



Preparing for Emerging Roles & Responsible AI Talent



Anticipating the future of work starts now

A quiet revolution is reshaping enterprise talent strategy. It's not just about filling roles, but preparing for new roles that haven't fully formed yet. From responsible AI governance to sustainability leadership, a new wave of interdisciplinary positions is emerging faster than the pipelines to support them. While roles like software engineer or data analyst are well established, emerging roles like the following cut across domains and are growing in visibility:

✓ **AI Policy and Ethics Managers**

Charged with developing frameworks for responsible AI deployment, ensuring algorithms are fair, and advising senior leadership on risks. They must be fluent in both technical systems and ethics.

✓ **Algorithmic Auditors and Responsible AI Engineers**

These roles involve auditing AI models for bias, interpretability, and compliance. They require hybrid expertise in data science, legal policy, and human-centered design.

✓ **ESG Data Specialists**

Focused on translating environmental, social, and governance metrics into quantifiable insights for leadership, regulators, and investors. This role often bridges sustainability, finance, and analytics teams.

✓ **Trust and Safety Officers**

Ensuring digital platforms, especially those with generative AI or user-generated content, operate within legal and ethical norms while maintaining user trust. They work closely with legal, engineering, and public relations teams.



What's driving demand for these emerging roles?

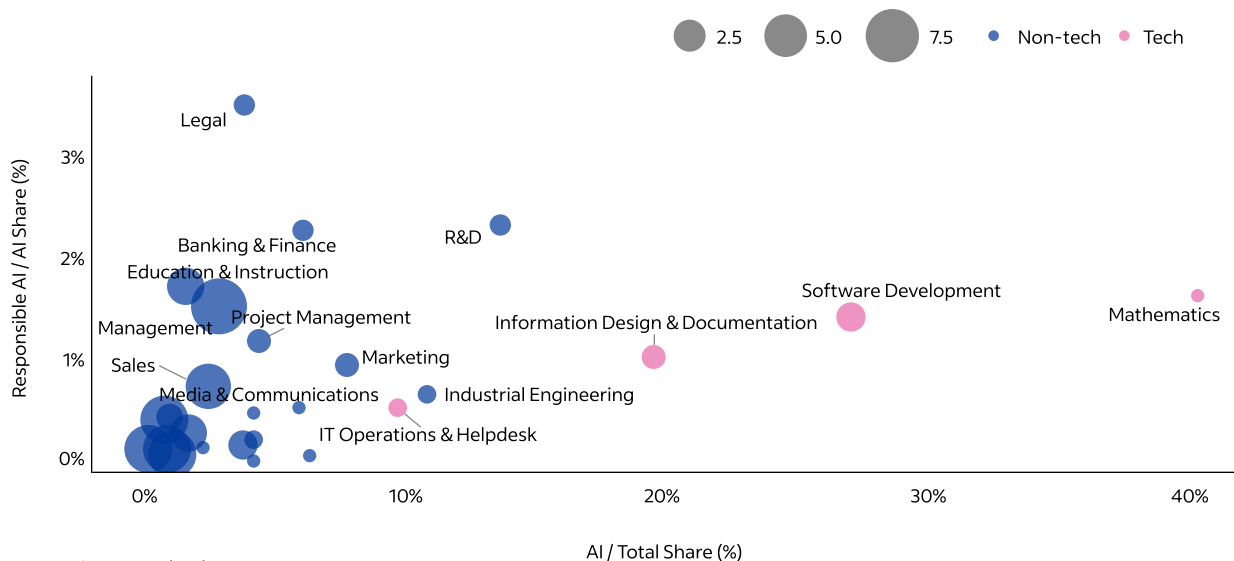
According to McKinsey, as AI technology advances, so do the concerns about its risks, including inaccuracy, cybersecurity, and intellectual property infringement. These concerns translate to the increase in related roles. Indeed Hiring Lab data marks a steady rise in responsible AI job postings from practically non-existent in 2019 to almost 1% of all AI-related postings in 2025, with growth notably accelerating from 2024 onward.



This trend reaches beyond tech occupations, which are generally focused on AI more broadly than responsible AI in particular. In fact, the highest shares of responsible AI postings relative to AI postings overall are in typically human-centered occupations, including legal, research and development, banking and finance, and education and instruction. These occupations may not be highly AI-intensive, but ethical AI use is essential for transparency, accountability, and compliance with laws and regulations.

Tech leads AI intensity, while some human-centered jobs emphasize Responsible AI

By occupation in the US, April 2024-March 2025. Size of bubble indicates share of occupation in total postings.



The scatter plot shows the relationship between the Responsible AI/AI share (%) on the y-axis and the AI/Total share (%) on the x-axis, by occupation in the US. The data covers the period from April 2024 to March 2025. Each bubble represents one occupational category. Bubble size is scaled according to the share of that occupation in total US job postings.

The pipeline problem

Enterprise talent acquisition leaders now face a whole new set of challenges as they try to source emerging roles with no traditional feeder paths:

- ⊗ **Lack of defined job architecture.** Emerging roles often lack standardized titles, responsibilities, or reporting lines, making it difficult to benchmark compensation or attract appropriate candidates.
- ⊗ **Limited external supply.** With only a few academic programs or certification tracks, most talent is self-taught or transitioning from adjacent fields, which requires flexible screening criteria.
- ⊗ **Unclear internal pathways.** Internal candidates may have the right potential but lack visibility into emerging roles or guidance on upskilling, leading to missed internal mobility opportunities.

Strategic ways to build talent pipelines

Building resilient, future-ready talent pipelines requires a strategy that looks beyond traditional recruiting. A skills-first approach is essential — one that identifies high-potential candidates through transferable competencies like systems thinking, regulatory fluency, and ethical judgment rather than just degrees or direct experience. The most effective organizations take a multi-pronged approach: developing talent from within, modernizing how they attract external candidates, and showing up where new talent networks are forming. Together, these strategies ensure a steady flow of skills and potential, no matter how the market shifts.

1



Create internal career paths

- Identify internal talent from legal, analytics, product, and compliance roles and create pathways into responsible innovation roles.
- Launch internal learning programs focused on interdisciplinary topics like AI governance, sustainable innovation, and ethics in automation.
- Use AI-driven talent intelligence platforms to analyze transferable skillsets and proactively match employees to future-fit roles.

2



Rethink how you hire externally

- Move beyond “must have 5+ years in AI governance” to focus on potential and mindset.
- Use structured, capability-based screening to discover unexpected great-fit candidates.
- Assemble cross-functional hiring panels — blending technical, legal, and people teams — to evaluate candidates holistically.

3



Be visible in emerging talent ecosystems

- Partner with academic institutions to influence curriculum development and recruit early talent from interdisciplinary programs.
- Join cross-industry working groups, like those led by the IEEE or ISO, that shape responsible AI standards and enable knowledge sharing.
- Sponsor conferences, fellowships, or learning series in responsible tech.