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Guide to hiring remote talent in the U.S. for APAC-Based companies

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Introduction:

When a company achieves sustained success in its home country, the next logical step is to explore international markets.

Hiring globally allows you to build your presence in other countries, overcome domestic dependency, and gain capital management benefits. While it may seem easier to scale within one's own region, venturing further out west is something Asia-Pacific-based (APAC) companies should consider. The U.S. market can unlock many opportunities for your company – a broad talent pool, a growing consumer market, and eager potential customers, just to mention a few.

This guide offers an overview of top talent hubs in the U.S. as well as preliminary advice on how to grow your remote team in this country.



Why hire in the United States?

With high venture capital momentum and a wide-ranging talent pool, the U.S. is an attractive market for companies looking to scale internationally. Regardless of your company's size, taking your business out west will enable:

1. A thriving business environment

According to the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#), there were 32.5 million small businesses in the country last year, a 2.5 percent increase compared to 2020. Additionally, venture capitalists invested a total of [USD 269 billion](#) in U.S.-based startups, outranking countries like China and the UK.

This growing number of investments in the territory provides an opportunity for companies to capitalize on partnerships.

2. A growing consumer market

The [United States Census Bureau](#) reported that the country's total population in July 2021 was over 331 million. The bureau's recent figures also indicate that 77.8 percent – around 258.3 million – of the U.S. population is aged 18 years or older – a considerable number of people with spending power that companies in retail and services can cater to.

3. Incentives from the local government

Several U.S. states offer [economic development incentives](#) for companies hiring in the country. Depending on the location, such incentives include tax credits, lower commercial real estate taxes, grants, and even lending incentives to help set up operations.

One of the most common examples of these incentives is job tax credits. For example, in the state of Georgia, job tax credits can be as much as USD 1,200 to USD 9,600 per qualified employee, depending on the target group. The most frequently certified Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is USD 2,400 for each new hire.

4. Diverse talent pool

Apart from the country's growing working population, there has been a gradual increase in specialized talent, particularly in the tech sector. In 2021, the U.S. ranked third, only behind Singapore and Switzerland, in terms of [talent competitiveness](#).

According to a recent [report by CBRE](#), tech talent in the U.S. has surged 13 percent in the last five years – double the overall national job growth rate. This translates to an estimated 640,700 new tech professionals. CBRE also noted that there are currently over 5.4 million tech workers in the U.S. – with a tech talent crisis looming in APAC, companies can tap into the promising talent pools in the U.S. to fill open roles.

Planning your global growth



Given the unique business environment of each state, there are [several things you need to consider](#) before building your remote team in the U.S.

Here are key questions to ask yourself before hiring new team members:

- How important is it for my employees to be geographically close to customers?
- Am I hiring for national roles or regional roles?
- If things go well, how many U.S. employees do I envision retaining five years from now, and in which roles?
- What is my hiring budget?
- Should I consider working with a local partner?

Factors to keep in mind

There are legal nuances and employment laws that companies should research to ensure a successful talent search. Knowing the basics before you start can help minimize risk and avoid potential lawsuits. Here are a few main areas to consider:

Employee benefits

The Affordable Care Act states that all employers with 50 or more full-time employees must provide minimum essential coverage (MEC) to avoid fines or penalties. Also known as “qualifying health insurance coverage,” MEC means coverage that provides minimum value to full-time employees and their dependents. For an employer-sponsored health plan to provide [minimum value](#), it has to pay for at least 60 percent of total covered costs under the plan.

There are also other supplementary benefits that you can offer in addition to MEC to attract talent. These benefits include:

- Pension plans
- 401(k) or 403(b) retirement plans
- Flexible scheduling
- Life insurance benefits
- Childcare assistance

Employment and termination conditions

Formal employment contracts are not standard in most U.S. states, except for Montana, and both companies and employees are able to terminate the employment relationship at any time and for any reason.

Wages

According to federal law, the minimum wage in the U.S. is USD 7.25 per hour, although this varies by state.

Working hours

The standard work week in the U.S. is 40 hours. Overtime is allowed if labor standards are met.

Taxes

Employers are responsible for paying certain taxes every quarter and withholding taxes from their employees’ salary. Both employers and employees also pay the equivalent of 6.2 percent to cover social security contributions.

How to build and scale your U.S. team

Assess your financial readiness

[Hiring in a new territory](#) often requires significant resources to cover administrative, marketing, and operational expenses. You also need to consider compliance costs such as local taxes, legal fees, and insurance, among others.

In order to successfully enter new markets, companies must establish a budget to account for operational costs during each growth stage. This financial plan usually includes six to 12 months of resources.

On top of that, resources must also be set aside in case of unexpected expenses. Examples of these include:

- Malfunctioning equipment
- Natural disasters
- Sudden resignations

Determine your talent needs

Your first international hires play a significant role in your global growth success. They will be the first to conduct on-the-ground market research, introduce you to customers, and build your brand.

Although remote working has many benefits, one of the potential challenges of managing dispersed teams is the lack of oversight and potential delays; however, these can be mitigated early on by recruiting candidates with the following traits:

- A track record of working successfully without constant oversight
- A genuine interest in your company and its business
- A referral network of skilled professionals

Where and how to find top talent

Once you know the kind of talent you are looking for, the next question is: Where exactly should you focus your recruiting efforts? There are several popular and emerging talent hubs in the U.S., and companies should evaluate both when sourcing talent.

Popular talent hubs

These are some of the most notable talent hubs in the U.S. :



San Francisco, California

- **Talent competitiveness:** Ranked 1st in the 2021 Global City Talent Competitiveness Index (GCTCI).
- **No. of tech professionals:** 373,430 (as of 2021) tech professionals are employed.
- **Bachelor's degree holders:** 51.4 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **Average annual salary:** \$104K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$63M (talent) + \$5M (office rent) = \$68M TOTAL¹

New York City, New York

- **No. of tech professionals:** 343,330 (as of 2021) tech professionals are employed.
- **Tech degree completions:** Ranked 1st in the country for tech degree completions, with 20,576 graduates in 2019 – a 69.4 percent increase from 2014 to 2019.
- **Bachelor's degree holders:** 41.8 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **Average annual salary:** \$121K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$53M (talent) + \$6M (office rent) = \$59M TOTAL



¹ Average annual operating costs were analyzed to determine the make-up of a typical 500-person company using 75,000 sq. ft. of office space.



Seattle, Washington

- **Talent competitiveness:** Ranked 8th in the 2021 Global City Talent Competitiveness Index (GCTCI).
- **Millennial population:** The city had the highest increase – 22 percent – of millennial population since 2014.
- **Bachelor’s degree holders:** 44.1 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- **Average annual salary:** \$100K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$53M (talent) + \$3M (office rent) = \$56M TOTAL

Boston, Massachusetts

- **Talent competitiveness:** Ranked 3rd in the 2021 Global City Talent Competitiveness Index (GCTCI).
- **Bachelor’s degree holders:** 49.3 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- **Tech talent pool:** The city’s tech talent pool has grown by 7.2 percent – 11,360 new professionals – between 2016-2020.
- **Average tech salary:** \$103K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$50M (talent) + \$3M (office rent) = \$53M TOTAL.



Emerging talent hubs



Atlanta, Georgia

- **Emerging IT hub:** An emerging IT hub with a computer systems analyst talent surplus of 15,420 professionals.
- **Bachelor’s degree holder:** 39.9 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- **Tech talent pool:** The city’s tech talent pool has grown 15.2 percent – 18,960 new professionals – between 2016-2020.
- **Average annual salary:** \$95.6K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$43M (talent) + \$2M (office rent) = \$45M TOTAL



Austin, Texas

- **Educational attainment:** Ranked 6th among the top 10 markets for educational attainment.
- **Millennial population:** Talent market with the highest concentration of millennials: 34.6 percent of its population.
- **Bachelor's degree holders:** 46.2 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **Average annual salary:** \$111K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$43M (talent) + \$2M (office rent) = \$45M TOTAL

Dallas, Texas

- **Tech degree completions:** Ranked 9th in the country for tech degree completions, with 6,672 graduates in 2019 – a 71.5 percent increase from 2014 to 2019.
- **Popular place for tech workers to migrate to;** an estimated 36 percent of its present workers do not hail from the city.
- **Lowest cost of living** among popular talent hubs. The average salary in San Francisco (benchmark) has over 40 percent more spending power in Dallas.
- **Average annual salary:** \$113K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$44M(talent) + \$2M (office rent) = \$46M TOTAL



Denver, Colorado

- **Educational attainment:** Ranked 7th among the top 10 markets for educational attainment.
- **Millennial population:** Talent market with the 3rd highest concentration of millennials: 32 percent of its population.
- **Bachelor's degree holders:** 45.8 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **No. of tech professionals:** 114, 900 tech professionals in 2020, 12th among U.S. markets with the most tech talent.
- **Average annual salary:** \$102K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$49M (talent) + \$2M (office rent) = \$51M TOTAL

Nashville, Tennessee

- **College graduates:** Had the highest growth rate (8 percent) of college graduates in the U.S. between 2016-2020.
- **Bachelor’s degree holders:** 38.5 percent (as of 2019) of residents aged 25 and older have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- **Millennial population:** Talent market with the 9th highest concentration of millennials: 30.4 percent of its population.
- **Average annual salary:** \$79K
- **Average annual operating costs:** \$38M (talent) + \$2M (office rent) = \$40M TOTAL



How to attract top talent in the U.S.

As you start building your team, it is essential to understand what top-tier talent in the U.S. looks for in an employer. Here are aspects you need to consider to attract preferred candidates to your ranks:



A competitive salary and benefits package

To keep up with the competitive labor market and combat the effects of the “Great Resignation,” many U.S. employers have raised their salary increase projections for 2022. Companies are now budgeting [an increase of 3.4 percent](#), compared with the average 3.0 percent they had budgeted in 2021.

To win the war for talent, companies need to offer competitive compensation and a benefits package based on hiring location and industry to meet local candidates’ expectations.



Performance-based incentives and equity awards

In a candidate-driven market, offering a competitive salary isn’t enough. Performance-based incentives and equity can be an additional way to attract prospective hires. Among the most common examples of performance-based incentives are sales commissions. However, this only applies to specific roles such as business development professionals. Individual and team bonuses are performance-based incentives that can be granted across the board.

Equity compensation, on the other hand, is a popular offering for high-potential startups. By providing equity options, you give employees a sense of ownership, motivating them to work harder and be part of the company’s success once it goes public.



Perks and benefits

With employees’ ever-changing expectations, candidates are more likely to prioritize salary trade-offs. A [survey by Staples](#) showed that 62.3 percent of U.S. employees would accept a lower salary in exchange for better workplace perks. These include having flexible hours, paid insurance premium, paid family leave, and regular remote work arrangements.

The preference for flexible work arrangements is seemingly a recurring theme among workers in the U.S. However, offering other attractive and practical benefits, like additional family leave, could help you stand out from competitors.

Hiring best practices



Time zone differences may make it a bit more difficult, but there are a few things you can do to [streamline and simplify the hiring process](#):

Present a coordinated front while maintaining flexibility

Make sure to work out any tech glitches in advance to avoid communication challenges and delays. Providing a seamless and professional recruiting process gives potential hires a pleasant first impression, boosting your company's employer brand.

When you are in a completely different time zone than a potential candidate, scheduling meetings or interviews may require some negotiation.

Being flexible and allowing candidates to choose a preferred interview time shows willingness and will create a positive workplace image.

Invest in quality onboarding

Whether remote or in-person, onboarding is critical to ensure your new team members understand their roles and the company's values. This is also an excellent opportunity for employers to connect with new hires and help them get familiarized with the company.

Here are some tips to ensure a seamless onboarding experience:

- Establish an open-door policy from day one: Invite new hires to always reach out and ask questions.
- Nurture a human connection: Find a balance between pre-recorded and live people-led training to avoid losing the human element.
- Avoid information overload: Try not to overwhelm new hires with too much information in the first week.
- Welcome swag: People enjoy feeling like they're part of a team.
- Buddy system: Provide a supporting "buddy" or colleague to help new hires navigate their first weeks on the job.

Success stories

How a Singapore-based company entered the U.S. market quickly and compliantly

Founded in 2005, Ecolex has established itself as a notable producer of vegetable oil-based products for home and personal care, animal feeds, and food emulsifiers. Allied with one of the largest palm oil refining businesses in the world, the Singapore-based company has a unique position in raw material sourcing.

Venturing outside its local market, Ecolex eventually began evaluating options for its entry into the U.S. They found potential growth allies, but every provider was limited to payroll processing, accounting, and tax services; they couldn't find one single solution that covered all their needs – **until G-P.**

“Working with our previous provider was difficult because of the time difference. It was a U.S.-based company, whereas we are in Singapore. But we couldn't do it alone and processing payroll in a timely manner, meeting all the statutory requirements at local and federal levels, and ensuring compliance

with the Employment Pass (EP) for our American talent was paramount,” said Rosalind Lee, Corporate Finance and Business Controller at Ecolex.

The company eventually decided to pursue U.S. hiring via G-P' Global Employment Platform™ to bypass the difficulties of building their remote team.

“What most impressed me was seeing all the contracts available – the formats G-P can generate in an astoundingly short period of time and at a granular level. In the U.S., for example, each state has its own labor law, which translates into different fees. All contracts fully comply with the internal laws of the countries considered.”

This partnership enabled Ecolex to quickly expand to the U.S. for product testing prior to entity setup and focus time and resources on growing their business.



How ReverseAds hired remote talent fast and easy

ReverseAds, an advertising tech startup based in Bangkok, Thailand, was looking for a solution that could help them scale faster in Singapore, Taiwan, and the U.S.

Realizing the complexities of employment and tax regulations in different jurisdictions, the team at ReverseAds decided to seek help from a global growth expert. This led them to G-P.

“ We pride ourselves in moving extremely fast, and G-P from the first day we met them wanted to move just as fast or even faster than us. ”

Michael Hahn, CEO and Founder of ReverseAds.

With the help of G-P, ReverseAds managed to identify other unique opportunities to expand its talent, customer base, and technology.

“ G-P literally helped us everywhere from recruiting to salary analysis, and all the way to the actual contract structure and legalities for our remote employees, ”



Grow your remote team in the U.S. with G-P

With its thriving economy, burgeoning talent hubs, and resounding business incentives, the United States is an attractive market for APAC-based companies with global aspirations.

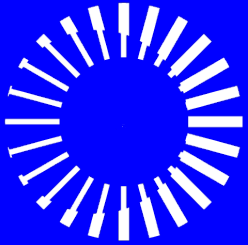
Planning your U.S. entry is the first step. Hiring a highly capable team of professionals to help you achieve your goals is the next. That is where G-P comes in, ready to help.

Our comprehensive and fully compliant Global Employment Platform™ helps companies build and scale international teams quickly and easily. Our industry-leading technology streamlines and automates otherwise complicated and time-consuming processes like payroll set up, onboarding, and hiring.

**CONTACT US TODAY AND
REQUEST A PROPOSAL**

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