

CFA CAREER HANDBOOK

**JOB ROLES AFTER THE
CFA PROGRAM**

INDIA & ABROAD

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Preface

Kick Start Your Career After the CFA Program

Earning the CFA® charter opens doors across the full spectrum of finance — but knowing which door to walk through, and what lies behind it, can be just as important as the credential itself. Recently, many new job roles and specialisations have emerged for CFA charter holders and candidates, both in India and globally. Students and working professionals aspiring to leverage the CFA Program need to be aware of the evolving roles, skill sets, and salary expectations in each domain before choosing a career path.

This handbook is designed to give you an express, practical introduction to six key job profiles that align directly with the CFA curriculum: Credit Analysis, Equity Research, Financial Risk Management, Investment Banking, Project Finance, and Wealth Management. For each profile you will find what the role entails, the skills and qualifications that matter, how to get in, a typical day, current salary benchmarks in India and abroad, and the companies to target.

For more guidance on the CFA Program and finance careers, visit www.proschoolonline.com/blog/

We are grateful to Ms Shilpa Menon (MBA – IIT Madras), Mr Vivek Gupta (MBA – IIM Bangalore), Mr Yogesh (CA, CIMA Finalist), Ms Munira Lokhandwala (IIM Calcutta, FRM, CFA), Ms Neha Deshpande (Content Writer), for their valuable contribution in developing the original Finance Career Guide on which this handbook is based.

Note on this edition: Salary benchmarks, market outlook, and company listings reflect current data sourced from CFA Institute, Glassdoor, 6figr, PayScale, Deloitte, SEBI, NaBFID, ADB, AIIB, and other cited references. All INR figures are in Lakhs Per Annum (LPA) unless stated otherwise.

Wish you all the best.

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Profile 1 — Credit Analysis

What is Credit Analysis?

A Credit Analyst assesses the creditworthiness of individuals, corporates, or sovereigns to determine their ability to service debt. The output is either a loan approval/rejection recommendation or a formal credit rating. With India's corporate bond market deepening, the launch of the SEBI-regulated credit-oriented AIF framework, and the RBI's Basel III/IV implementation roadmap, demand for credit professionals has grown substantially. India's sovereign credit rating was upgraded by S&P to BBB in August 2025 — the first upgrade in 18 years — signalling growing investor confidence in Indian debt.

Credit Analysts are employed across: (1) Commercial banks & NBFCs — assessing retail and corporate loan risk; (2) Credit Rating Agencies — CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, Fitch, Brickwork, Acuité Ratings; (3) PE firms and Investment Banks — debt research and structured credit; (4) KPOs — third-party credit research vendors.

Key Skills

- Strong financial statement analysis and ratio analysis
- Familiarity with credit risk models (PD, LGD, EAD) and scenario analysis
- Knowledge of RBI regulations, Basel III/IV norms, and SEBI debt frameworks
- Report writing: articulate credit opinions clearly for rating committees
- Proficiency in Excel and statistical/risk software (Python, SAS, R are a plus)

How to Enter

Most credit roles are filled by MBAs (Finance) from Tier-1/2 B-schools or Chartered Accountants. A CFA charter or candidacy is highly valued — many credit rating agencies and banks actively seek CFA-qualified professionals for mid-to-senior analytical roles. An FRM certification complements the CFA in risk-focused credit roles. Entry-level hires often come through campus recruitment; lateral hiring is common for experienced analysts.

A Day in the Life (Entry Level)

- Receive rating mandates or loan appraisal files from internal teams or clients
- Review financial statements, management reports, and industry data
- Build credit models and write draft credit assessment reports
- Attend internal review meetings or client site visits
- Present findings to rating committees or senior credit officers

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Fresh Analyst (MBA/CA, rating agency)	INR 8 – 12 LPA
Analyst (2-4 years, banks/KPOs)	INR 10 – 16 LPA
Senior Analyst (5-8 years)	INR 16 – 24 LPA
VP / Lead Credit Manager (10+ years)	INR 25 – 45 LPA

Sources: 6figr.com (2026 avg INR 16L), Glassdoor CRISIL (2026), PayScale ICRA (2025). CRISIL Credit Analyst average ~INR 10.1L; ICRA average ~INR 9.75L (PayScale 2025).

Global Outlook

Globally, credit analysts are in demand across Singapore (SGD 60K–120K entry), Dubai (AED 150K–300K), London (GBP 45K–80K entry), and New York (USD 75K–100K entry at major rating agencies and banks). The CFA charter significantly strengthens a credit analyst's profile for front-office credit roles at global investment banks and buy-side firms abroad.

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
CRISIL (S&P Global)	S&P Global Ratings
ICRA (Moody's)	Moody's Investors Service
CARE Ratings	Fitch Ratings
Acuité Ratings	DBRS Morningstar
Brickwork Ratings	JP Morgan (Credit Research)
HDFC Bank	Goldman Sachs
ICICI Bank	Deutsche Bank
Kotak Mahindra Bank	HSBC
Axis Bank	Citi
Aranca	Bloomberg Intelligence
Genpact	BlackRock (Credit)
Dun & Bradstreet	Barclays

Profile 2 — Equity Research

What is Equity Research?

Equity Research (ER) analysts monitor publicly listed companies, build valuation models, and publish Buy / Hold / Sell recommendations for institutional clients. India's equity markets have seen unprecedented retail and institutional participation — AMFI data shows mutual fund AUM crossing INR 65 lakh crore in 2025, and SEBI-registered FPIs continue to expand India coverage. This has materially increased demand for sector specialists on both the sell side (investment bank research desks) and the buy side (AMCs, hedge funds, PE firms).

ER teams are divided into sector coverage groups (e.g., Banking, IT, Pharma, Consumer). Associates support senior Analysts; Analysts publish reports in their own name. AI-assisted tools are now widely used for data aggregation and model updates, but original investment theses and client communication remain human-driven.

Key Skills

- Financial modelling (DCF, EV/EBITDA, Sum-of-Parts, LBO basics)
- Deep industry expertise in one or two coverage sectors
- Data sourcing: Bloomberg, Refinitiv, company filings, channel checks
- Clear, concise report writing and client presentation
- CFA charter — strongly preferred; many bulge-bracket banks reimburse CFA fees

How to Enter

Bulge-bracket banks recruit directly from IIM A/B/C, ISB, and equivalent campuses. The next tier — MDI, IIFT, IIT-SOMs — can access offshore ER roles at global banks (Mumbai/Gurugram GCC units) feeding into global analyst programmes. CAs with strong modelling skills compete effectively for domestic ER roles. A CFA charter or candidacy is the single most valued credential in this field; most firms encourage and financially support CFA enrolment.

A Day in the Life (Entry Level – Associate)

- Start the day scanning news flow on covered companies (Bloomberg, Reuters, Moneycontrol)
- Update financial models after earnings releases or management guidance changes
- Draft sections of sector notes or earnings preview reports
- Support the senior Analyst on client calls or investor conferences
- Earnings season can require late hours and back-to-back model updates

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Fresh Associate – Bulge Bracket (IIM/ISB)	INR 20 – 30 LPA (base + bonus)
Fresh Associate – Boutique / Domestic bank	INR 6 – 10 LPA
Analyst (4-7 years, bulge bracket)	INR 25 – 50 LPA
Senior Analyst / VP (10+ years)	INR 50 LPA – 1.5 Cr+
Buy-side Portfolio Manager (top AMC)	INR 1 Cr – 3 Cr+ (incl. bonus)

Sources: MentorMeCareers Equity Research Salary Guide (2026); 6figr.com Equity Research Salaries India 2026 (avg INR 16L reported across experience bands); SalaryExpert India 2026.

Global Outlook

Global investment banks and asset managers maintain large India-based ER teams covering both domestic and international equities. Indian ER professionals regularly transition to Singapore, Hong Kong, London, and Dubai. A CFA charter combined with 2–4 years of India ER experience is a strong

ticket to global roles, with mid-career salaries of SGD 100K–200K (Singapore), GBP 60K–120K (London), and USD 100K–180K (New York).

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
Goldman Sachs (GS India)	Goldman Sachs (NY/London/HK)
JP Morgan India	JP Morgan
Morgan Stanley India	Morgan Stanley
Nomura India	UBS
Barclays India	Bank of America
HSBC India	Deutsche Bank
Citi India	Standard Chartered
Kotak Securities	Bernstein Research
ICICI Securities	Jefferies
Motilal Oswal	Macquarie
Edelweiss	CLSA
Avendus Capital	BlackRock Investment Institute

Profile 3 — Financial Risk Management

What is Financial Risk Management?

Risk Management professionals identify, measure, monitor, and mitigate financial risks across four main categories: Market Risk (exposure to interest rates, FX, equities), Credit Risk (counterparty default), Liquidity Risk (funding and asset liquidity), and Operational Risk (people, processes, systems, and fraud).

Regulatory tailwinds have dramatically increased demand. The RBI has progressively tightened risk-governance norms for banks and NBFCs. Basel III is firmly in place; implementation of FRTB (Fundamental Review of the Trading Book) and preparation for Basel IV are underway in India. Global Capability Centres (GCCs) of multinational banks in Mumbai, Gurugram, and Bengaluru now house large risk quantification teams. India ranks among the top three countries globally for FRM exam registrations (GARP, 2025).

Key Skills

- Quantitative modelling: VaR, CVaR, stress testing, scenario analysis
- Knowledge of Basel III/IV, RBI regulations, SEBI risk frameworks
- Proficiency in Python, R, or MATLAB for risk model development
- Understanding of derivatives and structured products for market risk roles
- Certifications: FRM (GARP) and/or CFA are the two most sought-after credentials

How to Enter

Banks and Big-4 consultancies are the primary employers. Most candidates hold MBAs in Finance or post-graduate degrees in Mathematics, Statistics, or Economics. An FRM certification (GARP) is the gold standard for risk roles; a CFA charter complements it well, particularly for market risk and investment risk positions. Engineering graduates with quantitative skills are actively recruited by GCCs for model risk, stress testing, and FRTB implementation projects.

A Day in the Life (Entry Level – Risk Analyst)

- Morning market review: check overnight moves that affect risk metrics
- Run daily VaR and limit utilisation reports; flag breaches for review
- Work on pending model validation or stress testing assignments
- Attend cross-divisional meetings to understand operational risk inputs
- Draft sections of regulatory reports (RBI, SEBI, internal audit committees)

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Fresh Analyst (MBA/MSc, banks/consult.)	INR 6 – 10 LPA
Analyst – GCC / MNC bank (2-4 years)	INR 10 – 18 LPA
FRM-certified Specialist (4-8 years)	INR 12 – 25 LPA
Model Risk / Quant Risk Manager (VP level)	INR 20 – 45 LPA
Chief Risk Officer (large bank)	INR 50 – 100 LPA+

Sources: 6figr.com FRM/Risk Management Salaries India 2026; Glassdoor India – Risk Analyst salaries 2026; PayScale India – Financial Risk Manager 2025.

Global Outlook

Risk professionals are among the most internationally mobile finance specialists. CFA + FRM holders are recruited by global banks in Singapore (SGD 70K–150K), London (GBP 50K–100K+), Dubai (AED 180K–400K, tax-free), and New York (USD 90K–160K) for roles in market risk, credit risk, model

validation, and regulatory compliance. FRTB and Basel IV implementation projects are a particularly active hiring area in 2026.

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
JP Morgan India GCC	JP Morgan
Goldman Sachs India	Goldman Sachs
Deutsche Bank India	Deutsche Bank
HSBC India	HSBC
Citi India	UBS
ICICI Bank	Standard Chartered
HDFC Bank	BNP Paribas
Deloitte India	Credit Suisse / UBS
EY India	Deloitte (Global)
KPMG India	KPMG (Global)
Accenture (Risk Practice)	Oliver Wyman
CRISIL Risk	BlackRock Risk Advisory

Profile 4 — Investment Banking

What is Investment Banking?

Investment Bankers (IBankers) provide two core services: (1) M&A advisory — helping clients identify targets, value assets, and structure buy-side or sell-side transactions; and (2) Capital raising — through equity (IPOs, QIPs, rights issues) or debt (bonds, structured instruments). They also advise on restructurings, spin-offs, and complex corporate transactions. India's M&A market remained robust in 2025, driven by consolidation in financial services, renewables, infrastructure, and technology sectors.

The typical hierarchy is: Analyst → Associate → Vice President (VP) → Director / Senior VP → Managing Director (MD). Entry-level Analysts are primarily execution-focused; MDs drive client origination. Long hours are the norm, particularly during live deals.

Key Skills

- Financial modelling and valuation: DCF, comparable company analysis, LBO, merger models
- Attention to detail — pitch books and CIMs must be flawless
- Diligence and work ethic: unpredictable workflows, frequent all-nighters during live deals
- Excellent communication: written (Information Memoranda, pitch books) and oral (client presentations)
- CFA charter or candidacy: valued particularly at boutique IBs and for lateral hires

How to Enter

Bulge-bracket banks recruit front-end Analysts directly from IIM A/B/C and ISB campuses. The offshore/GCC route — through global bank India entities — remains a viable entry path for graduates of IIT-SOMs, IIFT, MDI, and top CA/undergrad colleges. Most offshore roles are execution-heavy and provide a pathway to global front-end teams via structured mobility programmes. Boutique IBs (Aventus, Spark Capital, JM Financial) hire laterally and value demonstrated modelling skills and a CFA charter.

A Day in the Life (Analyst – Entry Level)

- Update pitch book slides: company profiles, valuation comps, industry overview
- Build or refine a DCF/merger model for an ongoing deal
- Attend internal briefings on a new mandate; get staffed on a sector team
- Compile due diligence data room materials for a sell-side mandate
- During live deals: late hours, multiple revision cycles, coordination with legal/compliance

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Analyst – Bulge Bracket (front-end India)	INR 18 – 25 LPA base + INR 4 – 10 LPA bonus
Analyst – GCC / Offshore unit	INR 12 – 18 LPA + bonus
Analyst – Boutique / Domestic IB	INR 7 – 14 LPA
Associate / VP (4-8 years)	INR 40 – 80 LPA
Director / MD (10+ years)	INR 1.5 Cr – 5 Cr+ (incl. bonus/ESOPs)

Sources: Wall Street Careers IB Analyst Salary 2026 (INR 18-22L base at BB); Mergers & Inquisitions IB Salary Report 2026; MentorMeCareers IB Salary 2025.

Global Salary Reference

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
IB Analyst – New York (Year 1, bulge bracket)	USD 110,000 – 140,000 base + bonus
IB Analyst – London (Year 1)	GBP 70,000 – 90,000 + bonus
IB Analyst – Dubai / DIFC	AED 216,000 – 300,000 (0% income tax)
IB Associate – Singapore	SGD 120,000 – 180,000 + bonus

Sources: *Mergers & Inquisitions IB Salary Report 2026*; *Wall Street Careers 2026*.

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
Goldman Sachs India	Goldman Sachs
JP Morgan India	JP Morgan
Morgan Stanley India	Morgan Stanley
Citi India	Bank of America
Barclays India	Citi
Deutsche Bank India	Barclays
Kotak Investment Banking	Deutsche Bank
ICICI Securities	UBS
Avendus Capital	HSBC
JM Financial	Jefferies
SBI Capital Markets	Lazard
Edelweiss Financial Services	Rothschild & Co

Profile 5 — Project Finance

What is Project Finance?

Project Finance involves structuring, arranging, and managing long-term debt for capital-intensive infrastructure, energy, and industrial projects. Funding is ring-fenced to a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), with lenders relying on project cash flows — not corporate balance sheets — for repayment. India is in a sustained infrastructure build-out: the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) targets INR 111 lakh crore in investments through 2025. NaBFID (National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development) expects to sanction over INR 3 lakh crore by March 2026, and is partnering with the ADB and AIIB to co-finance climate-resilient infrastructure. Renewable energy project finance — solar, wind, green hydrogen — is a rapidly expanding sub-sector.

Project Finance professionals work in two settings: (1) Advisory / lending arms of banks, DFIs, and consultancies — structuring debt, arranging syndicates; and (2) In-house teams at infrastructure conglomerates — managing end-to-end financial implementation of projects.

Key Skills

- Project cash flow modelling (DSCR, IRR, NPV, sensitivity and scenario analysis)
- Knowledge of debt instruments: term loans, NCDs, mezzanine, green bonds, ECBs
- Understanding of concession agreements, PPP structures, and regulatory frameworks
- Report writing: Information Memoranda and lender presentations
- CFA charter: valuable for advisory roles; CA/MBA for in-house teams

How to Enter

Chartered Accountants and MBA (Finance) graduates from reputed B-schools are the primary hires at advisory firms. Engineering graduates with infrastructure project experience (L&T, Adani, NTPC) can enter in-house finance roles. A CFA charter, especially combined with exposure to financial modelling courses, is a differentiator for advisory roles at DFIs and international banks. Renewable energy finance is increasingly recruiting directly from sustainability-focused MBA and engineering programmes.

A Day in the Life (Entry Level – Associate)

- Review and update the financial model for a solar/wind project in progress
- Draft sections of an Information Memorandum for a toll-road SPV
- Co-ordinate with legal and compliance teams on loan documentation
- Attend an internal credit committee meeting for a new infrastructure deal
- Prepare lender presentation decks for an upcoming roadshow

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Associate – Advisory firm (NaBFID, IDFC, Big-4)	INR 10 – 15 LPA
Associate – In-house infrastructure player	INR 7 – 12 LPA
Senior Analyst / Manager (5-8 years)	INR 18 – 30 LPA
VP / Director (10+ years)	INR 35 – 60 LPA

Sources: Glassdoor Project Finance Analyst India 2025 (avg INR 7.15L fresh; top decile INR 17L); iimjobs.com Project Finance vacancies 2026; NaBFID careers and Citi Infrastructure Finance job listings (May 2026).

Sector Spotlight: Green / Renewable Project Finance

India's renewable energy capacity is targeted to reach 500 GW by 2030 (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy). NaBFID financed Juniper Green Energy's 90 MW wind project in Gujarat (INR 566 crore, Feb 2026), and AIIB-NaBFID jointly earmarked climate finance for clean transportation and

energy storage. Professionals with CFA + green finance or ESG knowledge (e.g., CFA Institute's Certificate in Climate and Investing) are well-positioned for sustainable project finance roles.

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
NaBFID	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
IDFC First Bank	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)
IL&FS	International Finance Corporation (IFC)
Power Finance Corp (PFC)	World Bank Group
REC Limited	Citi Infrastructure Finance
L&T Finance	Société Générale
Adani Green Energy	BNP Paribas (Project Finance)
ReNew Power	Standard Chartered
Greenko Group	MUFG / Mizuho
EY India (Infra Advisory)	Macquarie Infrastructure
KPMG India (Infrastructure)	InfraRed Capital
PwC India	

Profile 6 — Wealth Management

What is Wealth Management?

Wealth Managers provide holistic financial advisory to High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs — investible surplus above INR 5 crore) and Ultra-HNIs (UHNIs — above INR 25 crore). Services span investment planning, tax optimisation, estate planning, trust structuring, and asset allocation across domestic and cross-border portfolios.

India's wealth management industry is at an inflection point. As of 2024, UHNIs (assets above USD 30 million) grew 6% to 13,600 and are projected to increase 50% by 2028. The HNI population (assets above USD 1 million) has crossed 850,000 and is set to nearly double to 1.65 million by 2027. Deloitte India estimates a USD 1.6 trillion AUM growth opportunity for wealth managers between FY24 and FY29. The market is also shifting from product-distribution to fee-based fiduciary advisory, expanding beyond traditional metro markets to Tier-2/3 cities.

Two core career tracks exist: Relationship Manager (RM) — client-facing advisory; and Product Manager — designing and managing investment products. Family office advisory is an emerging premium track for senior professionals.

Key Skills

- Investment product knowledge: equities, fixed income, AIFs, PMS, international funds
- Portfolio construction and asset allocation frameworks
- Tax and estate planning literacy (HUF, trusts, succession planning)
- Client relationship management: confidence and credibility with HNI/UHNI clients
- CFA charter and/or CFP: highly sought; CFA Level III now includes a Private Wealth pathway

How to Enter

MBA graduates (Finance) and CAs are the primary hires at private banks and wealth management firms. A CFA charter is a strong differentiator — CFA Institute introduced a dedicated Private Wealth specialisation pathway at Level III, directly relevant to this role. A CFP (Certified Financial Planner) certification is valued for financial planning-focused roles. SEBI's Investment Adviser regulations require IAR certification for individuals providing investment advice — important for compliance.

A Day in the Life (RM – Entry Level)

- Morning: review portfolio performance reports and overnight market developments
- Client calls: discuss rebalancing opportunities, upcoming investment ideas
- Prepare asset allocation proposals for onboarding a new HNI client
- Internal product meeting: understand new AIF/PMS structures being launched
- End of day: documentation and compliance reporting for client transactions

Salary Benchmarks — India (2026)

Role / Experience	Indicative CTC (India)
Entry RM (MBA, private bank / wealth firm)	INR 6 – 10 LPA + performance incentives
RM with 3-5 years (HNI segment)	INR 15 – 25 LPA + commission
Senior RM / Team Leader (7-10 years)	INR 25 – 50 LPA + commission / bonus
Head of Private Banking / CIO (10+ years)	INR 50 LPA – 2 Cr+ (AUM-linked bonus)

Sources: Deloitte India Wealth Management Report FY24-29; Waterfield Advisors HNI Wealth Trends India; Hubbis India HNW/UHNW Market Survey.

Global Outlook

Private wealth management is a globally portable career. Indian professionals with CFA + HNWI advisory experience are sought in Singapore (private banks: DBS, UOB, Julius Baer), Dubai (private

banks and multi-family offices, 0% income tax), and London (high-value international client books). Global mid-career salaries typically range from SGD 120K–250K (Singapore) to AED 300K–700K (Dubai) for experienced private bankers. The CFA Institute Compensation Study (2024) reports a global median base salary of ~USD 150,000 for relationship managers who are CFA charterholders.

Companies to Target

India	Global / Abroad
Kotak Private Banking	Julius Baer (Singapore/Geneva)
HDFC Private Banking	DBS Private Bank
ICICI Private Banking	UBS Wealth Mgmt
360 ONE Wealth (IIFL Wealth)	HSBC Global Private Banking
Nuvama Private (Edelweiss)	Citi Private Bank
Anand Rathi Wealth	JP Morgan Private Bank
Waterfield Advisors	Goldman Sachs Private Wealth
ASK Private Wealth	Morgan Stanley Wealth Mgmt
Axis Private Banking	Bank of Singapore
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Disclaimer: Salary ranges are indicative and sourced from publicly available market surveys as of mid-2026. Actual compensation varies with employer, city, experience, academic credentials, and individual performance.

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