



DESIGN | BUILD
SEARCH



Salary and Market Trends Report 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Design Build Search is a specialist recruitment consultancy established with the simple aim of providing a quality recruitment service for clients and candidates alike in the construction and engineering industry.

Our team is made up of experienced construction recruiters who have a wealth of industry experience domestically and internationally. Over the last 8 years Design Build Search has been working with local and international companies helping them solve their recruitment needs.

Salaries will vary from company to company, as well as locations and industries. However, this is a guide to the most common figures we have observed when speaking with employers regarding specific roles.

According to CIS 2024 Double-digit growth was expected in 2024 (16%) and 2025 (11%) before levelling off in 2026. As the shocks from the pandemic and global unrest wane, Ireland finds itself in a strong position, where the strong economic performance in 2022 has continued with growth of 2% predicted out to 2026. Headline inflation is decreasing faster than previously anticipated driven by an easing of global energy prices.

The Irish labour market remains strong with unemployment close to historical lows, a strong factor influencing consumer confidence and spending. This year, pay increases outpaced inflation for the first time since 2022. Ireland however remains vulnerable to external global threats and uncertainty persists around corporation tax revenue.

One third of building companies surveyed in the latest Construction Industry Federation's Construction Outlook Survey reported an annual increase in turnover during the second quarter of 2024.

30% of companies also reported a year-on-year increase in the total number of people they employed in the same period, with 26% expecting to employ more staff in the coming months.

LOOKING INTO 2025

According to reports compiled by EY the pace of construction of new residential homes in Ireland continues to accelerate according to the latest forecasts from EY-Euroconstruct, with estimates for completions revised upwards to 36,000 this year and to 41,000 for 2025. Housing completions per 1,000 of the population in Ireland – at 6.9 in 2024 and 7.7 in 2025 – are projected to be the strongest among the 19 Euroconstruct European countries and more than double the overall average (3.3 per 1,000 in 2024 and 3.1 in 2025).

Total Irish construction output, including non-residential and civil engineering, is forecast to grow by 3.9% in 2024, the highest in the Euroconstruct area, and 5.7% in 2025. The volume of new non-residential building (including retail, office and industrial buildings, student accommodation and hospitality) is expected to break even in 2024 before recovering modestly in 2025 (up 1.3%).

The construction industry is expected to grow in 2025 along with the wider economy. This will be supported by investment in the transport and electricity sectors. As part of the plan, the government aims to increase the share of renewable energy in the country's total electricity mix to up to 80% by 2030. Forecast-period growth in the industry will also be supported by investment as part of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-30 plan, which involves an investment of €165 billion for different sectors in the country, over a time frame of 10 years. In addition to the renewable sector there is continued growth expected in the pharma, data centre, commercial, residential, and retail sectors.

“ Over the last 3 months we have spoken with industry leaders about market trends and expectations for 2025. The general consensus is that they anticipate an increase in activity and increase in employment ”

Emmett Finnegan

LOOKING INTO 2025

Concerns in 2025:

Labour cost:

One of the key concerns that has been highlighted amongst industry leaders is the cost of materials and labours. Over the last two years we have seen a sharp increase in cost of materials and this is expected to continue into 2025. This will have an impact on all projects and have a knock on effect on distribution and supply.

A survey by RTE revealed that the cost of labour and raw materials continues to put upward pressure on pricing across all sub sectors, with 67% of survey respondents seeing an annual increase in the cost of labour and 64% reporting an increase in the cost of raw materials. 54% of companies expect the cost of labour to continue to increase in the quarter of this year also.

The survey also found that the key challenges facing the construction sector are access to skilled labour (73%), securing a healthy profit margin (61%), increased cost of materials (56%) and continuity of work (50%). Hubert Fitzpatrick, Director General of the Construction Industry Federation, said that unprecedented demographic growth and an ageing population will mean that demand for investment in critical infrastructure will reach beyond the existing capital ceilings, especially in water services, housing and transport.

“The Construction Industry Federation is calling for an expansionary Budget in 2025 to support Government’s competing policy choices in the year ahead, in the context of Europe’s twin green and digital transitions and growing geopolitical and economic instability,” Mr Fitzpatrick said. “Hyperinflation in many building and construction materials in recent years, as well as fuel, has put a strain on the cost of delivering some of the infrastructure projects in the National Development Plan, as capital budgets are pre-determined. The Construction Outlook Survey results have been tracking this for some time,” he said.

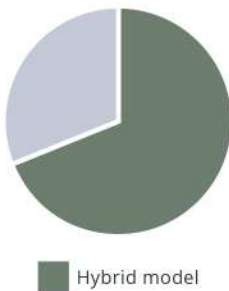
LOOKING INTO 2025

Candidates trends:

In our 2024 salary survey we posted about the increased number of candidates immigrating to Australia, New Zealand, Middle east and North America. This trend has certainly continued especially with professionals aged in the 22-27 brackets. Construction professionals are relocating to explore a better lifestyle and higher standard of living. Other reasons that have become more frequent are shorter working weeks, available property to rent and reduced commuting times.

A significant change we have noticed since last year is the volume of construction professionals returning to Ireland has increased. Typically this demographic is individuals aged 32 and above. It has been a fairly even split in terms of preferred location between the large hubs including Dublin, Galway and Cork. People within this demographic tend to relocate home due to starting their own family, buying a house or feel it's the "right time to return".

At DesignBuild Search, we carried out some research into our total number of placements this year to date in 2024 and how many of those were afforded the opportunity to work either a hybrid or work from home model.



69.6% of the total placements made currently work a hybrid model or were offered the option to work a hybrid model. For clarity, many of those who were not offered the hybrid model of work largely came down to the function of their position- such as a project/setting out engineer, project building services/maintenance engineer or similar, where it is not a possibility to carry out daily functions from a home working environment.

LOOKING INTO 2025

Common trend between most candidates considering a change is the below factors:



Salary/package improvement

- Higher salary or better benefits



Promotion and progress

- Having a clear path



Flexibility

- This includes remote working, Hybrid and flexible working hours

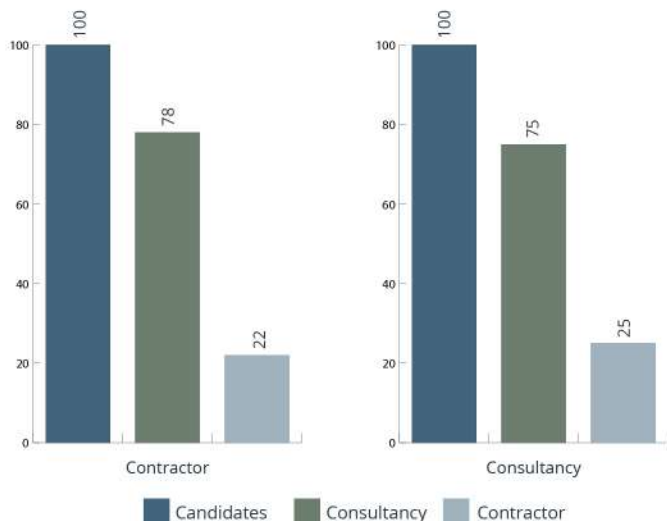
Contactor to consultancy

A huge trend we saw was professionals moving from a contractor to consultancy. This transition is very possible to do and there has been an increase in this over the years. However, it does come with its own set of problems – e.g., the consultancy side often has lower salaries, and there is typically a period of adjustment where you must reorient your thinking (from getting the best deal for the contractor to representing your client as best as possible).

People tend to balk at the salary discrepancy but often fail to consider the shorter working week and change in other working conditions (site-based to office based etc)

Much less common is the move from consultancy to contractor side – more money is obviously a big factor, and the contractor side can often provide a better benefits package too – for example, the consultancy side rarely can provide a company vehicle.

LOOKING INTO 2025



Other trends:

Similarly, we are now seeing a lot of people try to break into sectors they have never worked in before – Renewable Energy, Data Centres, Pharmaceutical, etc. Often this requires a slight step back in salary or responsibilities until you become more familiar with the idiosyncrasies of the new sector. After this period of adjustment, people do tend to get back to their original level fairly quickly.

“ A big trend we are noticing now is that professionals from both sides of the industry are very interested in working for the end client ”

HIRING AND MISSING OUT

Since our initial salary survey one of the biggest issues was the lack of skilled professionals to meet the demand of the industry. Over the last 12 months this problem has increased. It forecasts an extra 251,500 construction workers will be needed by 2028 to meet the expected levels of work. With an increase in the number of projects and an increase of people emigrating It is critical for companies to improve the efficiency and speed of which they hire.

“**Highly sought after talent can expect to have multiple interviews and offers within days of them searching for a new job**”

Emmett Finnegan

Depending on the urgency of the position a client should be setting up a meeting with a candidate within 48 of receiving the application (if suitable for their position) on the assumption the interview or interview(s) go well they should then move to offer verbal/written within 48 hours.

Highly sought after talent can expect to have multiple interviews and offers within days of them searching for a new job. If you find yourself repeatedly struggling to secure talent there is a distinct possibility it is due to a slow recruitment process and/or not being in a position to meet the candidates' key motivators.

HIRING AND MISSING OUT

Most common skills	% of total
Construction	28%
Engineering	21%
Quantity Surveying	18%
Construction Management	12%
Autocad	12%
Project coordination	3%
Construction procurement	6%

Fastest Growing Skills	Growth in last 12 months
Project Delivery	52%
Analytical Skills	46%
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	37%
Quality Control	33%
Design	31%
Customer Satisfaction	25%
Project Coordination	24%
Health & Safety	21%
Quality Assurance	21%
3D Modeling	20%

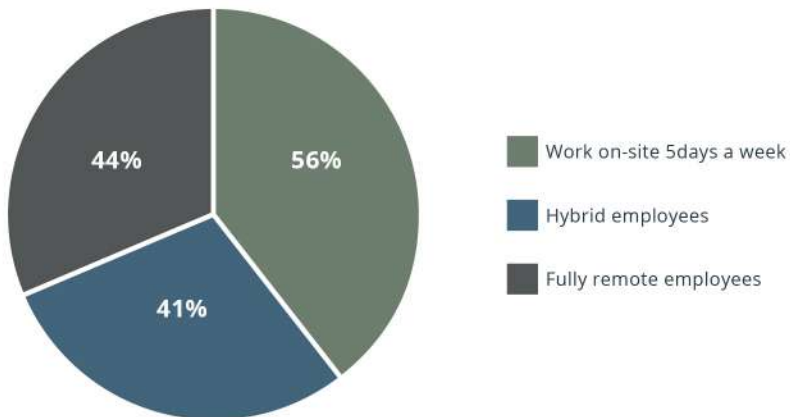
HYBRID WORKING

According to the Irish Times, Some 92 per cent of respondents in Ireland expressed a strong preference for continuing in a hybrid or remote work model. Despite employee preferences, 56 per cent of companies globally with 42 per cent in Ireland are urging staff to increase their in-office presence.

Professionals working in hybrid models expressed the highest contentment with their work patterns, with 59 percent willing to forgo pay raises for desired flexibility. Flexible working arrangements have emerged as a crucial factor in talent attraction and retention, after 80 per cent of hiring managers highlighted its importance.

The survey found that one to two days in the office is the favoured weekly working pattern for 47 per cent of professionals, with a further 25 per cent selecting three to four days in Ireland. Only 8 per cent were happy to be in the office for the full five working days.

The research also showed 56 per cent of respondents who work on-site five days a week are the ones most actively looking for a new job in the next six months compared with hybrid employees (41 per cent) and fully remote employees (44 per cent).



HYBRID WORKING

Hybrid working in construction

Whilst hybrid working is simply not possible within certain professions within the construction industry it certainly has caused a change. From speaking with recent graduates there is an increasing number who are looking for a split between Site, Office and Home. We are also noticing an increase in people looking to change their position within the construction industry to a job that will allow them more flexibility. This will be problematic as construction requires on site presence for the development of projects.

“ Over the last 12 months the majority of employers have been trying to encourage staff back to office ”

Emmett Finnegan

There is still flexibility, but the model has changed to some companies offering 4 days in the office 1 from home or hybrid flexibility after a successful probation period.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

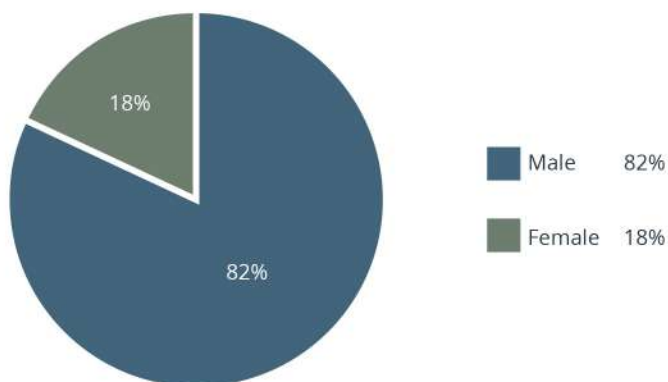
As a company we continue to work with and successfully place an increasing number of international candidates and women with both contractors and consultancies.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Male	80%	85%	79%	80%	83%	84%
Female	20%	7%	21%	20%	17%	16%
Irish	60%	41%	46%	57%	83%	76%
International	40%	59%	54%	43%	17%	24%

Following statistics from LinkedIn talent insights

Industry: Construction, Civil Engineering and Architecture industries.

Based on circa 90,000 construction professionals.



Throughout the year 9,820 of those professionals changed employers and according to LinkedIn Insights the median tenure was 1.7 years.

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

According to the CIF, women account for about 9% of the construction workforce in Ireland in 2024. There are now over 14,000 women working in construction.

This year we increased on that again, albeit just by 1%, from 20% to 21%. Hopefully, we will continue to see this number rise in 2023 and beyond.

There wasn't one particular sector of the construction industry that we placed women into most often, but we did identify higher numbers in the Environmental & Planning sector, Mechanical Engineering, as well as Civil / Structural BIM Specialists.

The Irish government are Encouraging more women to take up jobs in construction it is a key part of the Government Action Plan aimed at boosting employment in the sector.

“**Safer working conditions
can make construction
more appealing to
potential recruits**”

The shortage of skilled labour is one of the biggest challenges facing building companies. It has led to rising wage costs which in turn is contributing to increasing tender prices. The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland said more than 100,000 additional workers will be needed across property and construction over the coming decade to meet demand.

INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATES

Throughout 2024 we have seen the same trends as the previous year of construction professionals looking at relocating to Ireland. Within 2024 we have successfully placed candidates relocating from India, Sri Lanka, South Africa, UAE, Australia and North America. These candidates have secured positions with both medium and large contractor and local and international consultancies.

Positions include Quantity Surveying, Engineering, BIM and Safety. There has been an increase in companies open to sponsoring as the process has become a lot more efficient. There is still a large volume of candidates benefits from spouse visa and stamp 1g (Post grad).

Spouse visa:

In many instances companies are taking advantage of the spouse visa. This tends to be a spouse working in a hospital or in the tech sector. Candidates that qualify for the spouse visa have flexibility to change employers.

Higher Education:

The higher education visa/Stamp 1g is very effective. It permits graduates at Masters level to work upon graduation for 2 years unrestricted. This allows employers to hire experienced professionals who already have international experience on large scale projects. These professionals will also have a higher level Irish education.

Visa changes:

A notable change in the industry is the change in policy from 12 months to 9 months. This allows individuals to seek new employment with another company after 9 months.

Quality candidates:

This year we have also seen an increase of senior candidates, in particular Quantity Surveyors, successfully securing and relocating to Ireland on a critical skills visa. Contractors and consultancies are seeing the value in hiring experienced professionals from overseas who have large project experience. The visa process has sped up in the last 12 months.

BENEFITS IN CONSTRUCTION

Employee benefits offer a way to attract and keep people, contribute towards improving wellbeing, and encourage required behaviours, achievements, values, and skills. The advantages of having company benefits can provide an organisation a competitive edge compared to other organisations that do not provide employee benefits.

Offering employee benefits within an organisation is important as it shows employees that employers are invested in their overall health and their future well-being. Throughout the year, having been in contact with thousands of prospective job seekers and changers there is a strong desire for more than just a base salary.

Typically, the three key components for people accepting or declining an offer is salary, career progression and hybrid working. However, nearly 80% of personnel we speak to want to know about company benefits. When comparing offers their decision is likely to be influenced based on benefits and checking if the other components are the same.

“**The three key components for people accepting or declining an offer is salary, career progression and hybrid working**”

DesignBuild Search have included the below list of most common benefits that we have seen from employers coming from the construction industry. The below is a guide to what is available.

BENEFITS



Salary/package improvement



Career progression



**Remote/
flexible working
arrangements**



Pension
5%-10%



Annual leave
21-27



Healthcare



**Company
vehicle**

More common with
contractors



**Cycle to Work
Tax Saver
Scheme**



**Tax Saver
Travel
Scheme**



**Professional
subscriptions**



**Gym
membership**



**Further
education**

Paying or covering
part of fees



**Bonus contractor
and consultancy**

(contingent on both company
and individual performance)

DUBLIN/REST OF IRELAND:

Since we first started publishing our annual salary survey there has always been a significant difference in salaries in Dublin versus the rest of the country. However, this year we have noticed an increase in other regions which has brought it close to Dublin ranges.

There has been a significant increase in salaries in the West of Ireland this year in particular Galway and Mayo. We have seen increases up to 12% and 15% and this is across contractors and consultancies.



SALARY SURVEY

Engineering consultancy

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Junior Structural Engineer	€35,000 - €37,000	€32,000 - €35,000
Mid-level Structural Engineer	€45,000 - €55,000	€45,000 - €50,000
Senior Structural Engineer	€60,000 - €70,000	€55,000 - €60,000
Junior Civil Design Engineer	€35,000 - €37,000	€32,000 - €35,000
Mid-level Civil Design Engineer	€45,000 - €55,000	€40,000 - €50,000
Senior Civil Design Engineer	€60,000 - €70,000	€55,000 - €60,000
Resident Engineer	€60,000 - €70,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Associate/Chartered Engineer	€65,000 - €75,000	€55,000 - €65,000
Junior Traffic/Transport Engineers	€35,000 - €37,000	€32,000 - €35,000
Mid- level traffic/Transport Engineers	€40,000 - €50,000	€40,000 - €45,000
Senior Traffic/Transport Engineers	€55,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Junior CAD/BIM Coordinator	€35,000 - €37,000	€32,000 - €35,000
Intermediate CAD/BIM Coordinator	€40,000 - €45,000	€35,000 - €40,000
Senior CAD/BIM Coordinator	€45,000 - €60,000	€45,000 - €55,000

Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineering

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Graduate Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineer	€32,000 - €35,000	€30,000 - €32,000
Junior Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineer	€37,000 - €40,000	€35,000 - €40,000
Intermediate Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineer	€50,000 - €60,000	€50,000 - €55,000
Senior Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineer	€60,000 - €70,000	€60,000 - €65,000
Associate Mechanical and Electrical Design Engineer	€70,000 - €85,000	€70,000 - €80,000

Engineering (Contractor/On-Site)

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Junior Site Engineer	€33,000 - €40,000	€32,000 - €35,000
Intermediate Site Engineer	€40,000 - €50,000	€35,000 - €45,000
Senior Site Engineer	€55,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Quality Engineer	€40,000 - €60,000	€40,000 - €50,000

Contractor: Mechanical and Electrical Engineering

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Graduate Mechanical and Electrical Engineer	€32,000 - €35,000	€30,000 - €32,000
Junior Mechanical and Electrical Engineer	€35,000 - €40,000	€32,000 - €37,000
Intermediate Mechanical and Electrical Engineering	€45,000 - €55,000	€40,000 - €45,000
Senior Mechanical and Electrical Engineer	€50,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €65,000
M&E Coordinator/Building	€55,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000

Management and operations (Consultancy)

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Operations Manager	€75,000 +	€70,000 +
Associate	€95,000 +	€5,000 +
Senior Project Manager	€65,000 - €75,000	€55,000 - €65,000
Project Manager	€60,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Assistant Project Manager	€45,000 - €55,000	€40,000 - €45,000
Project Coordinator	€40,000 - €50,000	€35,000 - €45,000
Junior Project Manager	€35,000 - €45,000	€35,000 - €40,000

Management/Operations (Contractor/On-site)

Position	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Construction Director	€120,000+	€100,000+
Contracts Manager	€100,000+	€80,000 +
Senior Project Manager	€85,000 - €95,000	€80,000 - €85,000
Project Manager	€70,000 - €85,000	€65,000 - €80,000
Senior Site Manager	€75,000 - €85,000	€70,000 - €80,000
Site Manager	€65,000 - €75,000	€60,000 - €70,000
Assistant Project Manager	€50,000 - €60,000	€45,000 - €55,000
Foreman	€60,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Finishing Foreman	€60,000 - €65,000	€50,000 - €60,000
Mechanical and Electrical Site Manager	€65,000 - €75,000	€60,000 - €70,000
Mechanical and Electrical Project Manager	€85,000 - €95,000	€75,000 - €85,000
Mechanical and Electrical Contract Manager	€90,000+	€80,000+
Junior EHS Advisor	€35,000 - €40,000	€35,000 - €40,000
Intermediate EHS Advisor	€40,000 - €50,000	€40,000 - €45,000
EHS Advisor	€60,000 - €70,000	€50,000 - €60,000
EHS Manager	€75,000 - €90,000	€70,000 - €80,000

Commercial/Quantity Surveying

Consultancy	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Junior Quantity Surveyor	€35,000 - €45,000	€32,000 - €40,000
Intermediate	€45,000 - €65,000	€40,000 - €60,000
Intermediate M&E QS	€45,000 - €65,000	€40,000 - €60,000
Senior M&E Quantity Surveyor	€80,000 - €85,000	€75,000 - €85,000
Senior Quantity Surveyor	€80,000 - €90,000	€65,000 - €80,000
Associate Director	€85,000 - €100,000	€80,000 - €90,000
Director	€120,000+	€100,000+

Contractor	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Junior Quantity Surveyor	€40,000 - €45,000	€37,000 - €40,000
Intermediate	€50,000 - €65,000	€45,000 - €60,000
Intermediate M&E QS	€60,000 - €65,000	€55,000 - €60,000
Senior M&E Quantity Surveyor	€85,000 - €95,000	€80,000 - €85,000
Senior Quantity Surveyor	€85,000 - €95,000	€80,000 - €90,000
Managing Quantity Surveyor	€90,000 - €110,000	€90,000 - €100,000
Commercial Manager	€110,000 - €130,000	€100,000 - €120,000
Commercial Director	€130,000 - €150,000	€120,000 - €150,000

Commercial/Estimating

Contractor	Dublin Region	Rest of Ireland
Estimator	€75,000 - €75,000	€60,000 - €65,000
Senior Estimator	€80,000 - €90,000	€70,000 - €80,000
Estimating Manager	€100,000 - €120,000	€90,000 - €110,000

GET TO KNOW DBS

DesignBuild Search is a specialist recruitment consultancy established with the simple aim of providing a quality recruitment service for clients and candidates alike in the construction and engineering industry. Our team is made up of experienced construction recruiters who have a genuine passion for the construction industry.

Operating as part of the Vertical Markets Group, Design Build Search was founded in 2016 with the aim of bringing our expertise, specialist approach and vast network to the construction recruitment sector. Since then we have grown organically, nurturing valuable relationships with the businesses we partner with.

Our reputation in the construction sector is well-established, and a significant portion of our business comes from repeat business and referrals which is a testament to our ability to cultivate long term relationships with our clients.

At Design Build Search

We pride ourselves on building on your foundation and becoming an extension of your business. What sets us apart is our commitment to providing consultancy services rather than just recruiting. Our main aim is to cultivate long lasting relationships with both employers and employees rather than just one of encounters.

We understand the uniqueness of each client and go beyond job descriptions to comprehend organisational nuances, cultural dynamics, and team requirements. We tailor our approach, including feedback and review processes to meet the specific needs of our clients.

GET TO KNOW DBS



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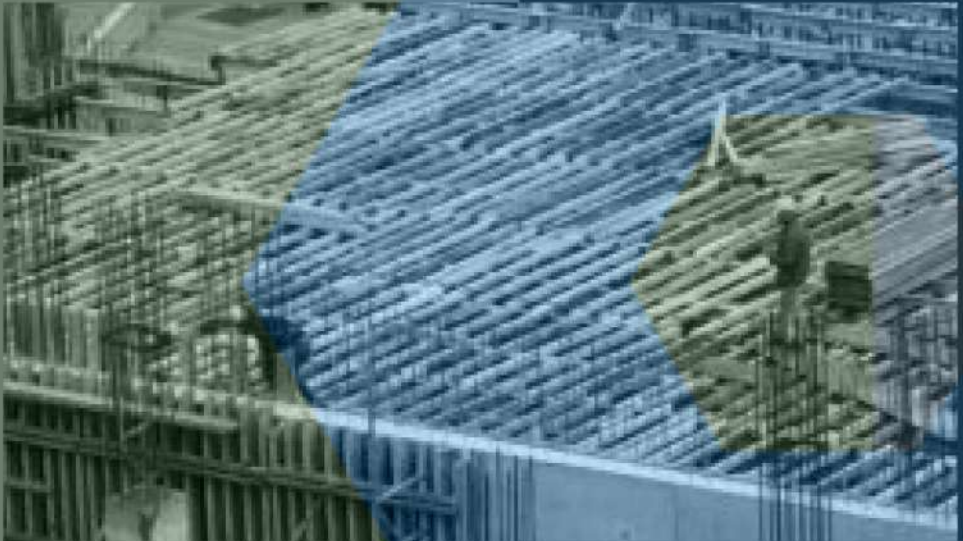
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