

Beginning the Journey: Representation and Identity-Based Perspectives

Sharon Jankiewicz, Structural Engineers
Association of New York

Shani Dellimore Barrax, Aurora Change Agency



Today we will:

Share	Share results from the SEaNY Self-Identification Survey
Explore	Explore data implications for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging efforts
Consider	Consider promising practices for successful efforts



SEAoNY Mission

To advance the art of structural engineering by:



- Building a **community** of colleagues
- Sharing **knowledge**
- **Advocating** for the profession
- Promoting public **safety**

The mission of the Structural Engineers Association of New York (SEAoNY) Diversity Committee, established in 2018, is to advocate for the inclusion and advancement of marginalized and underrepresented groups by fostering dialogue, raising awareness, and proposing solutions for the betterment of the structural engineering community.

Volunteer Engagement / Vertical Communication

SEAoNY engages diverse members and volunteers in fulfilling and enriching service, facilitating an understanding of how their work is strategically aligned with the direction of the organization and advancement of the profession.



Our Journey

2015

Origins in
San Francisco

SEaNC Committee

2016 Survey

2018: SEaNY
Diversity Committee



2017 - 2020

Going National

National Committee

2018 Survey

2019 Symposium

2020 Survey

2021 - Present

The Committee Now

Insight Development (DEI)

Survey Development

Outreach

2023 Symposium

Local Chapters

SE3 \equiv Structural Engineering
Engagement and Equity



Defining DEIB

Diversity

The wide variety of personal and group characteristics (identities) that make one individual or group different from or similar to another.

Equity

Fair and just practices and policies ensuring all can thrive by **acknowledging and addressing structural historic and current inequities** that advantage some and disadvantage others. **Assessing and adjusting** policies, programs, and practices to **facilitate fairness**.

Inclusion

Efforts **resulting in experiences of respect, belonging, and full engagement**. Inclusion can be applied to policies, programs and practices with the aggregate effect of an inclusive **organizational culture and climate**.

Belonging

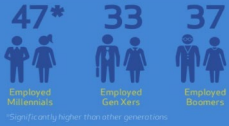
The state of **acceptance and affirmation**, typically accompanied by **psychological safety and authenticity**. A culture of belonging makes those feel valued by **welcoming all dimensions** of their identities, experiences, and perspectives.

Why does DEIB matter?

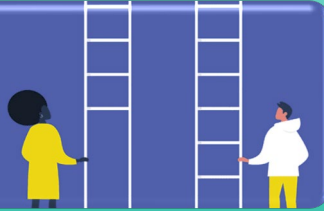
Diversity and Inclusion is an Important Factor in Millennials' Job Search

Millennials are significantly more likely than other generations to consider the diversity and inclusiveness of a workplace to be an important criterion in their job search.

"If I were to look for a new job tomorrow, a diverse and inclusive workplace would be important in my job search" (% agree)



Generational relevance beyond the business case



Addresses disproportionality and the “Myth of Meritocracy”

HEAR NO EVIL



Privilege of oblivion = liability and missed opportunities

The majority of humans on the planet are racially, ethnically, culturally, linguistically, geographically, religiously, and socially diverse. White, European-descended Christians are a minority. This phrase, which comes from the Miami Institute of Social Sciences, works better than “people of color,” “nonwhite” and many others that continue to position White, European-descended people as the norm and everyone else as others.

New reality: “People of the Global Majority”

Four Quadrants of Psychological Safety

Learner Safety

- It's safe to:
- Discover
 - Ask questions
 - Experiment
 - Learn from mistakes
 - Look for new opportunities



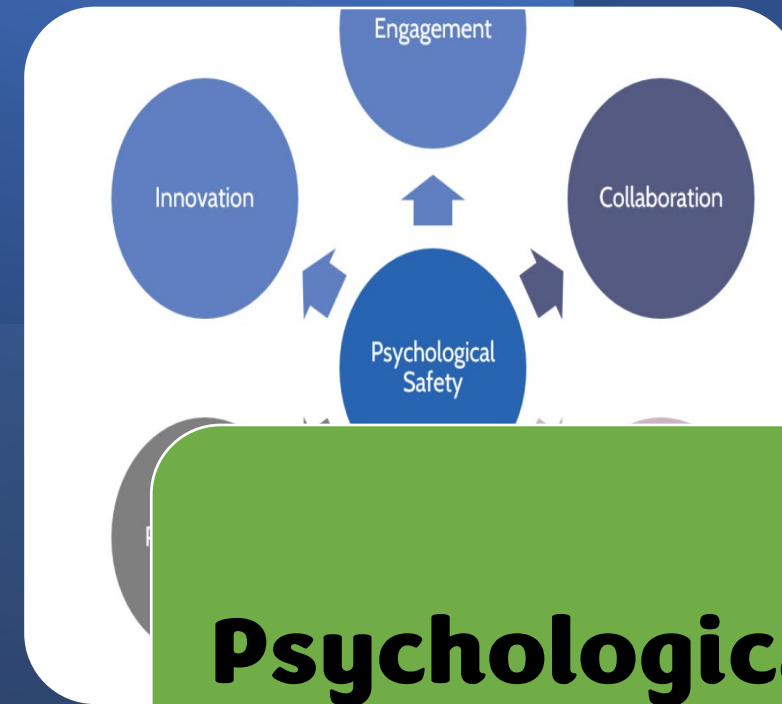
Collaborator Safety

- It's safe to:
- Engage in an unconstrained way
 - Interact with colleagues
 - Have mutual access
 - Maintain open dialogue
 - Foster constructive debate

Challenger Safety

- It's safe to:
- Challenge the status quo
 - Speak up
 - Express ideas
 - Identify changes
 - Expose problems

**Affirmation =
Psychological
Safety**



**Psychological
Safety =
Innovation**

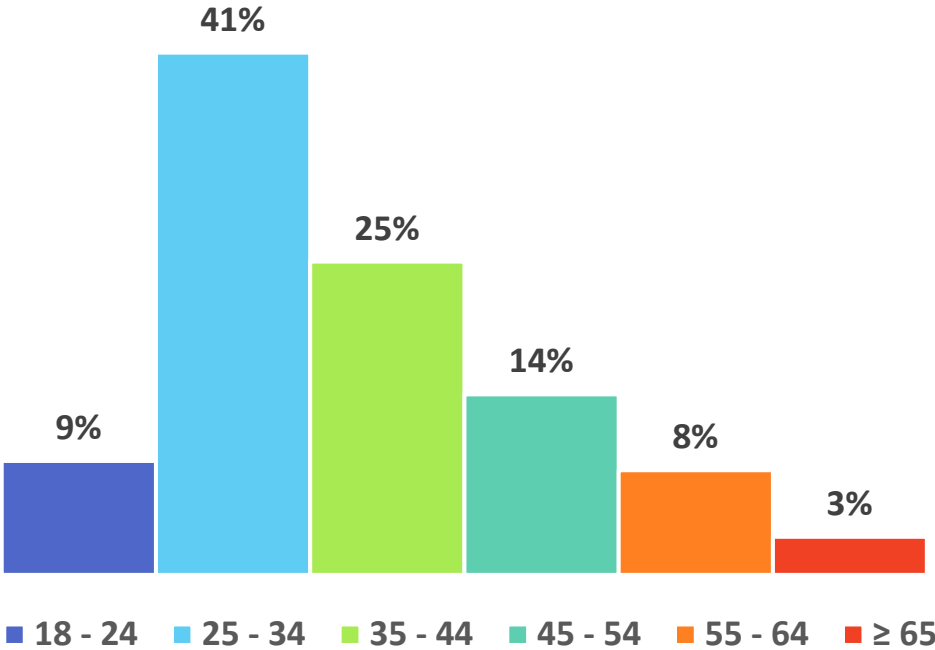


Self-Identification Campaign

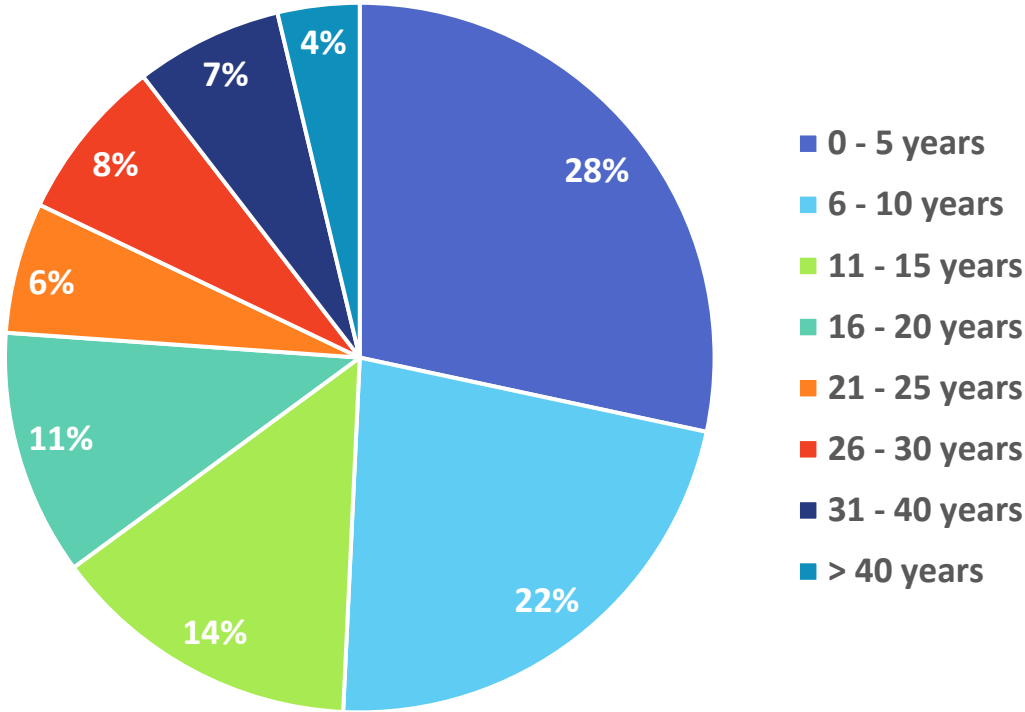


134 Total Respondents

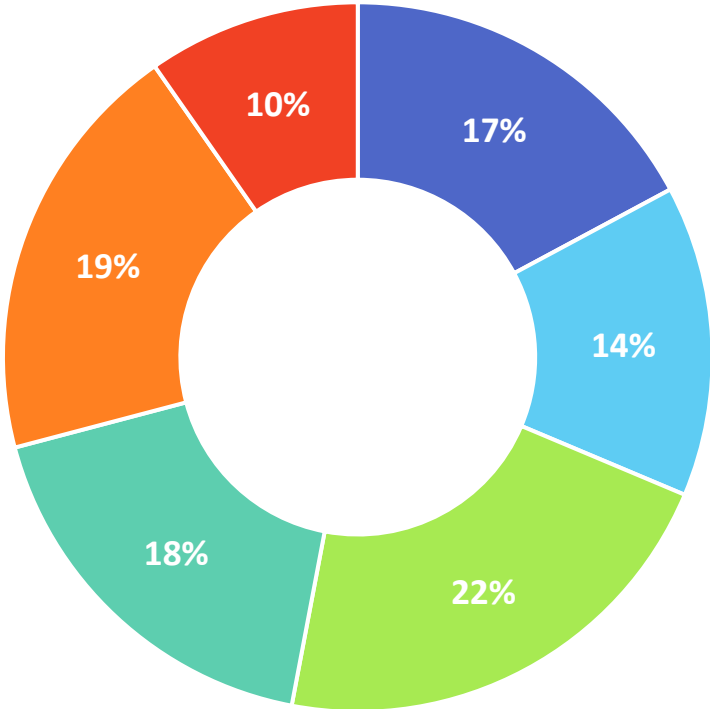
Respondent Age



Years of Experience

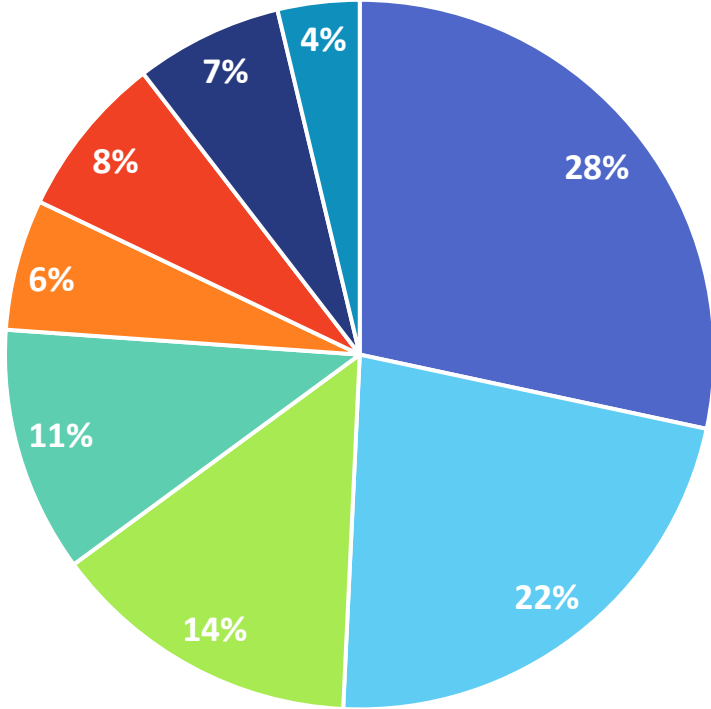


Position Title



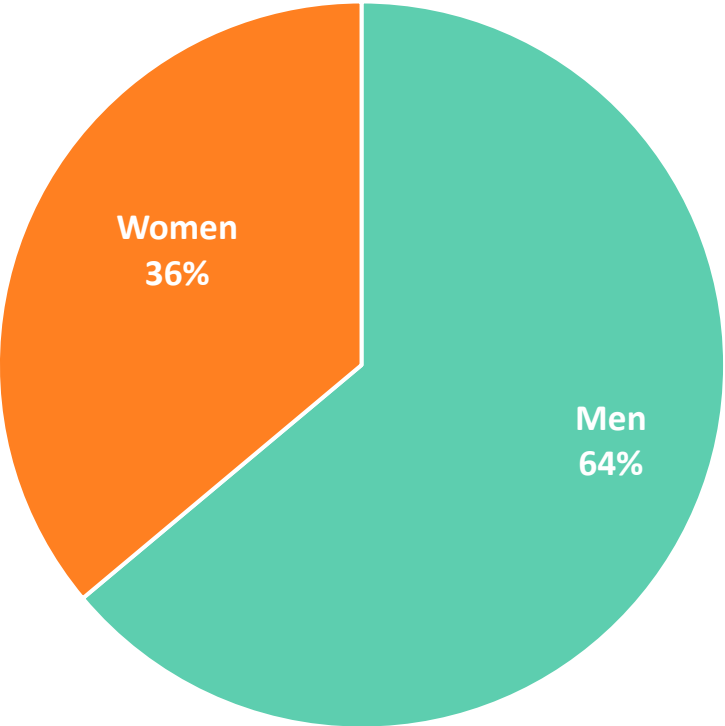
- Staff Engineer / Entry Level
- Project Engineer
- Senior Engineer / Project Manager
- Associate / Shareholder
- Principal / Owner
- Other

Years of Experience

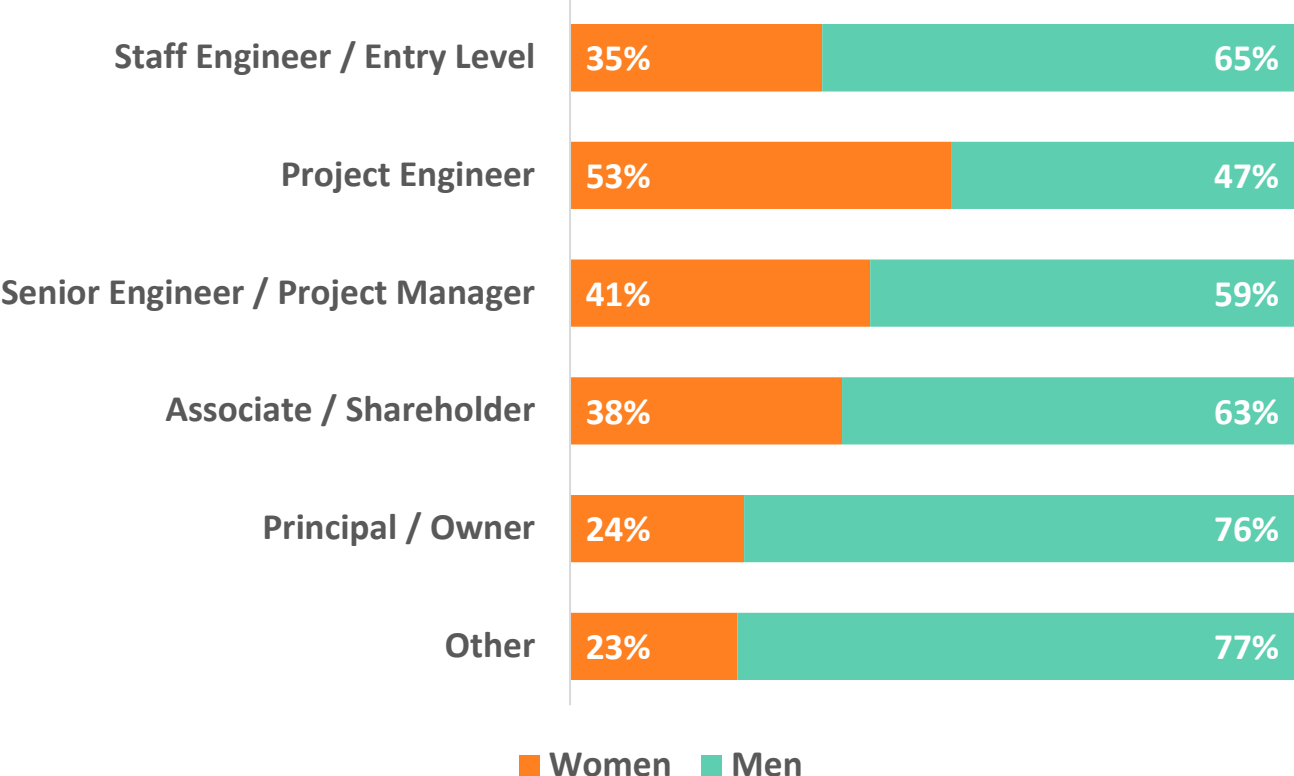


- 0 - 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 15 years
- 16 - 20 years
- 21 - 25 years
- 26 - 30 years
- 31 - 40 years
- > 40 years

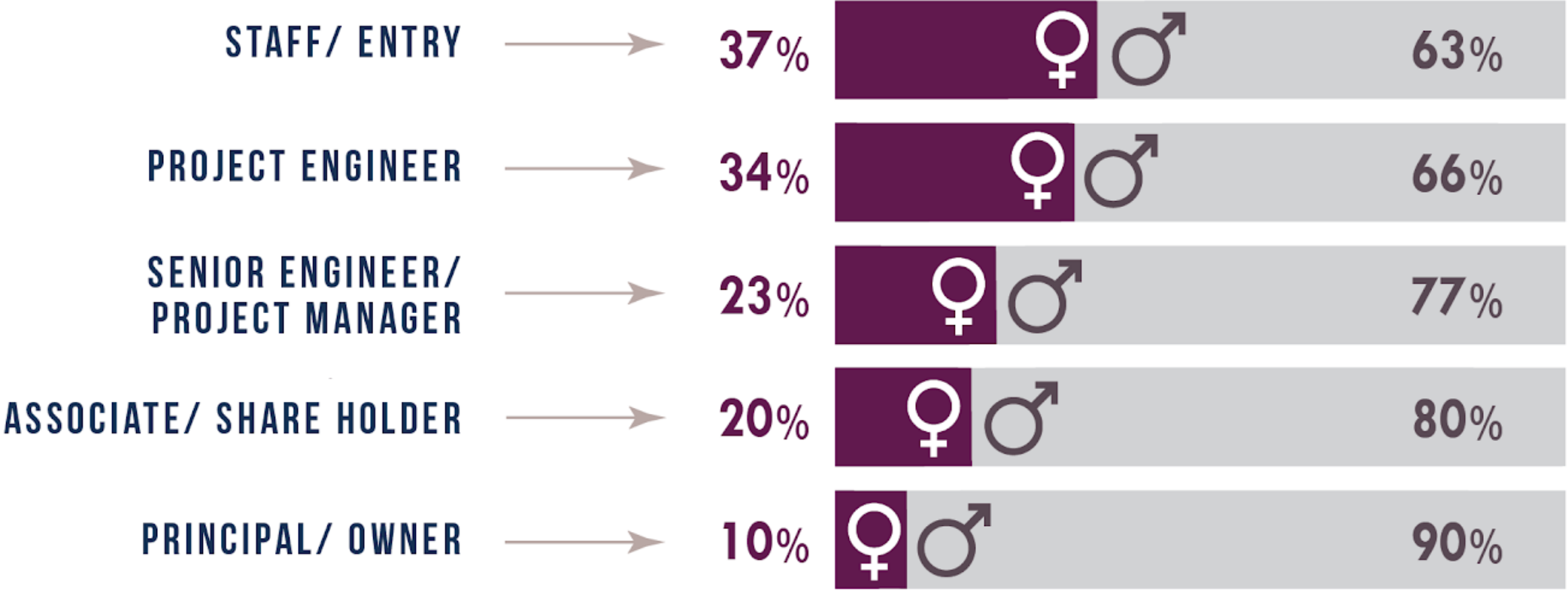
Gender Identity



Position by Gender



POSITION BY GENDER

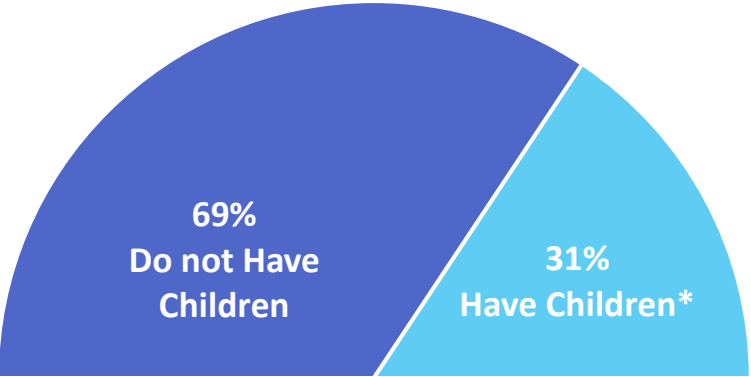


4,596
Total Respondents

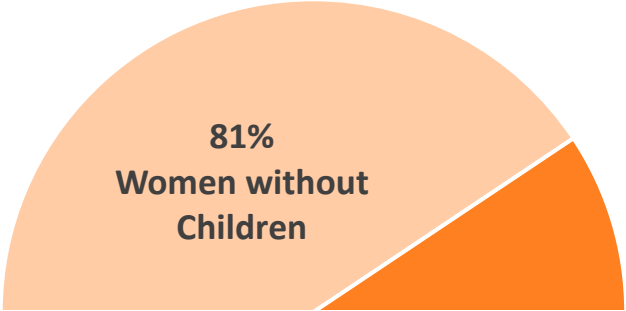
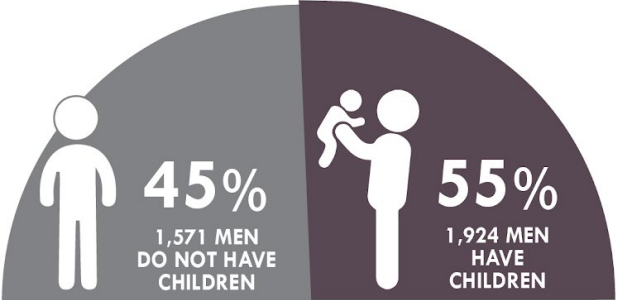
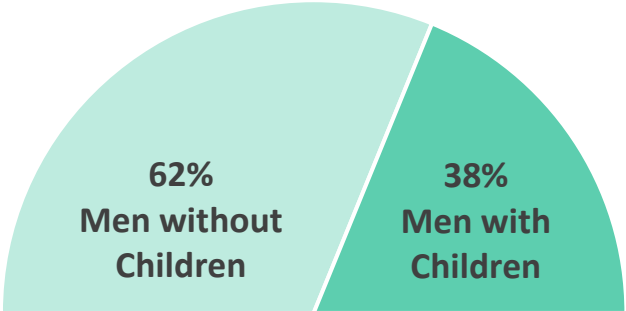
MEN
WOMEN

2020 SE3 SURVEY RESULTS

Children/Dependents



*Includes infant through adult children/dependents/sick/elderly

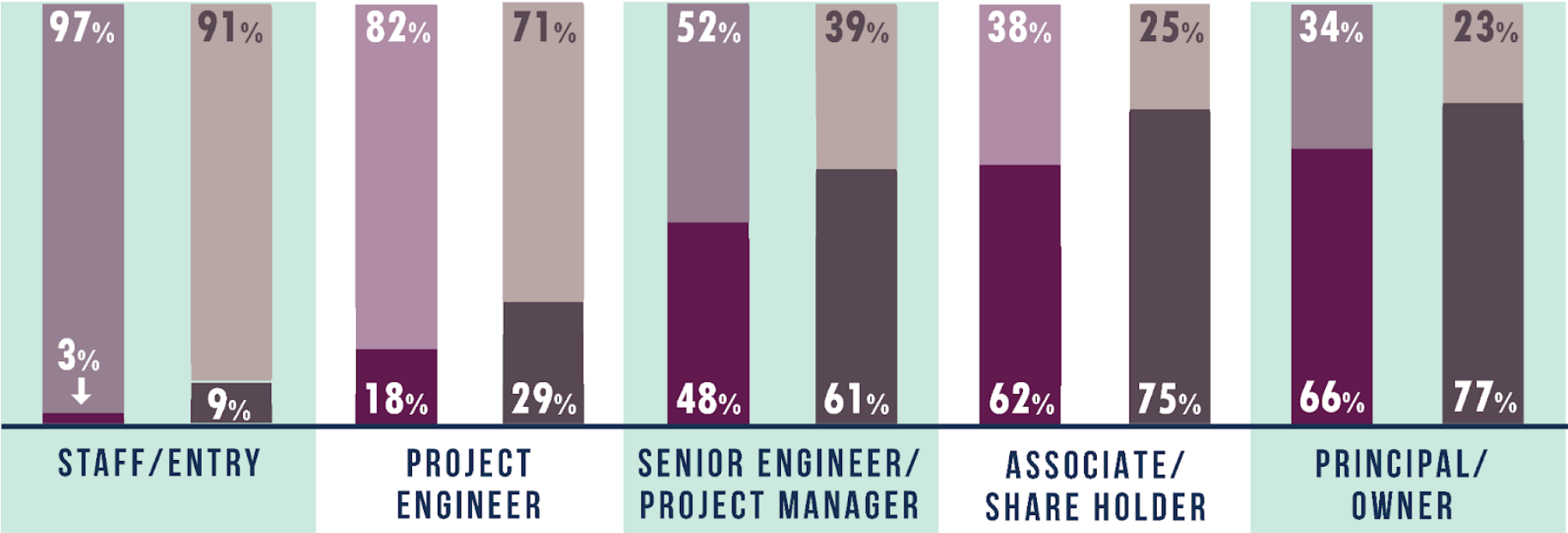


19%
Women with Children



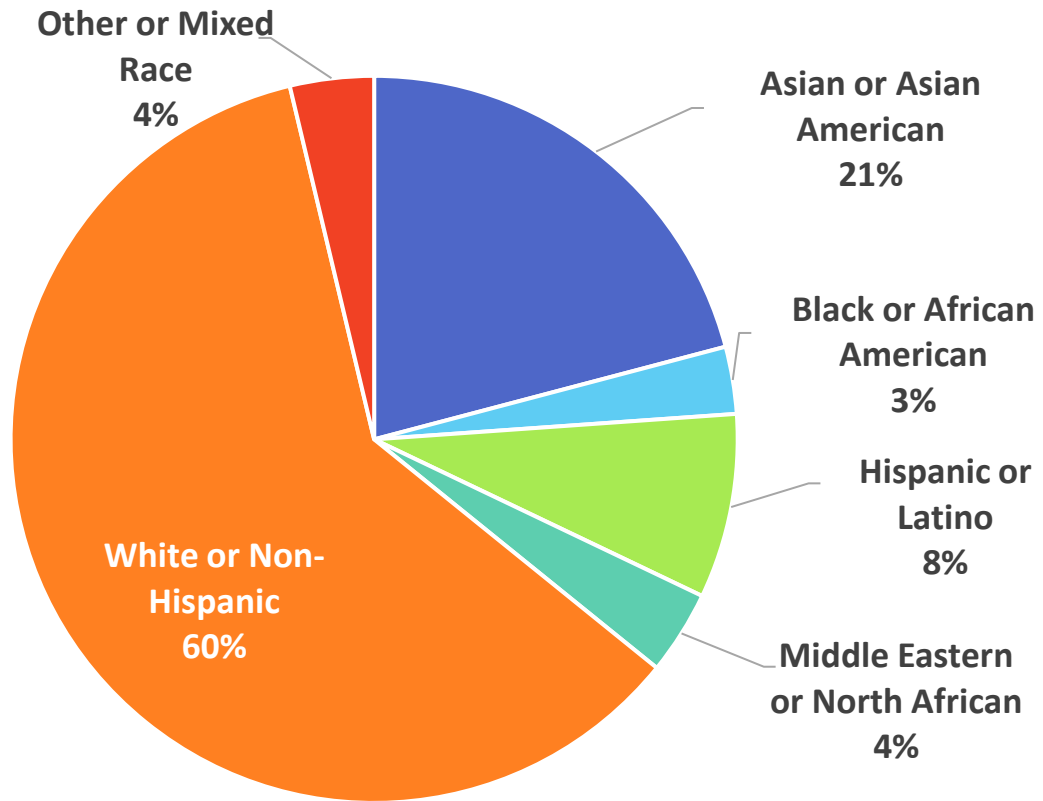
2020 SE3 SURVEY RESULTS

CHILDREN BY POSITION AND GENDER

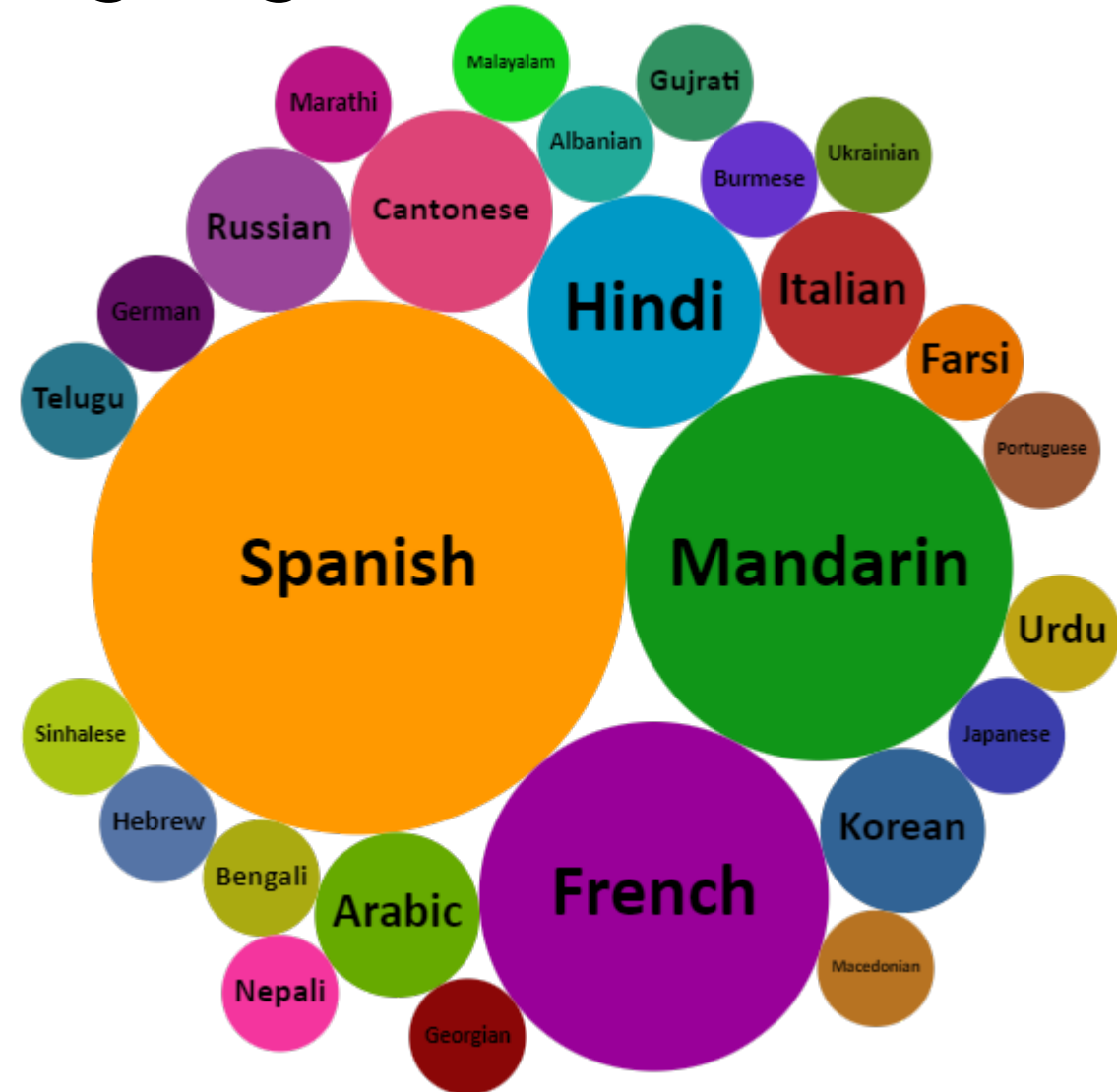


2020 SE3 SURVEY RESULTS

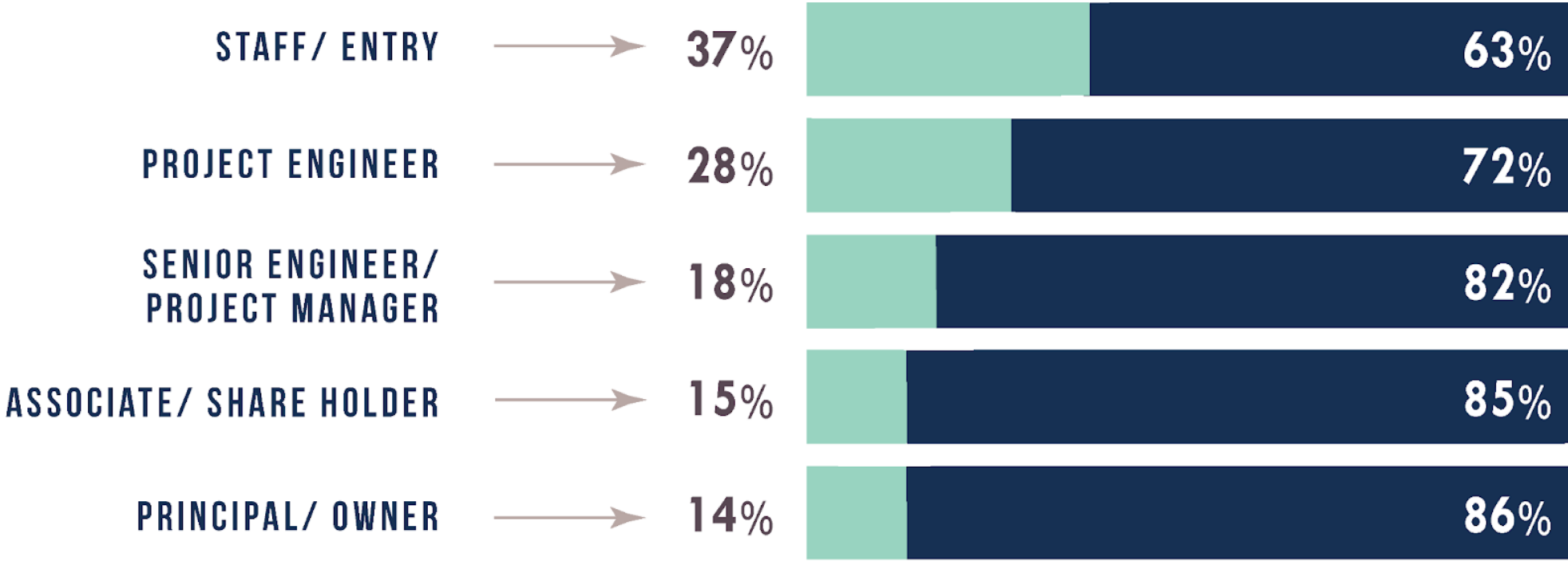
Race



Languages



POSITION BY RACE

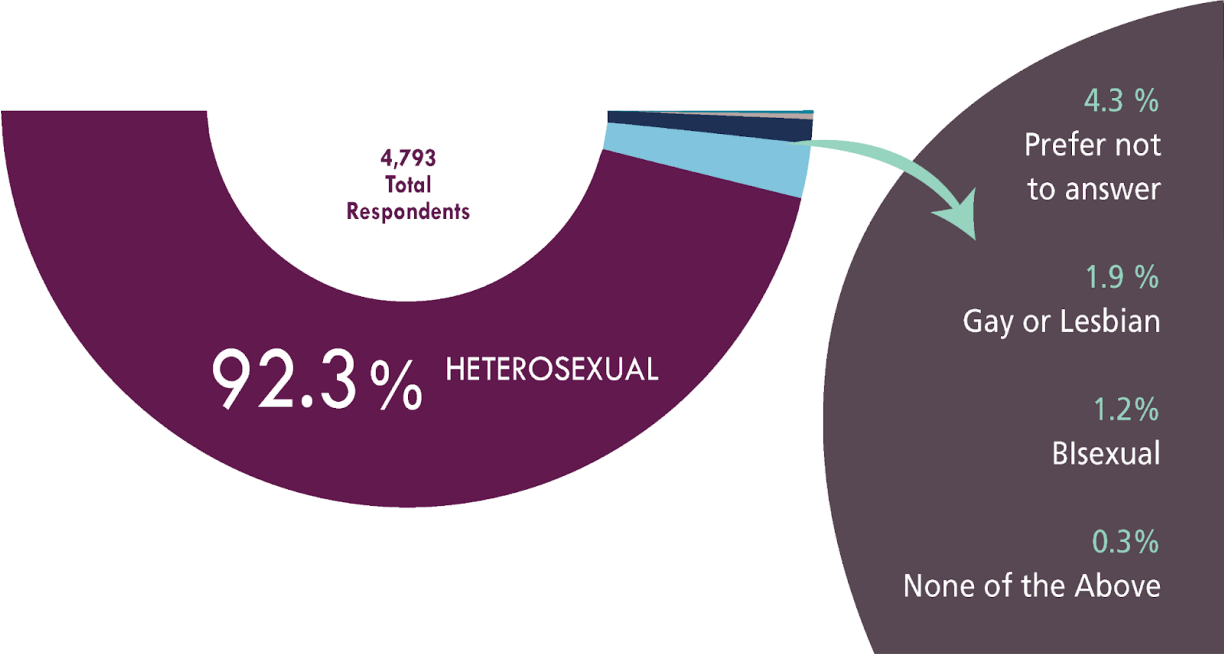
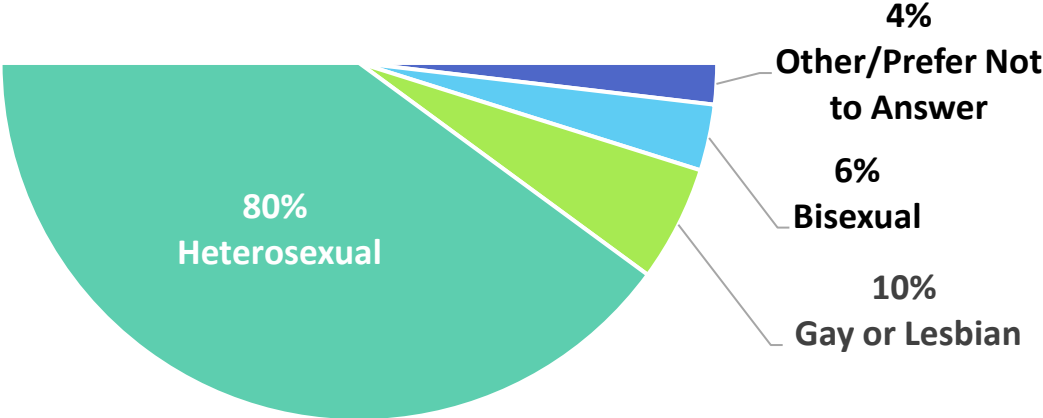


WHITE CAUCASIAN
NON-WHITE OR MIXED RACE

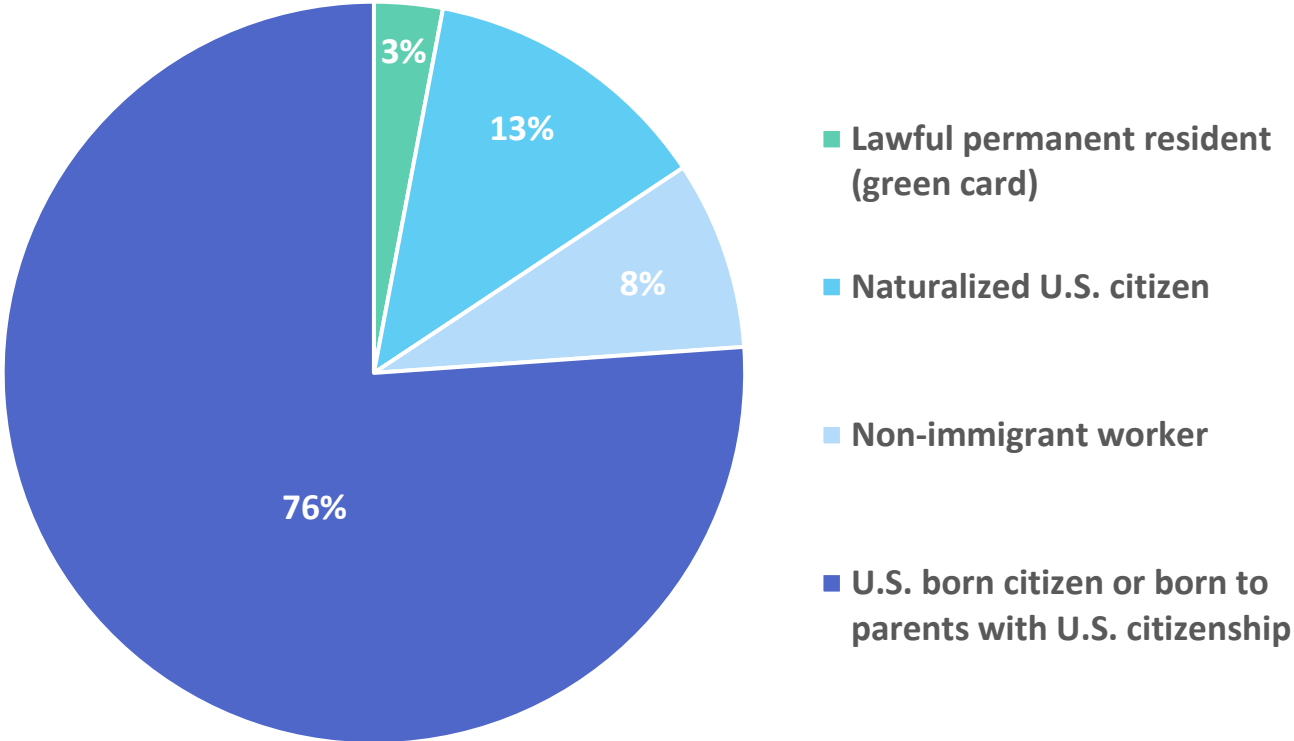
4,719
Total
Respondents

2020 SE3 SURVEY RESULTS

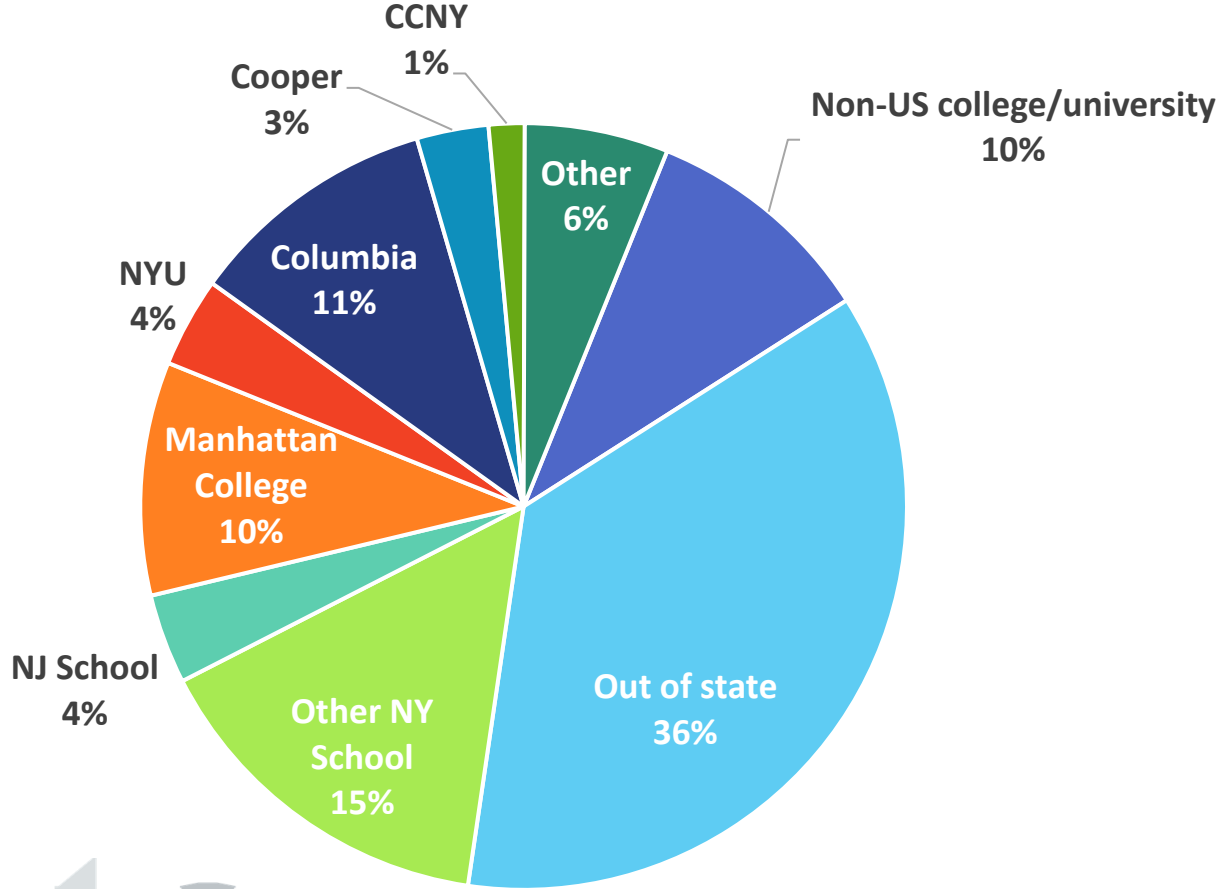
Sexual Orientation



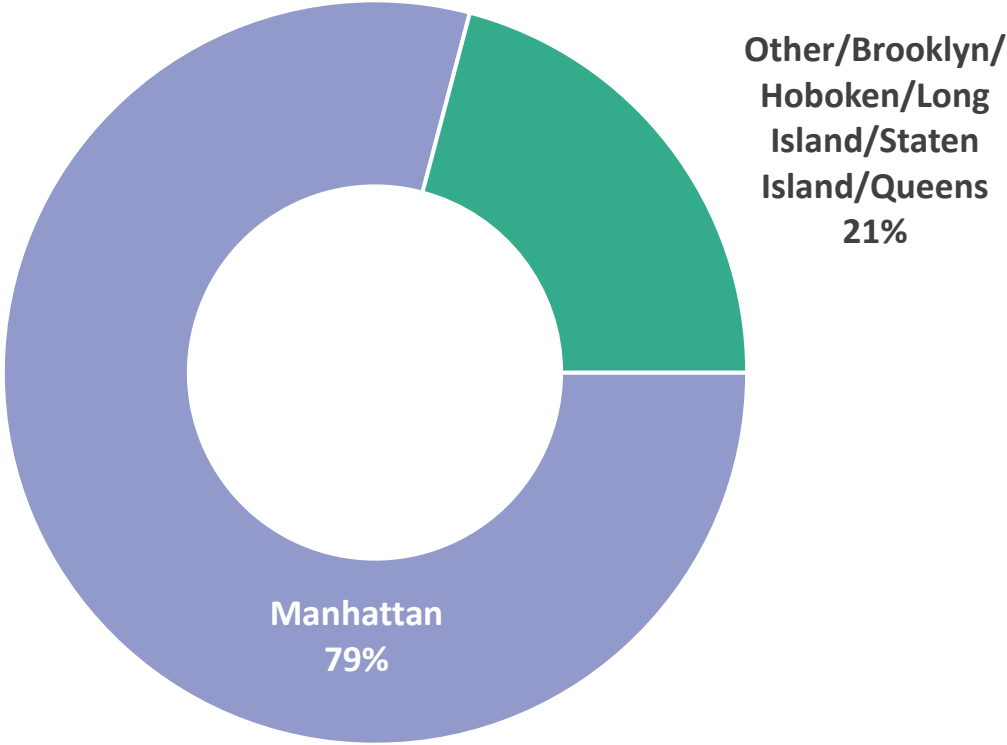
Citizenship Status



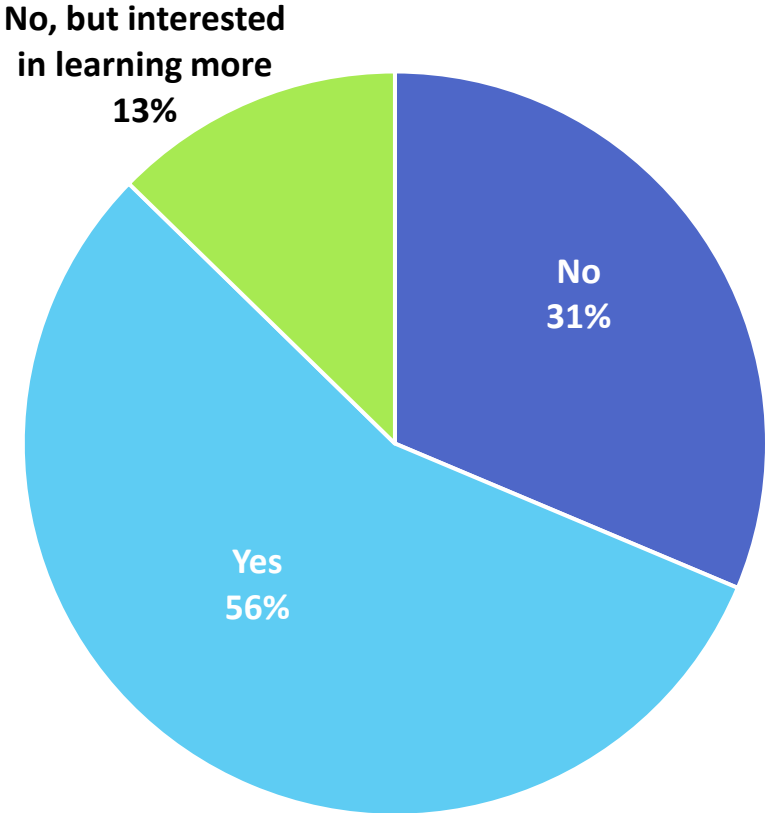
College/University



Locations

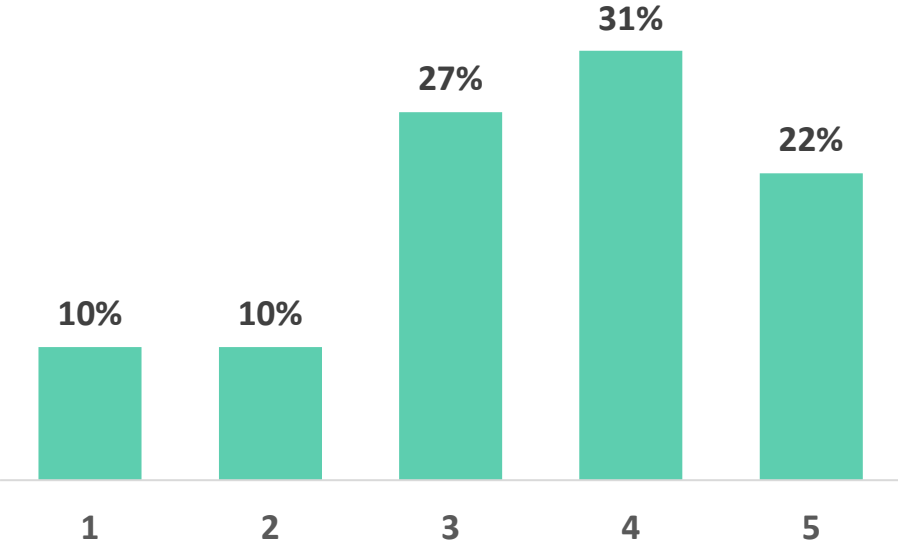


Volunteer/Non-Profit



Notable: Student Outreach

DEI Engagement



Existing Efforts

DEI Committees

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

DEI-related annual reports

Programs

Training



Challenges

No existing efforts

**Lack of support
and engagement
from senior
leadership**

**Inconsistent
education and
programming**

**Council
effectiveness and
transparency**

**Relative diversity
without inclusion**

**Passive exclusion
and lack of
belonging**



Topics of Interest

Representation and outreach

Understanding and affirming identity-based experiences

Beginning an effective program

How to support DEIB as an ally

Performative vs. substantive efforts





Where and how do you begin?



How can efforts be inclusive, equitable and substantive rather than performative and tokenizing?



How do you address resistance, apathy, and denial?



Organizational Culture

Organizational Culture

Organizational Culture



Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal

ORGANIZATION

Priming the Space:
providing optimal opportunities for growth

Intentional Engagement

Intrapersonal

Developing cultural humility and engaging in self-reflection

Understanding your own identity-based perspectives (and their limitations)

Exploration of biases, socialization, and norms that affect interactions

Interpersonal

Collective application of intrapersonal perspectives
Leadership, Staff, DEIB Committees

Normalization of identity-based conversations, **including associated discomfort**

Organizational

Multicultural, inclusive, and equitable policies, programs, practices

Common understandings, definitions, goals, strategies

Organizational culture: values, beliefs, norms (including articulation and actualization)

**RESOURCES:
TIME, EXPERTISE,
BUDGET**



Case Study: The NCSEA Journey

Board
engagement
(2020)

SE3 Summit
(2019 & 2023)

SE3
Committee
Training
(2024)

Integration
into
organizational
strategy

Goal: increased capacity for change agency



*Aurora Change
Agency*
STRATEGIC EQUITY AND INCLUSION



SEAoNY Diversity Committee Training

Aurora Change Agency
STRATEGIC EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Access Essentials

🗣️ Taught in English | [8 languages available](#) | Some content may not be translated

Enroll for Free
Starts Oct 27

Financial aid available

3,677 already enrolled

Course

Gain insight into a topic and learn the fundamentals



Instructor: [Joanne Woodard](#)

PLUS [Included with Coursera Plus](#)

4.8 ★
(94 reviews)

Beginner level
No previous experience necessary

Approx. 8 hours to complete
3 weeks at 2 hours a week

Flexible schedule
Learn at your own pace

SEAoNY Diversity Committee Training Fall 2024



Module 1:

Cultural Humility and Intrapersonal Engagement



Module 2:

Bias Awareness, Socialization, and Identity Development



Module 3:

Inclusive Communication and Microaggressions



Module 4:

Privilege, Allyship, and Equity



Module 5:

Agency for Organizational Change

Join us!

Upcoming Workshops



**January
30**

Performative vs. Substantive Practices

March 6

Retention Strategies: Belonging and Psychological Spanx

Spring - Summer: Recruitment and Community Building Activities

Next Session: January 30

Performative vs. Substantive Practices



STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

Sharon Jankiewicz
Structural Engineers Association of
New York
sharon.jankiewicz@silman.com

Aurora Change Agency
STRATEGIC EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Shani Dellimore Barrax
Aurora Change Agency
www.aurorachangeagency.com
Shani@aurorachangeagency.com

Resources

NCSEA SE3 Committee Publications (including 2020 survey topic briefs)

<https://www.se3committee.com/publications>

NCSEA SE3 Symposium

<https://www.ncseasummit.com/special-program/preconferencesymposium2023>

SEA of Northern California (SEAoNC) SE3 Committee Publications

<http://www.se3project.org/seaonc-se3-publications.html>

Inclusive Recruitment and Hiring Practices Structure Magazine Article

<https://www.structuremag.org/?p=24570>

