

Toptal

Hire the Top 3% of the World's Talent [™]

Est. 2010 | San Francisco | Talent Marketplaces | www.toptal.com

BEST FOR

- + Companies that need vetted senior developers, designers, product managers, project managers, finance experts, marketing experts, or management consultants quickly.
- + Hiring managers who want a curated shortlist instead of screening a large open marketplace themselves.
- + Teams that value a no-risk trial before committing to a contractor or consulting engagement.
- + Organizations that care about IP ownership and want Toptal's documented pass-through model for work created by talent.
- + Companies that may need either individual experts or managed consulting and services engagements under one vendor relationship.

NOT IDEAL FOR

- ! Buyers who need fully transparent hourly rates before starting a vendor conversation, because Toptal does not publish talent rates or project price ranges.
- ! Small teams with tight budgets that may get enough value from broader marketplaces such as Upwork or Fiverr.
- ! Employers looking for a classic ATS, HRIS, payroll system, or internal employee management platform.
- ! Procurement teams that require public SOC 2, SSO, or SCIM documentation, because I did not find those controls documented on vendor-owned Toptal pages for the hiring platform.
- ! Teams that want to screen and negotiate directly with many candidates rather than use Toptal's managed matching process.

Key Features

Vetted Talent Network

Toptal provides access to a curated network of software developers, designers, marketing experts, management consultants, product managers, project managers, and sales experts. The vendor says fewer than 3% of more than 200,000 annual applicants pass its screening process.

Hand-Selected Matching

Toptal does not operate like an open job board where buyers screen every applicant themselves. The vendor says an industry expert works with the client to understand goals, technical needs, and team dynamics, then introduces hand-selected talent, with average time to match under 24 hours.

No-Risk Talent Trial

Toptal starts engagements with a trial period of up to two weeks. The vendor says clients pay only if satisfied, and if the match is not right, Toptal can either part ways or begin another no-risk trial with another expert.

Rigorous Screening Process

Toptal screens candidates for communication skills, personality, domain-specific knowledge, professionalism, and technical ability. The documented process can include portfolio reviews, coding challenges, user or market research, business cases, backlog grooming, formal assessments, live problem-solving sessions, domain-expert interviews, and test projects.

IP Pass-Through

Toptal says client contracts provide that work created by a Toptal expert is the property of the client, not Toptal. The vendor says it obtains ownership of work created by talent through talent agreements and then provides that intellectual property to the client under the client agreement.

Flexible Engagement Models

Toptal supports hourly, part-time, and full-time contract hiring across many skill pages, and says it can also manage projects end-to-end through Consulting and Services. Its hiring model includes remote talent by default, with limited on-site coordination possible when required.

Pricing & Plan Guidance

PLAN	PRICE (ANNUAL)	KEY INCLUDES
Platform Subscription	\$79/month	Charged if the client proceeds with a talent search Gives access to Toptal's client platform Can be cancelled at any time Refund request available if Toptal cannot provide talent Governed by Platform Subscription Terms
Talent Engagement	Talent rates not publicly listed	Matched talent based on client requirements Hourly, part-time, or full-time contract basis depending on role and scope Up to two-week no-risk trial Pay only if satisfied during the trial Invoices typically issued twice monthly Net 10 invoice terms
Consulting and Services	Custom	End-to-end managed project option Technology services Marketing agency services Management consulting People consulting Finance consulting Operations consulting

PLAN GUIDANCE

Choose Toptal if you need a managed way to find vetted senior talent and you are willing to pay for quality, speed, and matching support rather than manually screening a large applicant pool. The only clearly public recurring price I found is the \$79/month platform subscription that applies if you proceed with a talent search. Actual talent rates and project costs are not publicly listed, so procurement teams should treat total cost as variable and request a scoped quote before comparing Toptal with open marketplaces. The no-risk trial is useful for testing fit because Toptal says engagements start with up to two weeks where you pay only if satisfied. Consulting and Services is the better path when you want Toptal to manage a project end-to-end rather than only match you with an individual expert.

Compliance Transparency Index™

B

Score: 70 / 100

Security 30/40 | Pricing 10/25 | Data Rights 15/20 | Legitimacy 15/15

Methodology: staffgrid.net/about

COMPLIANCE SNAPSHOT

✕ SOC 2 No	✓ GDPR Yes	✓ SSO Yes	✓ Data Retention Yes
✕ Public Pricing No	✓ Free Trial Yes	✓ Data Export Yes	✓ Data Deletion Yes

KEY FACTS

Starting Price	\$79/month	Output Ownership	User
AI Training Opt-Out	N/A	Legal Entity	Toptal, LLC

HOW IT WORKS

You start by telling Toptal what kind of talent or project outcome you need. An industry expert works with you to understand your goals, technical requirements, timeline, and team dynamics, then Toptal searches its network and introduces a hand-selected match. The candidate has already gone through Toptal's screening process, which can include communication checks, portfolio reviews, domain-specific tests, live problem-solving, interviews with senior domain experts, and a test project. Toptal says it usually introduces candidates within 24 hours and that clients can begin a trial period with up to three individuals per position. If the match looks right, you work with the expert during a trial period of up to two weeks. If you are satisfied, Toptal bills you and the engagement continues. If not, Toptal says you are not billed for that trial and can either stop or try another expert.

ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

- 01 Upwork Enterprise: Covers the marketplace scale and buyer-control gap. Toptal is stronger for curated, vetted matching, while Upwork Enterprise gives larger organizations a broader freelance marketplace with more direct control over sourcing and vendor workflows. Tradeoff: buyers may need to spend more time screening for quality.
- 02 Turing: Covers the AI and engineering-talent specialization gap. Turing is a better fit when the buyer wants a developer-focused hiring platform with AI-heavy positioning and remote engineering operations. Tradeoff: Toptal covers a broader range of business, design, product, marketing, and consulting roles.
- 03 Arc: Covers the remote developer hiring gap. Arc is a better fit when the buyer mainly wants remote technical talent and a developer-focused marketplace. Tradeoff: Toptal has a broader premium talent network across engineering, design, product, finance, marketing, project management, and consulting.

- 04 Andela: Covers the global engineering workforce gap. Andela is stronger for organizations building distributed engineering capacity and AI or technical teams at scale. Tradeoff: Toptal is more flexible for one-off senior experts, design roles, finance experts, product managers, project managers, and consulting work.
- 05 Fiverr Pro: Covers the productized-service and lower-friction buying gap. Fiverr Pro is better when the buyer wants packaged services, clearer upfront scopes, and faster browsing. Tradeoff: Toptal is more suitable for premium, vetted, ongoing, or complex work where managed matching matters.

www.toptal.com

Full review: staffgrid.net/review/toptal