

Formation Monthly Deploy: September 2025

For the blog: Formation Monthly Deploy: September (Blog)

Welcome to the Formation Monthly Deploy, our monthly newsletter highlighting achievements, insights, and innovations from across the Formation ecosystem. Whether you're a current Fellow navigating challenges, an Alumni building your career, or a Mentor guiding others, this spa

🌎 Engineering tip from Sophie Novati

📉 Tech hiring remains uneven

The engineering job market is in flux. While layoffs are down year-over-year (90k YTD vs. 140k last year). We've stabilized since pandemic-era overhiring, but volatility continues to reflect the huge market shifts caused by AI. Demand is now highly segmented — front-end roles are shrinking, while backend and AI-leaning roles are in high demand.

🤖 AI roles command a growing premium

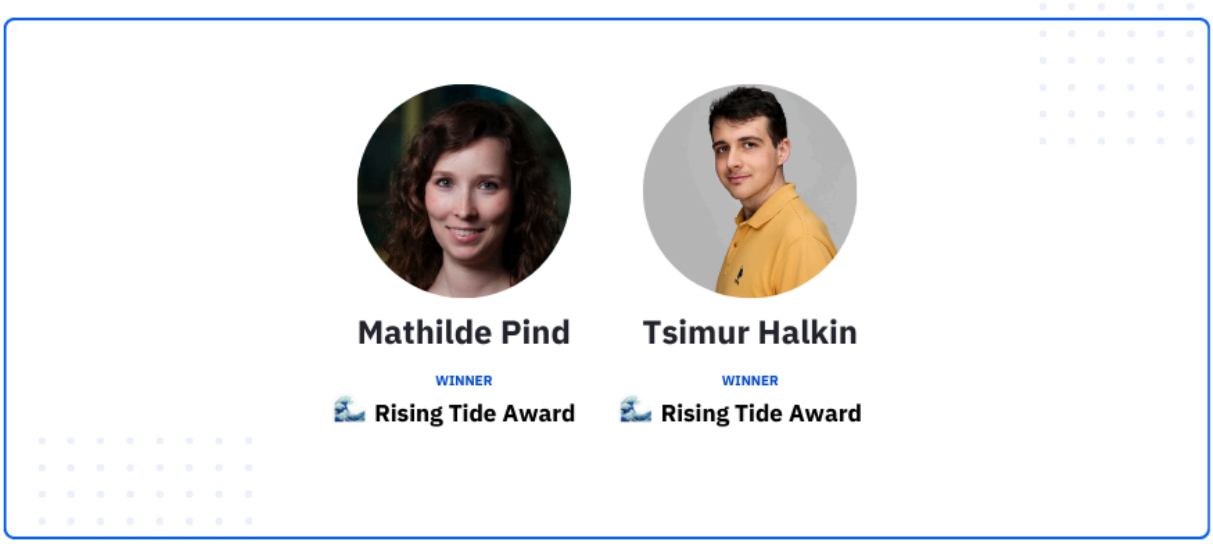
AI continues to reshape the market. Compensation for AI-skilled engineers is rising sharply, with specialized roles earning 15 to 40% more than generalist peers. Expect continued growth in roles like AI product engineer and ML Ops. Importantly, 67% of engineers now use AI tools daily, pointing to a future where AI fluency is essential, even for non-specialists.

💡 Developer tools and funding are bright spots

Despite a generally cool labor market, investment in AI tooling remains strong. Startups like Replit and Devin are raising major rounds, and new IPOs (e.g., Klarna) show capital is flowing, supporting innovation and demand for talent in AI infrastructure and developer tooling.

🧠 **Hiring trends shifting to skills-first**

Companies are leaning into IQ-based and skills-first hiring. Expect more hands-on assessments and even AI-native interviews as early adopters reshape how candidates are evaluated.

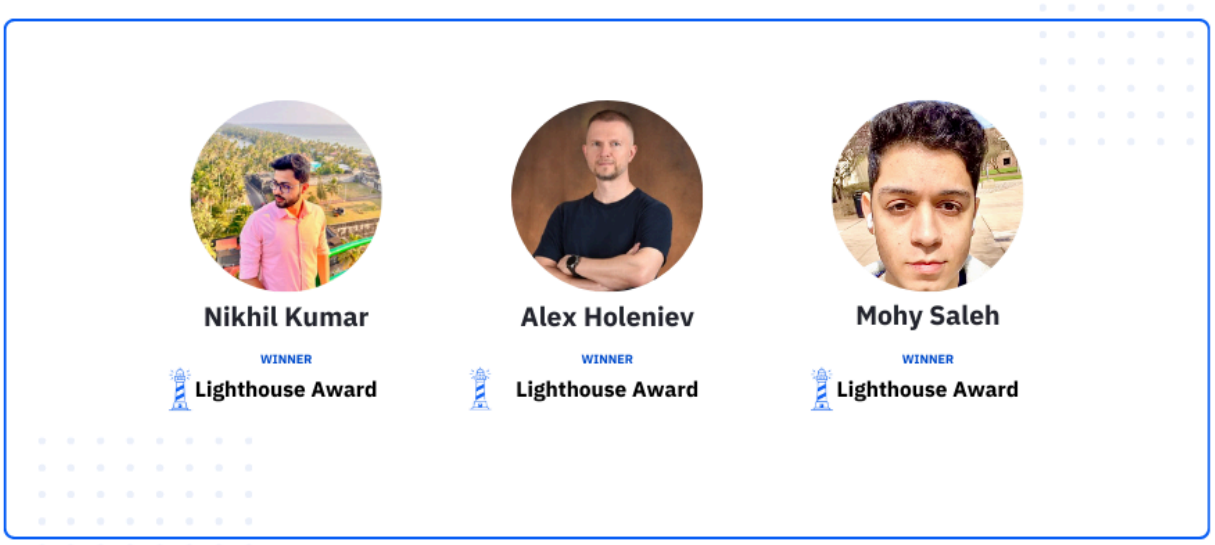


🌊 Last month's Rising Tide winners

Each month, we recognize Fellows who go above and beyond to lift others up. These standout Fellows showed up with support, positivity, and generosity, making Formation better for everyone around them:

Mathilde Pind was recognized for her collaborative mindset and strong attention to detail. Her nominator shared: *"I really like working with Mathilde on problems — we brainstorm solutions and she has good attention to detail, which is something I need to work on. It's a great compliment."*

Tsimur Halkin stood out for his positivity, communication, and team-first attitude. His nominators shared: *"Communicative, helpful, always positive.", "Very cooperative, always tries to draw a solution, great teammate."*



🌟 Last month's Lighthouse Award Winners

The Lighthouse Award recognizes mentors who go above and beyond to guide, support, and light the way forward. Last month's winners exemplified what it means to meet Fellows where they are and leave them better than they found them.

Nikhil Kumar was recognized for his clear and thoughtful explanations that helped Fellows connect technical concepts to real-world understanding. His nominator shared: *"Nikhil is a great mentor and made sure we understood the code from a 'human' perspective as well as what the computer actually gives, and I think that was very useful for the overall understanding of the working code. I really enjoyed his explanations."*

Alex Holeniev stood out for his clarity and ability to guide Fellows toward deeper understanding. His nominator shared: *"I really appreciate the depth of knowledge and clarity you brought to our mock interview. I've discussed WebSocket in several past sessions, but it wasn't until our conversation that I realized I didn't fully grasp it. Your explanations helped me see where I was missing pieces, and it pushed me to go back, re-read the material, and connect the dots. Thank you for taking the time to guide me — it made a real difference."*

Mohy Saleh was recognized for creating a collaborative, educational environment and sharing real-world insights. His nominator shared: *"I had my first session with him, and the way he ran it really stood out. He made sure everyone contributed to the solution, and he facilitated the discussion in a way that felt natural and unforced. I finally understood top-down dynamic programming thanks to his clear explanation. On top of that, he shared a recent real-world interview experience that was incredibly helpful. Overall, Mohy created an environment that was collaborative, educational, and encouraging, which had a big impact on my week."*



Nicholas Schillaci
Software Engineer
@ Disney



Matthew White
Senior Full-Stack Engineer
@ Instinct Science

🏆 Job placement celebrations

We're celebrating Fellows who turned persistence into progress and landed new roles this month.

Nicholas Schillaci → Disney
"It took a year and a half to find work, but every interview is a door to potential connections. Rejections don't always mean you did something wrong. Stay positive and leave a strong impression — you might get another chance."

Matthew White → Instinct Science
"The job hunt is a marathon. Rejections are normal, and many are outside your control. Space out your interviews to avoid burnout, and use Formation's resources every step of the way."

🚀 What's new at Formation?

AI courses to keep you growing

We're growing our AI course catalog to meet demand — and help engineers build with AI, not just talk about it.

Now enrolling: *Ship Faster With AI*
A four-week course that helps engineers integrate AI tools into their daily workflow. You'll learn when to delegate, how to evaluate AI output, and how to build faster without sacrificing quality.

Next cohort starts Sept 22. **Learn more**

Coming soon: *Building AI-Powered Features*
Starting Oct 13, this hands-on course will teach you how to prototype and ship AI-powered features (like search, recommendation, and summarization). You'll use APIs, open-source models, and simple ML tools to build projects that reflect what's happening in the industry.

Learn more

See you next month!

We're always proud of how this community shows up — with generosity, determination, and drive. Keep asking questions, lifting each other, and pushing the limits of what you thought you could do.

Until next month,

The Formation Team