Upwork Introduces Upwork Now to Help Clients Hire Experts in Minutes

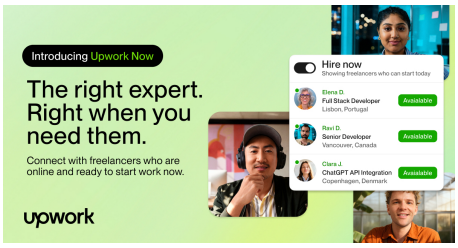
November 2, 2026

The new on-demand hiring experience connects people and businesses with skilled professionals who are online and ready to work now, on Upwork or from inside the AI tools they're already using

PALO ALTO, Calif., Nov. 02, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Upwork Inc. (NASDAQ: UPWK), the world's human and AI-powered work marketplace, today announced the public beta of Upwork Now. Clients can see available freelancers, review a shortlist and hire in minutes, while freelancers can connect with clients who are ready to hire and get work started.

With Upwork Now, a founder preparing to launch a website can find a developer to fix a last-minute issue. A marketing team facing a deadline can connect with a designer ready to help. Someone deep in a build with AI can bring in an expert to review their code before it ships. And through the Upwork MCP server, clients can do it without ever leaving the AI tools where their work began.

Introducing Upwork Now



The right expert. Right when you need them.

AI is making it easier to get started on projects and move work forward quickly. The ability to hire the right expert needs to keep pace. In an Upwork survey, 57% of clients said they would prefer to hire in a day or less.[1] Upwork Now was built for that need, to help clients bring in human expertise at the speed of AI.

In early testing, clients who took advantage of Upwork Now typically hired in under 30 minutes, with the fastest hiring in under 10. When those clients reached out to freelancers, the typical response came in about five minutes.[2]

"The faster people work with AI, the more it matters that the right expert is there the moment a task needs human judgment, creativity, or careful review," said Peter Sanborn, Chief Business Officer at Upwork. "Upwork Now unlocks a new on-demand way for people and AI to work together. Whether you're on Upwork or deep in an AI tool, you can bring in highly skilled talent who can start right away, and freelancers get a way to turn their availability into work when they're ready to take it on."

For clients: When posting a job on Upwork.com, clients can turn on "Hire Now" to reach skilled professionals who are online and ready to start. Responses appear in a live feed and a real-time shortlist helps them review qualified candidates. Upwork Now will be coming soon to freelancer search.

For freelancers: Freelancers can turn on "Work Now" from their homepage or profile to signal they're ready to start right away. They can then see which clients are actively online and hiring now while they search for jobs, and respond to those who need help immediately.

Inside AI tools: Clients can use Upwork Now from inside their favorite AI tools by connecting them to Upwork. Once connected, their AI tool can use the context of the work already underway to find freelancers who can start now. In the coming weeks, freelancers will also be able to manage their "Work Now" availability from their AI tools.

Upwork Now is the latest step in making human expertise available the moment work needs it, wherever that work begins. Earlier this year, Upwork launched its Model Context Protocol (MCP) server, enabling customers to hire, win jobs, and manage work inside any compatible AI tool. Where the MCP server lets agents connect with the Upwork Marketplace, Upwork Now lets them connect with human expertise on demand. Every action, whether taken by a person or an agent, is built on the same trust and safety infrastructure that backs Upwork engagements today.

Upwork Now is available as a public beta to all clients and freelancers on Upwork at no additional cost. To get started, visit Upwork.com or connect Upwork to your favorite AI tool at www.upwork.com/ai/plugins.

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[1] Based on an Upwork survey of 150 U.S. based clients that hire on Upwork conducted April 2026.

[2] Based on Upwork internal data from October 7th, 2026 to October 26th, 2026 for clients who turned on Upwork Now and hired within one hour of doing so. "Work started" refers to contract start. Response time measures the median time between a client's outreach and a freelancer's first reply.

About Upwork

Upwork Inc.'s (Nasdaq: UPWK) family of companies connects businesses with global, AI-enabled talent across every contingent work type including freelance, agency, fractional, and payrolled. This portfolio includes the Upwork Marketplace, which connects businesses with on-demand access to highly skilled talent across the globe, and Lifted, which provides a purpose-built solution for enterprise organizations to source, contract, manage, and pay talent across the full spectrum of contingent work. From Fortune 100 enterprises to entrepreneurs, businesses rely on Upwork Inc. to find and hire expert talent, leverage AI-powered work solutions, and drive business transformation. With access to professionals spanning more than 10,000 skills across AI & machine learning, software development, sales & marketing, customer support, finance & accounting, and more, the Upwork family of companies enables businesses of all sizes to scale, innovate, and transform their workforces for the age of AI and beyond.

Since its founding, Upwork Inc. has facilitated more than $30 billion in total transactions and services as it fulfills its purpose to create opportunity in

every era of work. Learn more about the Upwork Marketplace at upwork.com and follow on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X; and learn more about Lifted at go-lifted.com and follow on LinkedIn.

Safe Harbor

This press release of Upwork Inc. (together with its wholly owned subsidiaries, the "Company," "we," "us," or "our") contains "forward-looking" statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws. Forward-looking statements include all statements other than statements of historical fact, including any statements regarding information or predictions concerning the future of our business or strategy, future products, features, or functionality, future market opportunity, anticipated events and trends, technological and market trends, the expected impact and timing of strategic initiatives, and other future conditions.

We have based these forward-looking statements largely on our current expectations and projections as of the date hereof. As such, they are subject to inherent uncertainties, known and unknown risks, and changes in circumstances that are difficult to predict and in many cases outside our control, and you should not place undue reliance on such forward-looking statements. Moreover, we operate in a very competitive and rapidly changing environment, and new risks emerge from time to time. We make no representation that the plans, intentions, expectations, or results disclosed in these forward-looking statements will be achieved or that future events and circumstances will occur, and actual results or events may differ materially and adversely from our expectations. The forward-looking statements are made as of the date hereof, and we do not undertake, and expressly disclaim, any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, conform these statements to actual results, or make changes in our expectations, except as required by law. Additional information regarding the risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from our expectations is included under the caption "Risk Factors" in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the three months ended September 30, 2026, when filed, and in our other SEC filings, which are available on our Investor Relations website at investors.upwork.com and on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/02effbea-4241-469e-b6ce-0f048034d498