TriCity Engineering Market: Employee Insights

Understanding retention, growth, and talent dynamics in engineering market

2026

Purpose

While typical market research relies on interviews with employers, this analysis uses other source: over 1000 reviews from 3city employees, gathered from platforms where employees voluntarily submit assessments.

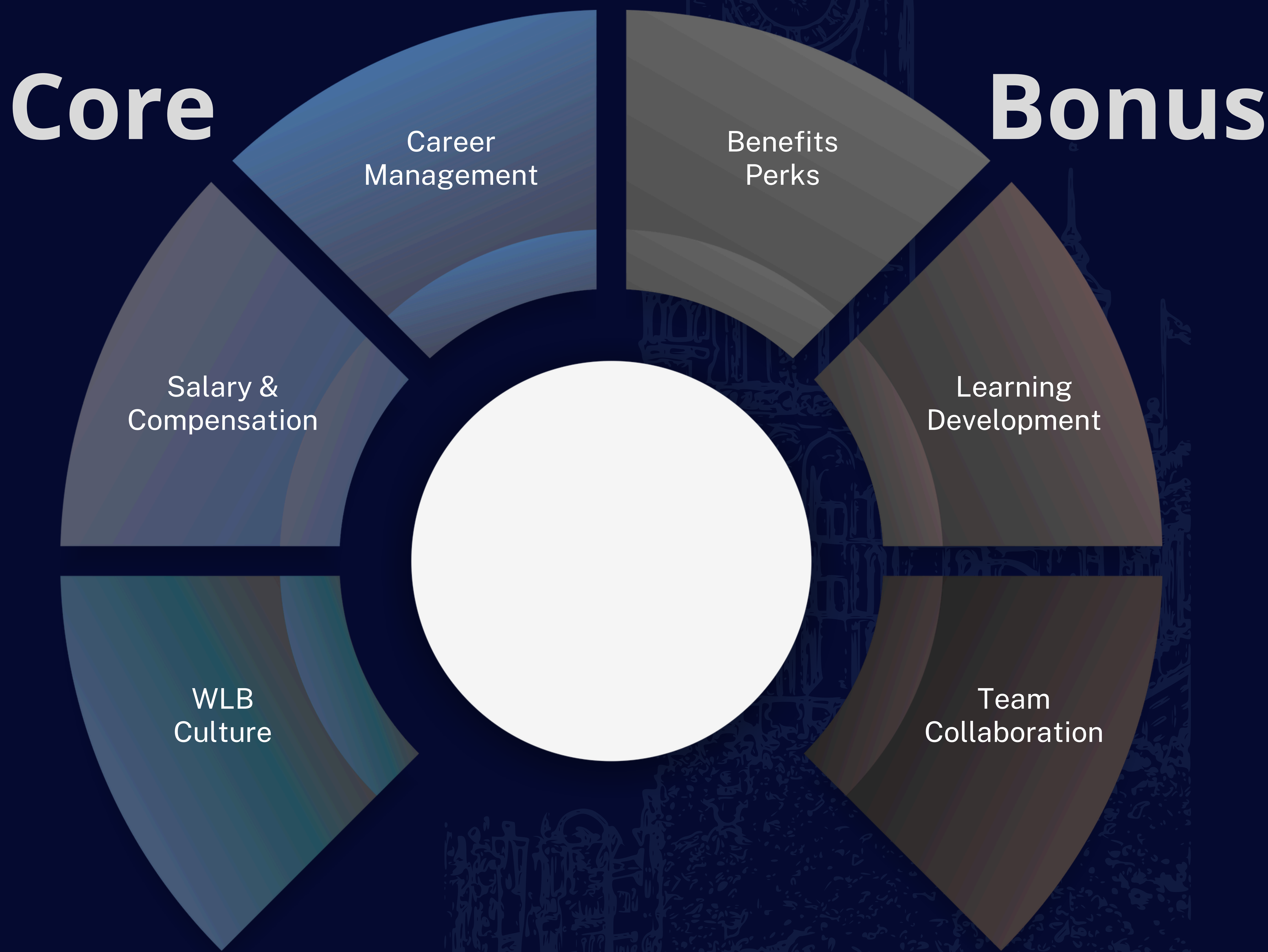
Data is actionable and provides intelligence on what attracts, retains, and frustrates talent in TriCity’s tech market. Material is an essential supplement for investors and companies scaling in TriCity.

Content

Structure

This report analyzes six dimensions of TriCity's engineering market. The core analysis focuses on three: Career Management, Salary & Compensation, and Work-Life Balance & Culture, while the full report adds more:

- three bonus dimensions: Benefits & Perks, Learning & Development, and Team Collaboration.
- additional data points that goes beyond all of the six dimensions to have a complementary view from the employees.



Core

Summary

A 14% retention loss due to broken career clarity, salary stagnation costs and culture, per cohort of 10 senior engineers, is around $113K* annually. All gaps are fixable in structural investment (frameworks, salary bands, CoL adjustments etc...).

Career Management
62 → 52
Current Departing

Compensation
66 → 55
Current Departing

WLB & Culture
67 → 55
Current Departing

Career management has a -10 percentage point satisfaction gap between those who stay (62%) and those who leave (52%). This gap is an opportunity: closing it through career frameworks and merit-based promotions can recover up to 10% in retention.

Compensation has a -11 percentage point gap between those who stay (66%) and those who leave (55%). This gap is an opportunity: closing it through transparent salary bands, automatic cost-of-living adjustments, and clear bonus rules can recover up to 11% in retention

Work-life balance and culture have a -12 percentage point gap between those who stay (67%) and those who leave (55%). This gap is an opportunity: closing it through remote-first flexibility, reduced hybrid mandates, burnout measurement, and low-politics culture protection can recover up to 12% in retention

* Cost per employment: ~$80K (TriCity senior engineer replacement cost including salary, headhunter rates, ramp-up costs, knowledge loss costs), Total cost: 1.4 × $80K = ~$113K per cohort

Salary and compensation

3.71 OVERALL RATING

3.80 CURRENT EMPLOYEES

3.47 FORMER EMPLOYEES

GAP: -0.33 (7% DROP)

- "Great work life balance, competitive salary, modern tools"
- "Excellent atmosphere, good salary, modern technologies"
- "The salary remains the same for entire year. Even though steps for promotion are well defined not always there's opportunity to achieve them"
- "Salaries under average, no salary increases comparing to higher life costs every year"
- "Salary not updated, newer employees are compensated better than old ones. Hard to get promotion."
- "Poor salaries, low annual raise and salaries do not match to your responsibilities and skills."

WHAT WORKS?

- CLEAR SALARY
- COMPETETIVE START
- TRANSPARENCY

WHAT FAILS?

- STAGNATION
- PAY INVERSION
- SUBJECTIVE BONUSES

YOUR ADVANTAGE IS TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY

What to do to improve?

- Publish salary bands (L1-L5 with ranges)
- Automatic cost-of-living adjustments (3-5% annually)
- Clear bonus rules (no discretion; tied to metrics)
- Equity for L4+ (unusual in market; signals seriousness)
- Annual career conversations (show raise/growth path)

Results?

- Recruitment: Disenchanted seniors from competitors will target you
- Retention target: 75%+ of senior hires stay 3+ years
- Culture: Transparent compensation removes resentment; frees attention for work
- Competitive advantage: "We have clear compensation" becomes differentiator

Career growth and management

3.63 OVERALL RATING

3.73 CURRENT EMPLOYEES

3.38 FORMER EMPLOYEES

GAP: -0.35 (7% DROP)

- "Great people with positive and proactive mindset, Great management who care about people, Good opportunity to grow and change your career path"
- "Great community of professionals, Many options to grow if you take additional effort, Many learning opportunities, Fair compensation"
- "You have to really fight for promotion"
- "No promotion No salary race No good management Toxic enivornment"
- "business decisions detached from engineers"

WHAT WORKS?

- CLEAR LEARNING PATHWAYS
- PROJECT-BASED GROWTH
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT FAILS?

- UNCLEAR PROMOTION POLICIES
- GATEKEEPING AND POLITICS
- SLOW PROGRESSION

YOUR ADVANTAGE IS
CLEAR ADVANCEMENT & MERIT-BASED PROMOTION

What to do to improve?

- Publish explicit level framework
- Make promotion merit-based (manager recommends; committee approves)
- Remove manager discretion
- Annual career conversations
- Hire external managers

Results?

- Recruitment: Disenchanted seniors will target you
- Retention target: 75%+ of senior hires stay 3+ years
- Culture: Transparent advancement removes resentment; frees attention for work
- Competitive advantage: "We have clear promotion path" becomes differentiator

Work-life balance and culture

3.79 OVERALL RATING

3.87 CURRENT EMPLOYEES

3.55 FORMER EMPLOYEES

GAP: -0.32 (6% DROP)

- "great office, flexible working hours (start between 8-11), min. 2 days in office, work life balance"
- "Great team atmosphere, Technical profile, Monitoring tool included in everyday work"
- "Stress, no work life balance, no understanding and training"
- "chaos, work/life balance is a myth, rat race, loads of pointless meetings"
- "Depends of your Org, there are some orgs and teams that management put lot of pressure on you"

WHAT WORKS?

- FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS
- COLLABORATIVE TEAM ENVIRONMENT
- AUTONOMY ON HOW YOU WORK

WHAT FAILS?

- WORKLOAD DURING CRUNCH PERIODS
- UNCLEAR BOUNDARIES ON AVAILABILITY
- BURNOUT RISK <> UNCLEAR ADVANCEMENT

YOUR ADVANTAGE IS CULTURE & FLEXIBILITY

What to do to improve?

- Stop hybrid mandates (2x office = friction); shift to remote-first flexibility
- Protect team cohesion (low politics, collaboration working at 3.87 baseline)
- Pair flexibility with career clarity; flexibility alone won't stop departures
- Measure burnout quarterly (3.55 from departing employees is warning level)

Results?

- Recruitment: Flexibility + clear career path = competitive edge (not flexibility alone)
- Retention: Fixing WLB (-6%) + career (-7%) + salary (-7%) together = 75%+ retention target
- Competitive advantage: All three gaps addressed simultaneously

About the report

This report analyzes employee reviews for engineering and IT roles across the TriCity agglomeration. It draws on 1,001 reviews, spanning 2015 to 2026. Of these, 722 come from current employees and 279 from former employees, a split that lets every dimension be read as a gap between those who stayed and those who left.

The analysis is deliberately narrow. It covers three core dimensions, salary and compensation, work-life balance and culture, and career growth and management, plus three secondary dimensions surfaced from the same data: benefits and perks, learning and development, and team collaboration. Two questions run through all six: how far apart are current and former employees on each dimension, and how does the rate at which each group raises concerns differ.

Every figure in this report is reproducible from SQL. No sentiment model, no AI-based scoring, no manual coding. Dimensions are detected by deterministic keyword matching over the pros, cons, and advice fields of each review, which means any reader can trace a data point back to the reviews that produced it.

The pipeline applies a fixed sequence of controls before any metric is computed. Location strings are normalized to a single canonical form. Reviews shorter than 50 characters of combined content are flagged as low-signal and excluded from dimension analysis. Employment status is preserved on every record so current and former populations stay separable. Ratings are validated against the source distribution.

- Location normalization: 100% coverage
- Meaningfulness filter: 99.1% of reviews retained (992 of 1,001)
- Dimension detection: deterministic keyword matching, auditable
- Employment status: preserved on all records
- Rating distribution: validated against source
- Reproducibility: every metric traceable via SQL

TriCity is among Poland's largest engineering hubs. Invest in Pomerania, the regional development agency, estimates around 18,000 software developers working in the city, concentrated in office complexes such as Olivia Business Centre and employed by firms including Amazon, Boeing, Intel, Nordea, and Sii, several of which appear in this dataset.

Against a base population on that order, a sample of 1,001 reviews represents roughly 5% of the market. That is a high coverage ratio. National polling in Poland typically surveys 1,000 people against a population of 30 million, around 0.003%. At this sample size, with a finite-population correction, the margin of error sits near 3% at 95% confidence, a level treated in market research as a strong basis for real decisions.

- Reference population (N): ~18,000 developers in TriCity (Invest in Pomerania)
- Sample (n): 1,001 reviews
- Coverage: ~5% of the market
- Margin of error: 3,01% at 95% confidence (finite-population correction applied)

Population figure: Invest in Pomerania / Agencja Rozwoju Pomorza. The 18,000 estimate covers software developers within TriCity; this sample spans the wider TriCity and includes adjacent IT roles, so actual coverage of the full population is likely somewhat lower. Separately, reviews are voluntary and self-selected: reviewers tend to hold stronger opinions than the silent majority. The margin of error describes sampling precision, not freedom from self-selection bias. Read the findings as a strong directional signal, not a census.

The reviews span a turbulent period for Polish tech, and the numbers cannot be read outside it. Three phases shape the sentiment in this data.

2020-2021, COVID. Hiring paused, layoffs were rare, and the shift to remote work strained companies built around the office.

2022-2023, boom and correction. A hiring surge through 2021 and early 2022 gave way to a sharp correction: rate hikes, a funding winter, and rightsizing that cut 10 to 40% of some teams.

2024-2026, post-correction. Headcount stabilized, the focus turned to profitability, wage growth slowed, and remote work settled into a norm.

This matters for how retention reads. Junior mobility in the boom years was extraordinary and is not a stable baseline; with fewer offers on the market now, movement has slowed for reasons outside any employer's control. The findings here are framed for anyone building or scaling an engineering presence in TriCity, not for a single market. Where the data points to a gap, it points to an opportunity to design hiring and retention deliberately, rather than a prediction that people will leave.

Michał Bojko. Fifteen years in software engineering leadership, ten years before that in technical IT roles. I have built and scaled engineering organisations across Europe, working with teams in the USA, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Estonia and Poland.

I teach Data Engineering and Digital Transformation at university level, across Engineering and MBA programmes. My courses combine theory with hands-on simulations and interactive exercises rather than lectures alone.

I run two communities in Gdańsk: the Observability Tech Community, focused on platform engineering, monitoring and software reliability, and the Critical Thinkers Academy, which brings together practitioners applying critical thinking to technology and organisational problems.

This report exists because most market research on Gdańsk talks to employers. This one listens to employees. The data was already public; what was missing was someone willing to read all of it, apply the same filter to every review, and publish the result whether or not it flattered the market.

mbojko.com
linkedin.com/in/mbojkogdansk