardent Mills | United States | 218 jobs

Oatly | Sweden | 206 jobs

AAK | Sweden | 202 jobs

Glatt Group | Germany | 194 jobs

GenScript | United States | 178 jobs

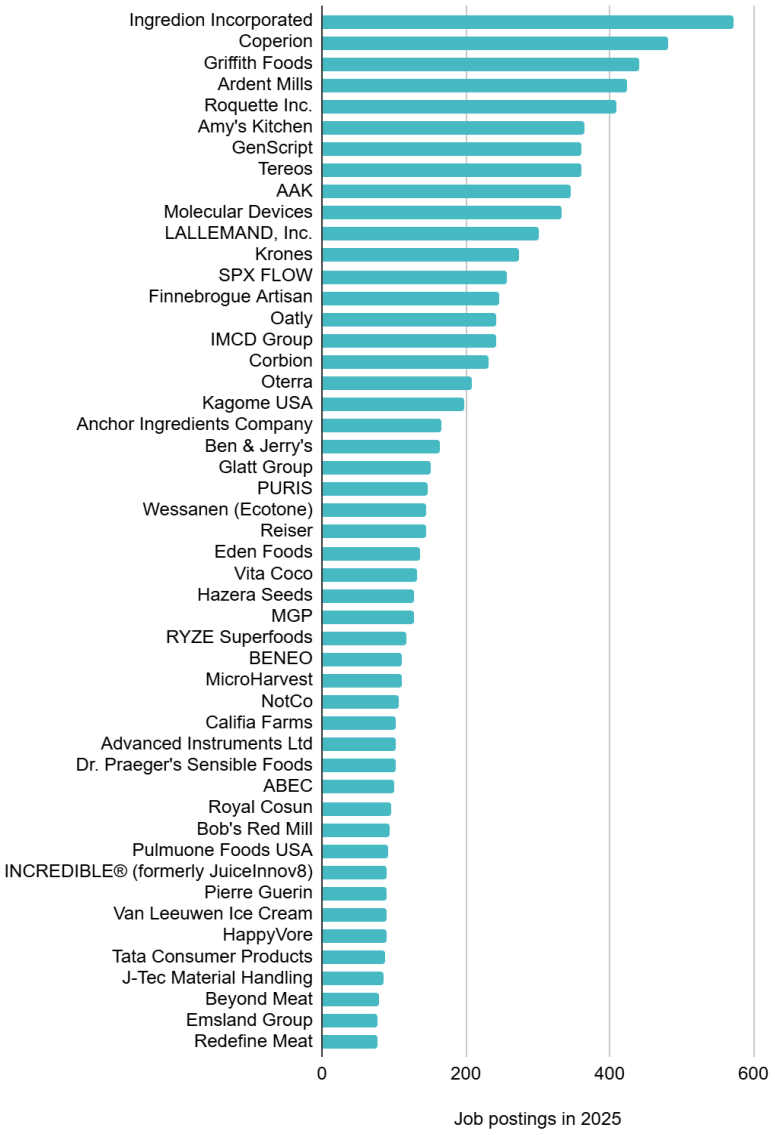

Figure 4: Top 50 companies with the most job posts and their opening numbers in 2025

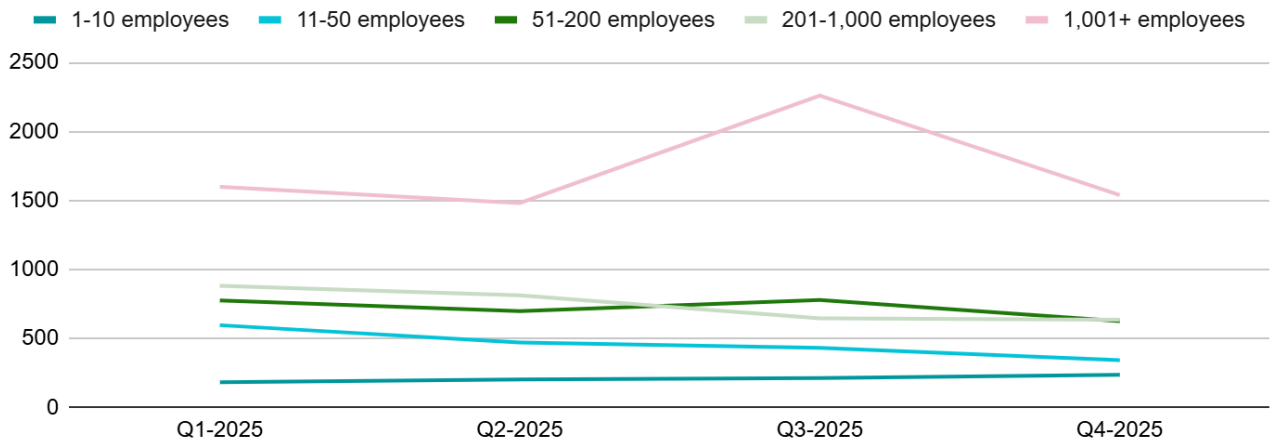

Figure 5: Jobs per company size and quarter

2025 quarterly hiring data (Figure 5) reveal that company size does appear to influence hiring patterns, with larger companies showing more defined hiring patterns over the year.
While on average, **smaller firms displayed relatively consistent hiring trends over time**, opening numbers of **companies with over 1,000 employees sharply peaked over the summer** (Q3 of 2025), before returning back to average in Q4. This pattern was somewhat recapitulated by mid-size companies (51-200 employees).

The majority of employers displayed slightly higher hiring numbers at the beginning of 2025 than at the end. These data are indicative of the general decline in available jobs in 2025 compared to 2024, but also reflect the general trend of **lower hiring activity towards the end of every year**.

One exception to this trend were very small companies (1-10 employees), however, their deviation is negligible relative to their size and does not necessarily indicate funding instability in comparison to larger companies, but could be the result of more sporadic, project-based needs.



5. ROLE AND SKILLS ANALYSIS

In this section, we analyze the distribution of roles and required skills in the Alternative Protein industry, highlighting strong demand for entry- and mid-level talent and identifying key skill gaps in specialized scientific and technical roles.

a. SENIORITY LEVELS

The job market within the Alternative Protein sector exhibits a notable distribution of roles across various seniority levels. The most sought-after positions are **entry-level positions,** which account for **35.5% of job listings,** and **mid-level roles,** which constitute **31.8%**. This trend underscores the industry's need for fresh talent, as well as the demand for mid-level expertise to manage teams and projects effectively.

An analysis of job postings over the past four quarters reveals dynamic shifts in seniority levels:

Internship roles have seen a slight decrease, from **8.8%** in Q1 2025 to **7.9%** in Q4 2025. This is however still higher than the numbers in 2024 (Q3: 7.1%), indicating a growing focus on nurturing talent from the ground up.

Entry-level positions stayed stable around **36%** in Q1-Q3 2025 and slightly decreased to **33.5%** in Q4 2025, reflecting an ongoing demand for newcomers in the field.

Junior roles have increased from **1.9%** in Q1 2025 to **2.3%** in Q4 2025. This is, however, still lower than in 2024, suggesting that companies may be reallocating these positions toward other roles, such as internships and mid-level jobs.

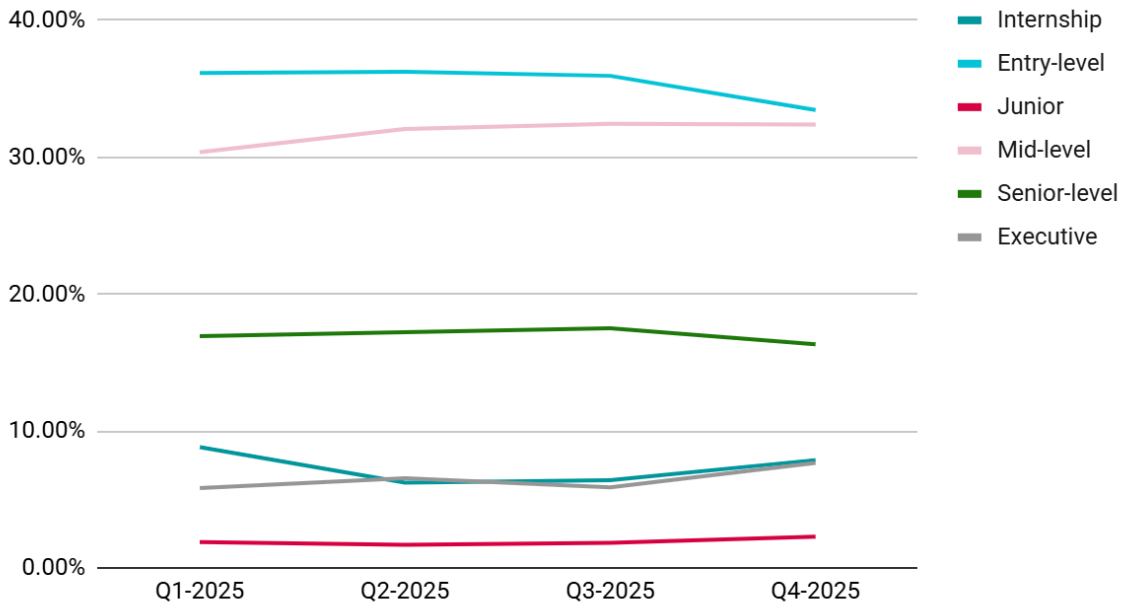

Figure 6: Percentage of jobs per seniority level

Mid-level roles have continued to be a significant focus, moving from **30.4%** in Q1 2025 to **32.4%** in Q4 2025, showcasing the necessity for professionals who can bridge junior staff and senior leadership.

Senior-level roles have fluctuated, initially accounting for **16.9%** in Q1 2025, then increasing to **17.5%** in Q3 2025 before decreasing again to **16.3%** in Q4 2025. This pattern suggests a variable yet sustained demand for seasoned leaders who can guide teams through growth and change.

Executive positions remained relatively stable, varying between **5.8%** and **7.7%** over the four quarters, reflecting a consistent, albeit limited, need for high-level strategic leadership.

Overall, while entry-level and mid-level roles continue to dominate the market, there has been a slight shift with a reduction in junior roles in favor of an increase in entry-level positions. This trend reflects the industry's need for foundational skills to support rapid growth, while relatively stable numbers of senior and executive roles indicate a consistent demand for experienced leaders.

Looking at the ratio of **applicants to available positions** by seniority, it is clear that this ratio is **lowest in mid-, senior, and executive positions** across all categories. This suggests that opportunities for applicants at higher seniority levels are ample, while **competition for lower seniority positions is higher, with junior roles likely being the toughest to land**.

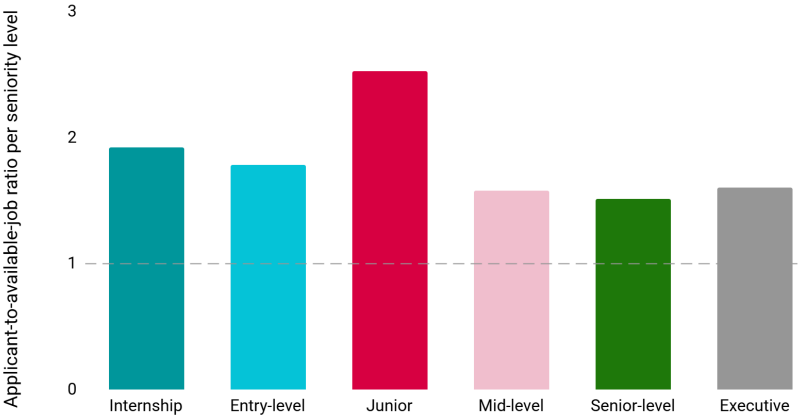

Figure 7: Applicant-to-available-job ratio per seniority level

b. GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Alternative Protein sector is seeing a **high demand for skills** related to not only food science, but also engineering, machine learning, and law.

In-demand positions in the sector vary greatly in the time it takes to fill them. Based on granular job functions (Figure 7), we found that while **most positions remained open for about 39 days**, roles in **bioinformatics and tissue engineering were the quickest** to be filled, with an average open time of about **20 days.** This is **almost two times faster than the most popular roles of 2024** (marketing, PR, and business administration with 35-37 days of open time). Such a drastic change indicates a **growing interest in the field among the candidates**, and may be the result of the **general job scarcity**.

Positions related to **cell line development and biochemical engineering** retained their popularity from the previous year but their average open time of **30 and 32 days was shorter than before**. Similarly, other popular functions were **marketing**

and PR, as well as **sales and business development, and policy and advocacy**.

As opposed to the previously recorded data, roles that remained open the longest were related to **growth medium development, machine learning, software and mechanical engineering, and legal and compliance**, staying open between **44 and 59** days. The prolonged hiring times highlight the urgency for companies to attract skilled professionals to fill their talent gaps, revealing a strong **opportunity for candidates with backgrounds in cell biology, software development, AI, automation, and law** to step into roles where their expertise is needed.

Here is a breakdown of the **top 10 job functions** by total postings since January 2025, noting that roles may have multiple job functions, as positions have overlapping skill requirements and can fit across different departments:

1. **Manufacturing**: 2,993
2. **Agricultural Science**: 2,973
3. **Project management**: 2,729
4. **Sales & Business Development**: 2,597
5. **Food Science**: 2,507
6. **Leadership**: 2,135
7. **Quality Assurance:** 1,789
8. **Marketing & PR**: 1,240
9. **Finance & Accounting**: 820
10. **Business Administration**: 712

However, the popularity of these roles among candidates did not correlate with their availability. The ratio of applicants to available positions shows that the area of **policy and advocacy was the most competitive, with 3.4 times more applicants than positions** available on the job board**. Biology and food science** followed, with **twice as many** applicants as roles. Meanwhile, on average, for **each production role, there were only 1.4 applicants**, suggesting that candidates in this area are likely to have a good chance of finding employment.

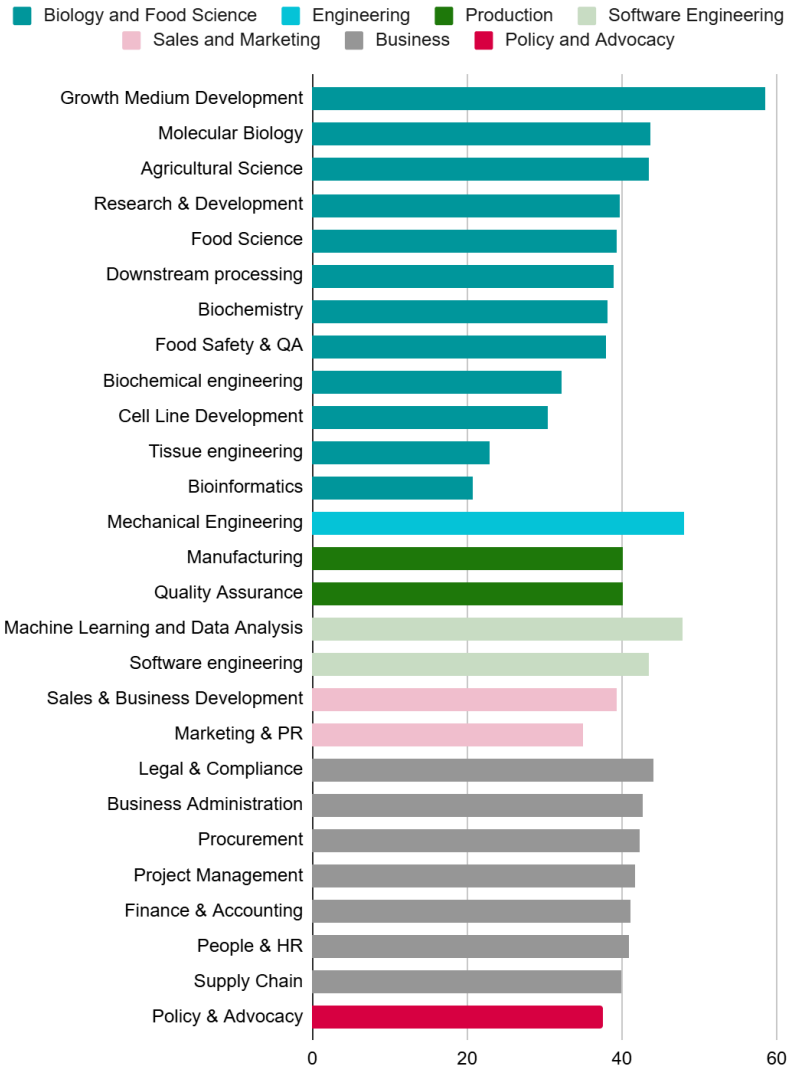

Figure 8: Job opening times in various Job functions 2025

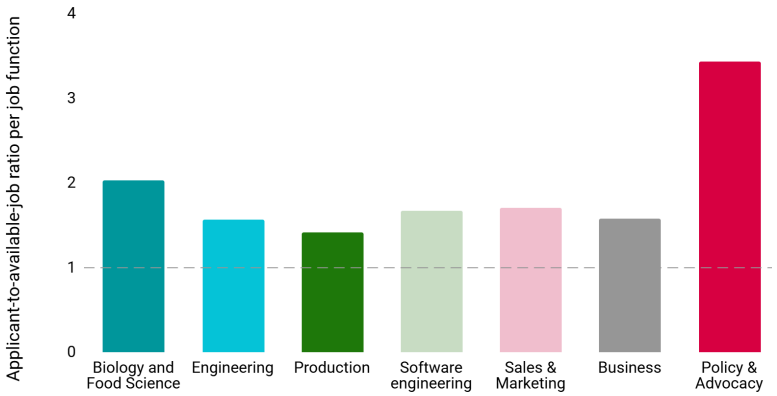

Figure 9: Applicant-to-available-job ratio per job function

6. GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

The **United States and Europe continue to dominate** the Alternative Protein job market, collectively accounting for more than **70% of global job postings**. Figure 8 represents a heatmap of jobs per region, clearly identifying the **United States as the country with the most openings** in 2025 (6,103). In a definitive second place was **Germany** with 1,863 vacancies, followed by **France, United Kingdom and the Netherlands** with approximately 800-1,000 jobs each.

Notably, outside of North America and Europe, **Brazil** and **India** pioneered with 500-600 jobs each, indicating a **developing market that could become increasingly important** in the coming years. Other regions with over 100 jobs included the **rest of Europe** (EU and non-EU), **Canada, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, and Singapore**.

Despite these numbers, **North America was the only global region that displayed an increase in opening numbers** in 2025 compared to the year before, showing 9.3% growth (Figures 9 and 10). **In all other regions, the job market shrunk compared to 2024, and, in cases of EU, Asia Pacific, and the Middle East, compared to even 2023**. Indeed, these three regions also showed the sharpest decline in available positions, with the EU growing by 0.8% from 2023 to its all-time-high in 2024, and then declining by 4.8% between 2024 and 2025.

Although such numbers might not seem to be of much significance in the grand scheme, they **indeed correlate with the global state of the entire Alternative Protein industry** and Food Tech in general from the past 1-2 years, and the evolution that the players in the field, including AltProtein.Jobs, have gone through.

Whereas 2021-2022 marked an expansion in interest and funding for the Alternative Protein sector, in part driven by the advent of cultivated meat, this boom was followed by steady development, but also by depletion of existing resources. **With a decline in investments, 2025 saw a number of companies and branches closing, and others reevaluating their positions in response to the present economic pressures**.

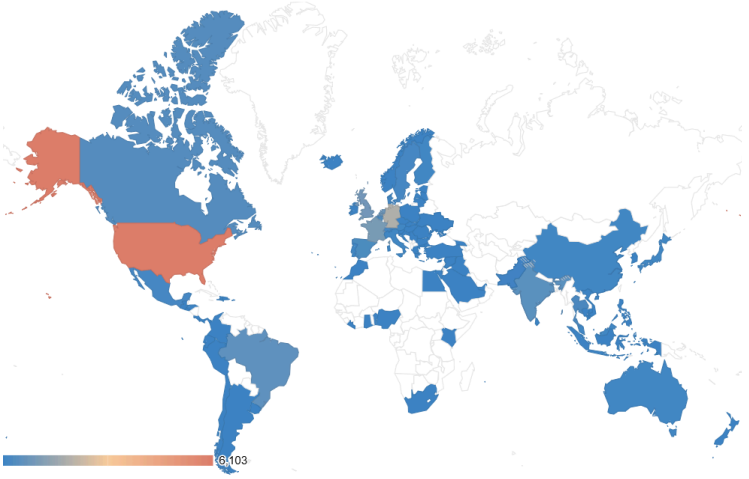

Figure 10: Geographical distribution of available jobs

However, compared to the pre-2021 period, the current funding landscape in the industry is not substantially different. While there was no rise in the number of global job openings, we've recorded an **increased diversity of job functions** and the number of roles related to **technical services**, equipment, and ingredient production, as well as **no significant decrease in the number of positions around plant-based proteins**. The latter indicates that the **Alternative Protein category with the biggest global market share and broadest consumer acceptance is still in demand**.

Importantly, the only region with recorded growth in job openings in 2025, **North America, actually experienced a decrease the year before** (2023 to 2024). While in other regions the growth phase seems to have ended, North America's recovery may indicate the beginning of a stabilization period ahead. As the **world's leading economy, political and economic trends of the US have a global influence, and other regions could experience a similar bounceback in the coming years.**

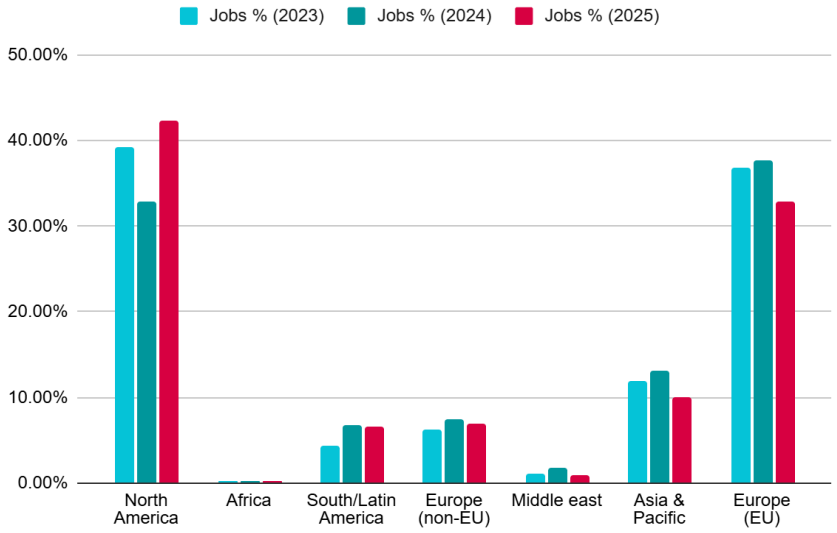

Figure 11: Comparative job distribution by region and year

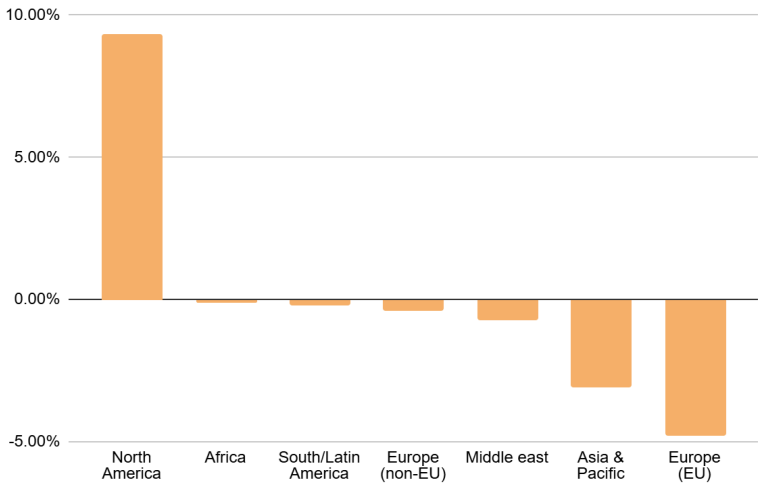

Figure 12: Relative change in available job numbers from 2024 to 2025

7. EMPLOYMENT TYPE

This section highlights the sector's strong emphasis on full-time roles, with minimal reliance on contract or temporary positions, reflecting a preference for long-term employment.

The Alternative Protein sector shows a strong preference for stable, long-term employment, with nearly **92%** of roles being **full-time** positions. This high percentage indicates that companies in this field prioritize committed and sustained engagement from employees, which is likely to support ongoing research, product development, and operational stability. In contrast, **internships** make up **3%** of postings, offering limited but essential opportunities for new talent to enter the field and gain experience.

Part-time roles account for **2.8%**, catering to flexible work arrangements but still representing a small slice of the market.

Contract roles are rare, constituting only **2%** of job postings, which suggests that companies in this industry rely less on short-term project-based hiring. **Temporary roles**, representing only **0.6%**, indicating minimal reliance on seasonal or ad hoc labor. Both could point to a sector preference for stability and continuity. It is also possible that some contract or temporary roles are filled through alternative channels rather than standard job postings, which could contribute to their low visibility at AltProtein.Jobs.

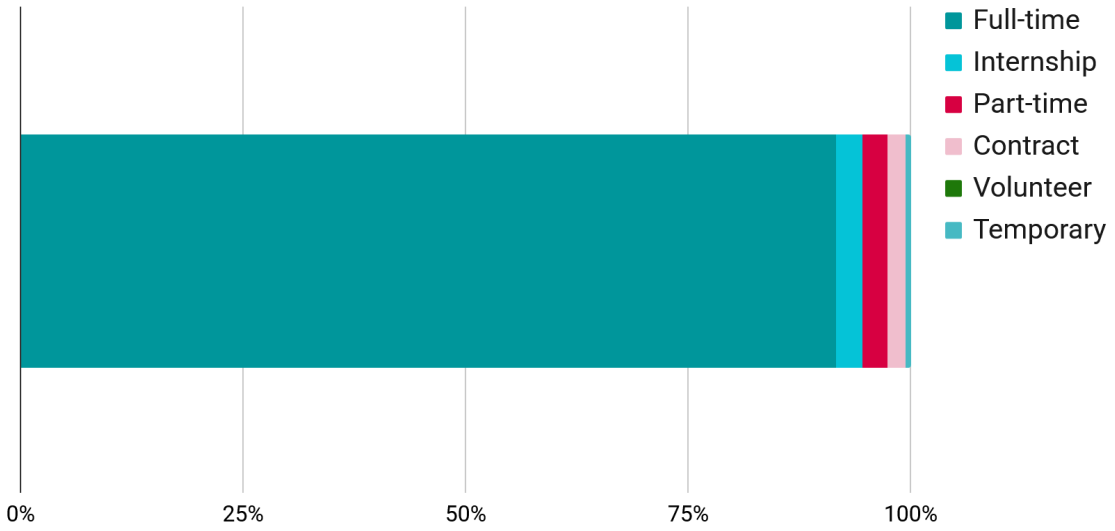

Figure 13: Percentage of types of employment for all jobs

8. TECHNOLOGY AND PRODUCT TYPE TRENDS

The sector's hiring trends reveal a clear emphasis on **plant-based** technologies, which accounts for the majority of job postings at more than **60%**. **Fermentation-related** roles (excluding precision fermentation) make up the smallest share with **3.1%**, while cultivated technologies account for 6.3% of the opportunities. **Precision fermentation**, though a growing area within the industry, comprises **9.1%** of postings. Positions categorized as **Other**, including plant molecular farming, explicitly hybrid technologies, or **production-related services, as well as non-technical contributions to the sector, take up 19.3%**.

This is a significant increase in comparison to **2024, where this category occupied less than 1%**. The difference is in part due to the category being introduced somewhat later than the other categories, and in part due to **some of the biggest players on the market in 2025 being companies producing equipment, chemicals, packaging, and ingredients** (e.g. Coperion, Molecular Devices, Reiser).

This distribution highlights the **industry's strong focus on plant-based solutions**, which also continue to dominate the global market, while also supporting innovation and production through a number of **various accompanying services and activities.**

However, in contrast to role availability, the application data suggest that **positions in the precision fermentation sector were among the most popular**, followed by **cultivated meat** with around **2.4 and 2 times more applicants than roles,** respectively. Other sectors, including **plant-based, traditional fermentation,** and products and services labeled as **Other**, had similar average numbers of applicants per role, ranging from **1.5 to 1.7.** This indicates that the competition for positions in the cultivated meat and precision fermentation sectors are higher, while other sectors offer more opportunities, both in terms of candidate preference and role numbers.

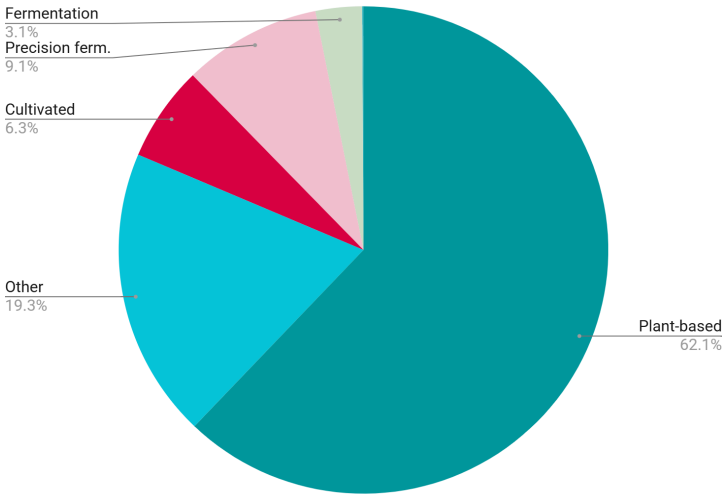

Figure 14: Distribution of open jobs by protein category

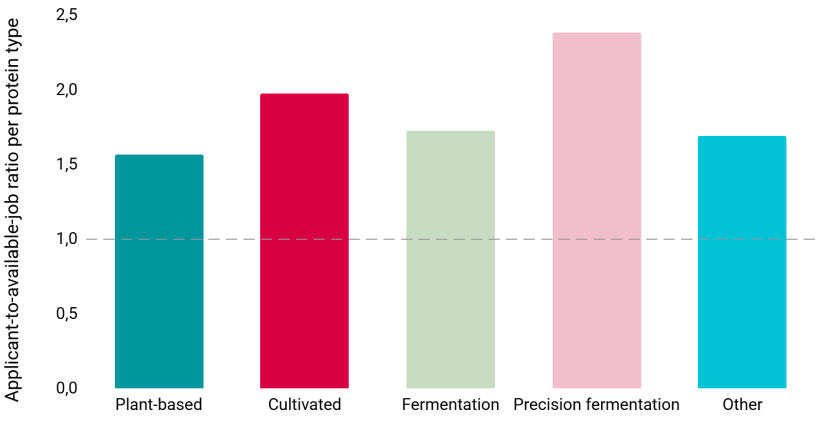

Figure 15: Applicant-to-available-job ratio per protein type

9. KEY TAKEAWAYS

FOR EMPLOYERS

Diversity in Employment Types and Workforce Stability

With full-time positions constituting over **90%** of job postings, it's clear that long-term employment stability is prioritized. **Employers may consider increasing internship and contract-based roles** to attract new talent, especially for short-term projects or specialized skills that may not require permanent positions. As these types of roles currently constitute only 3% and 2% of all roles on the job board, respectively, **creating more pathways for interns to transition into full-time roles** could enhance talent retention and engagement.

Our applicant data point in a similar direction. **Internship, entry level and junior-level positions were the most popular** types of roles among job seekers in 2025, whereas mid-, senior, and executive positions were the least applied for.

Since there is a **tendency for the lowest seniority roles and internships to be filled internally**, publishing them officially may **increase the diversity of hired talent and help more early-stage professionals enter the industry.**

While on-site roles were the most numerous, **remote positions were drastically more popular among candidates**. Employers should consider offering more **flexibility for remote work** and **updating company policies regarding work from home**, especially for roles that rarely or never require physical presence.

Geographical Expansion and Localized Hiring Strategies

Growth in regions like **Brazil and India** reflects the industry's changing geography. Employers expanding into new markets should consider localized hiring strategies to build teams that understand regional markets. Furthermore, offering relocation assistance, particularly to candidates in high-mobility areas like **North America**, may support talent acquisition in key growth markets.

FOR JOB SEEKERS

High-Demand Skills and Job Market Alignment

Job seekers with expertise in **cell biology, software development, automation, and law are well-positioned** in this sector, with an increasing number of openings in these areas. Candidates focusing on production roles, in particular, may find numerous chances given the **high numbers of manufacturing opportunities and low application rates**.

Job seekers aiming for roles around **plant-based and fermentation-derived proteins and secondary and complementary services**, like ingredient production, and development of equipment or chemicals for the food industry, are likely to find success in the coming year as these positions attract **lower application rates than precision fermentation and cultivated meat**.

Emerging Opportunities in Sales and Marketing

As **companies increasingly commercialize their products**, job seekers in **sales & marketing may find expanding opportunities**, especially those with experience in the food or biotech industries. This shift marks a promising area for career growth or switch as companies emphasize market presence and customer engagement.

Remote Work Preferences

Candidates seeking flexible roles may find that **hybrid positions are more available than fully remote roles**. While only **6%** of roles are fully remote, a larger share, approximately **11%**, are hybrid, indicating some level of flexibility with limited options for fully remote work.

However, job seekers may also find that **on-site and hybrid roles are easier to land** due to lower competition, while **remote roles saw almost twice as many applicants per role**.

Competitive Fields and Strategic Positioning

On the one hand, for job seekers targeting **bioinformatics, tissue engineering, cell line development or biochemical engineering** roles, short staffing times indicate a **competitive landscape**. In terms of protein types, roles in **precision fermentation**, as well as **cultivated meat**, take the lead in competitiveness.

Standing out in these fields may require emphasizing **specialized experience or acquiring supplementary skills**, as well as targeting **companies with higher growth trajectories**. Besides roles in biology and food science, the scarcity and high interest rate in **policy and advocacy** roles indicates a **highly competitive** environment in this area, with over **3.4 times more candidates than available roles**. On the other hand, applicants may find that roles in **production and manufacturing are more easily filled** due to **lower interest rates among job seekers**. Finally, due to the lower availability and high popularity of **remote** roles, these vacancies have an overall **lower success rate** than the on-site or hybrid positions.

FOR ECOSYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS

For ecosystem stakeholders such as investors, academic institutions, media outlets, and non-profits in the Alternative Protein industry, this report provides actionable insights into talent and skill gaps that can inform workforce development initiatives. By focusing on these insights, stakeholders can play a critical role in shaping a more robust Alternative Protein ecosystem that is responsive to market needs and capable of driving innovation and growth. The analysis highlights several key trends that stakeholders should consider:

Regional Opportunities

The data indicate a **decline of the market in most large regions outside of North America**. However, stakeholders are encouraged to explore outlier countries within those regions that are exhibiting growth despite the general decline. Emerging markets such as **Brazil and India** may present a new opportunity for investment and

collaboration, while regions like the **EU or Asia Pacific** will likely continue building on their **history of Alternative Protein consumption and innovation**, despite the decline.

Skill Development and Training

The high demand for roles related to new technologies such as **AI and automation**, which have found an application in many industries including Alternative Proteins, suggests that workforce development and educational programs should prioritize skills training in these areas. As companies seek to enhance their capabilities, targeted training initiatives can help **bridge the talent gap and prevent additional investment into consulting services**.

CALL TO ACTION

Alternative Protein industry as a whole experienced **difficulties in 2025**. This was reflected in a decrease in available jobs, lay-offs, and companies closing. While some of these phenomena were a direct result of the unmet commercialization timelines, **many of the challenges were caused by a rise in conservatism** in the global political landscape, correlating with **inflation** and **other industries experiencing the same issues**.

Newly imposed tariffs in the US, cultivated meat bans, and restrictions on labeling of plant-based products have not only polarized public opinions, but also the **opinions of national and private funding bodies and investors**.

Some of the tariffs ended up being rolled back, and the consumer interest in Alternative Proteins is still growing; however, to set the industry back on its previous path of growth, **it is essential that the investors and the public are informed that consumers and the conventional meat industry do not oppose Alternative Proteins nearly as much as a powerful political minority.**

It is thus imperative for Alternative Protein stakeholders partaking in the **media, public relations, outreach, communication, and education**, as well as **players involved in policy and advocacy, and the public** to get involved in actively tackling the *status quo*.

Better education, more positive media coverage, collaborations with lobbies, funneling of more talented and mission-aligned people into political roles, higher voter turnout, and a market demand for Alternative Proteins can ensure that this industry's impact on animal welfare, human health, and sustainability is not dampened.

OUTLOOK FOR 2026

As we did in our previous edition of the data study, we here provide predictions on the state of the job market in the industry, hiring trends, role demand, and role popularity among candidates.

Based on data from the past 12 months, we expect the global **Alternative Protein sector as a whole to not experience particular growth**. We will likely see more companies facing layoffs and closing while a few larger companies expand, creating a mixed employment landscape.

Despite the decline in the quantity of positions, 2025 showed an **increase in**

the variety of job functions, as we previously predicted. We expect this trend to continue in 2026; as companies mature and, at the same time, new startups enter the market, the industry will likely experience an even greater diversity in job profiles.

In addition, we expect an **increased demand for new research and development roles**, positions related to emerging technologies such as **machine learning**, and commercial roles, especially in **sales and marketing**, as products approach market readiness.

Despite the fact that certain job categories within the Alternative Protein sector may have a higher volume of openings while others remain underserved, competition for job seekers is likely to intensify across fields where there are **drastically fewer jobs than candidates, such as policy and advocacy**. The **cultivated meat** field faces a similar dynamic: following steep **investment declines** in 2024 and continued funding headwinds, the number of candidates is **expected to outpace available roles** in the near term. **Precision fermentation**, by contrast, has emerged as the strongest-performing sub-sector for investment, attracting the majority of Alt. Protein funding throughout 2024 and 2025, suggesting that **job growth in this field may be more resilient** than in other areas of the sector, even as it continues to attract strong candidate interest and remains **highly competitive for job seekers**.

Despite the current state of the industry and the funding landscape, we expect the **popularity of Alternative Proteins to continue rising** among job seekers. In 2025, we saw this reflected in the **times necessary to fill the most popular roles, which have almost halved in comparison to the previous year**. Combined with a stagnating or decreasing availability of jobs that we expect in 2026, this could **skew the supply-demand ratio even further**, which was the ultimate reason for AltProtein.Jobs' non-profit transition.

Our previous reports also correctly indicated that **hiring trends will be shaped by regulatory decisions** and investor priorities in 2025, influencing which technologies receive regulatory and financial support. Looking forward, we will likely see more shifts in regional hiring trends as local political and economic factors influence the Alternative Protein market, as last seen during the debates over the regulations for plant-based product labeling in the EU. We expect **Alternative Proteins to keep being used as political instruments**, but we also anticipate a **backlash from the industry**. In line with our data, we predict that **roles in policy and advocacy** are going to continue enjoying high application rates, as **professionals seek to make a difference through political action**.

It is important to note that extrapolating from past data to future trends comes with limitations and uncertainty, so these outlooks should be interpreted with caution.