

the  
transparency  
initiative

**2023**  
**Portland**  
**Equity Report**



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# 01 Intro- duction

# Overview

## Mission

The Transparency Initiative (TTI) seeks to foster transparency around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in Portland's creative industry through surveys, resource hubs, programming, and more.




**Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard.**

**Kadia Tubman; Managing Editor, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Insider, Inc.**



## History of TTI



This initiative was born as an idea in late 2020. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black people by law enforcement officials resulted in increased public awareness of structural racism and urgent calls for collective action.

A large number of creative, advertising, and marketing agencies made promises on their websites and social channels to “do better”. They promised to elevate Black lives, hire more diverse talent, examine white privilege, and donate money to organizations serving marginalized populations. Though there existed a desire for enduring social change during that time, studies show that these shifts were temporary and declined sharply back to baseline levels in the latter portion of 2020. (1)

This has impacts on the experience of marginalized identities in the workplace. To better understand those experiences, in addition to the Portland creative industry, we issued two surveys in the fall of 2022. One was a *Survey for Agencies*, which was created to better understand the current state of DEI programs and policies at creative, marketing, and advertising agencies. The other was a *Survey for Creatives*, which asked people working in Portland’s creative industry about their experiences in the workplace. This *Equity Report* is the culmination of the latter ONLY, as we did not receive enough agency survey participation to garner a report.

(1) Nguyen TT, Criss S, Michaels EK, Cross RI, Michaels JS, Dwivedi P, Huang D, Hsu E, Mukhija K, Nguyen LH, Yardi I, Allen AM, Nguyen QC, Gee GC. Progress and push-back: How the killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd impacted public discourse on race and racism on Twitter. *SSM Popul Health*. 2021 Sep 10;15:100922. doi: 10.1016/j.ssmph.2021.100922. PMID: 34584933; PMCID: PMC8455860.

# Why AIGA Portland?

The mission of our organization is to serve creatives, and a large part of that is supporting them throughout all stages of their careers. This includes making sure we're supporting healthy, inclusive, vibrant workplaces.

We're not subject matter experts on the topic of equity, but we're keen on dismantling white supremacy in the workplace and have a proclivity towards action. We've learned a lot during the process of this initiative, and will continue to do so.

[View our AIGA Diversity Statement](#)

## Community-driven

The centrifugal force throughout this initiative has been community. Nearly 75 people — including subject-matter experts, teachers, consultants, students, and volunteers — have contributed to building this initiative. A huge shoutout to our long-term volunteers Janet, Madi, Solar, Cassie, Carmen, Julia, and Odul for believing in the possibility of structural change and showing up to help make it happen.

# Thank you, creatives!

We've been excited to see people working in a variety of roles within the creative industry participate with the inaugural year of this initiative.

The audience for the *Survey for Creatives* includes anyone who works in Portland's creative industry — everyone from designers and photographers to copywriters, strategists, project managers, and more.

We intend to continue publishing the *Survey for Creatives* on a bi-yearly basis so that we can start to see if shifts are occurring in the industry.

▶ [Take the 2023 Survey for Creatives](#) ◀



**80% [of respondents] said inclusion is an important factor for them when choosing an employer.**

Deloitte Development 2020 survey, over 1,300 full-time employees from a range of organizations and industries across the US



# Thank you for contributing!

Thank you to the 11 agencies that took our inaugural *Survey for Agencies*. We identified over 90 creative, marketing, and advertising agencies in the Portland Metro region. As such, we did not feel we received enough participation in our agency survey to accurately report back on the state of active DEI programs and policies in Portland, OR. We fully intend to issue the survey again in 2024, and hope to see our agency engagement numbers continue to increase.

▶ [Can we count on you in 2024?](#) ◀



OM  
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THE  
BEAUTY  
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paper(moon)  
CREATIVE



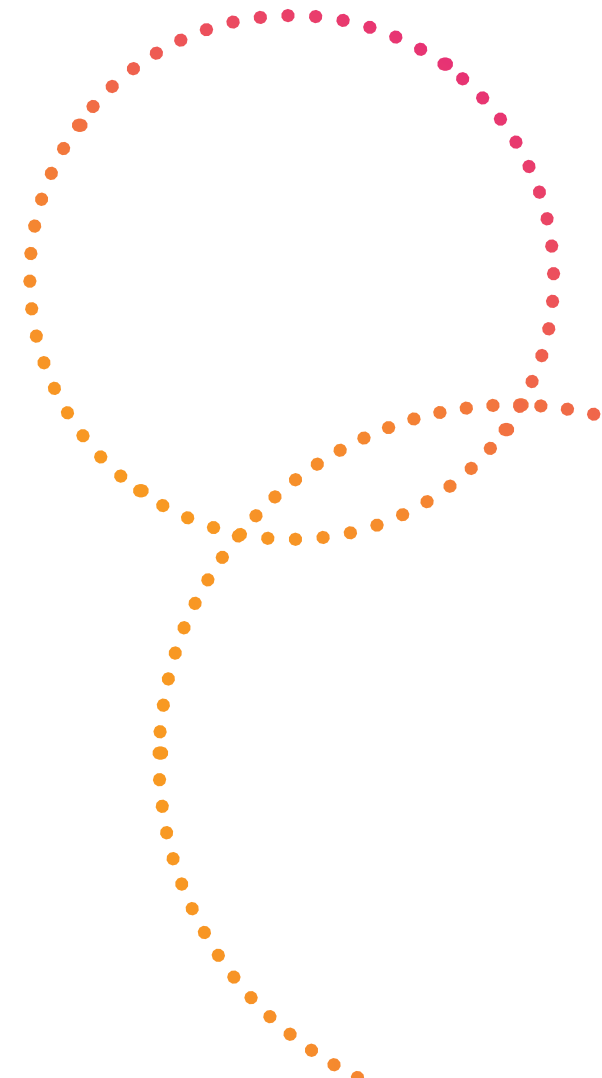
# What we surveyed

## **We can't change what we don't measure.**

By surveying creatives in these six key areas, we can better understand what they experience in the workplace:

- ▶ Demographics
- ▶ Employment Information
- ▶ Financial Compensation
- ▶ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- ▶ Identity at Work
- ▶ Workplace Harassment

These insights can also highlight broken systems and processes and, thus, where there's room for improvement. We share this information in an effort to foster an industry culture that serves everyone, not just a privileged few.



# Content warning

## The data

This report shares data on people's experiences with the following topics and, as such, may be emotionally triggering or difficult for some readers.

- ▶ Workplace Harassment
- ▶ Identity
- ▶ Tokenism
- ▶ Racism
- ▶ Homophobia + Transphobia
- ▶ Sexism
- ▶ Ableism
- ▶ Retaliation
- ▶ Safety

## The survey

In an effort to extend personal power and choice, and to opt out of answering specific questions that may be emotionally triggering, we included a **Prefer Not To Answer** option for many of the questions. We include these responses throughout the report as **PNA**.

# Q2 Demo- graphics

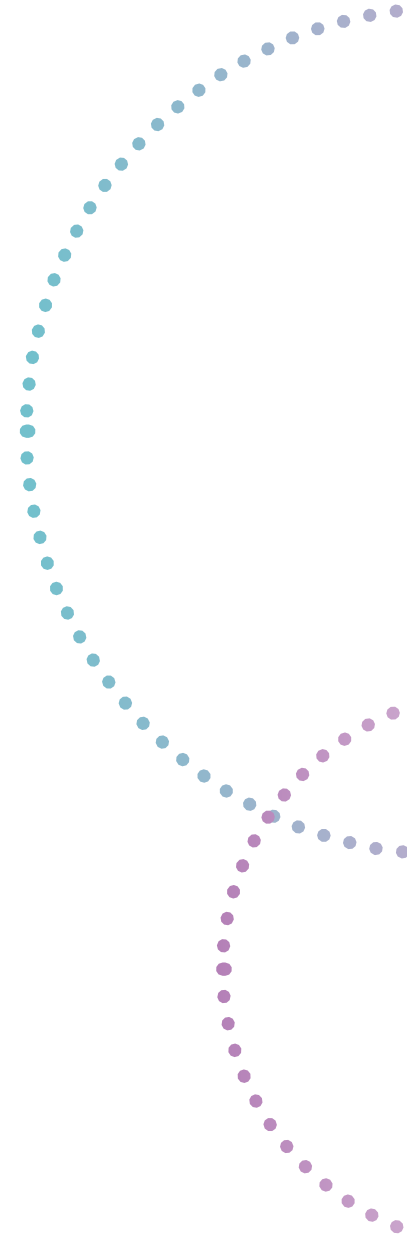


# Overview

As part of our survey facilitation, we collected demographic data from respondents. Our goal was to use this information to better understand certain background characteristics that may impact our survey results.

Unfortunately, the number of survey respondents we received this year wasn't enough to render insights through the lens of demographic data (i.e. gender, race, veteran status, etc.). It would be misleading to make a statement about a demographic grouping with such a small sampling of respondents. We are hoping that future survey releases will garner more participation so that we can glean deeper insights into the data received.

We are still including an overview of the overall demographic data as it provides additional context to the survey results that we did receive.

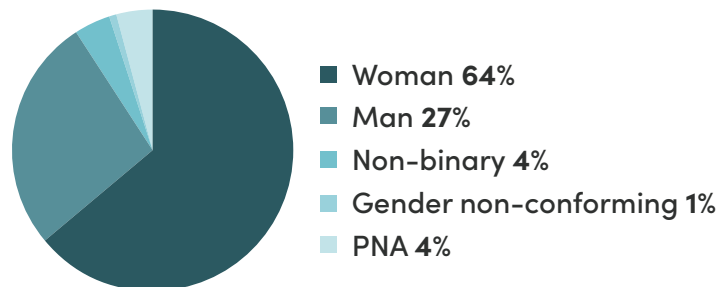


# Personal Profile

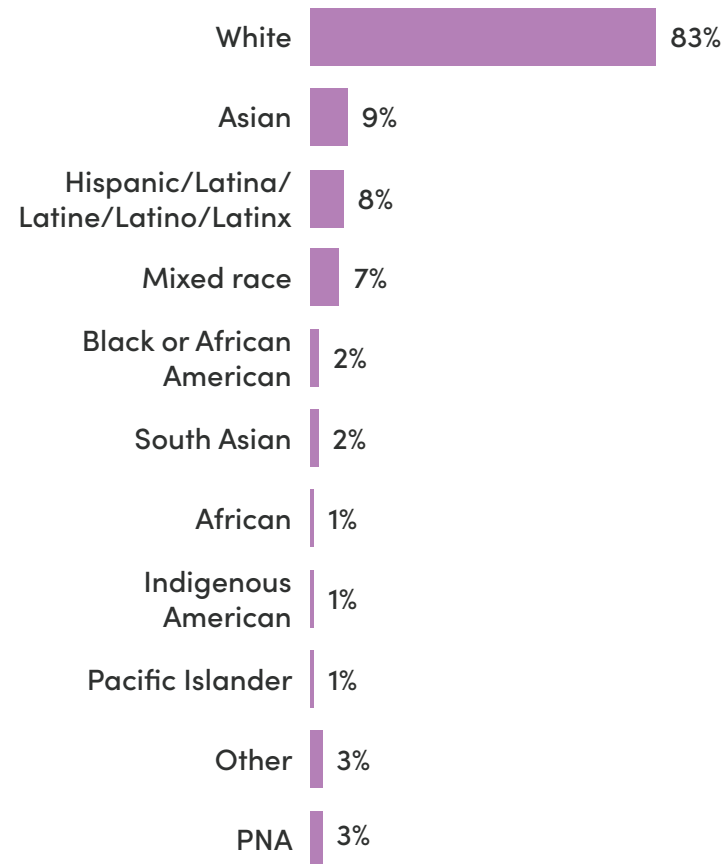
The following demographic information includes age and the identification of gender, race, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and disabilities, along with veteran and immigrant or refugee status of our survey respondents.

**40%**  
Age 25-34

## Gender identity

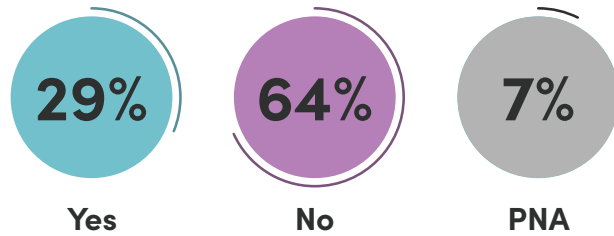


## Racial identity\*

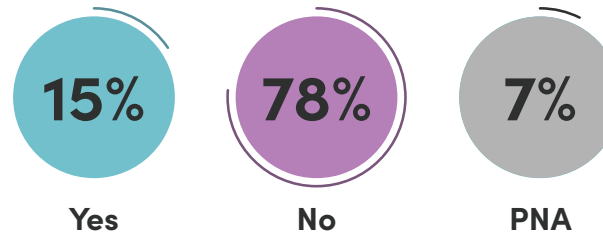


\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.

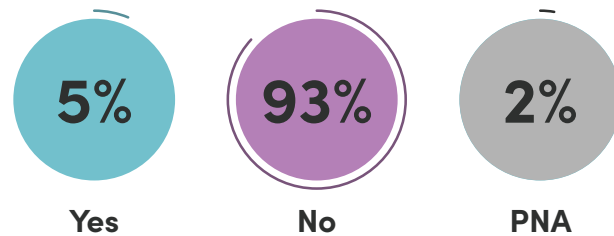
Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?



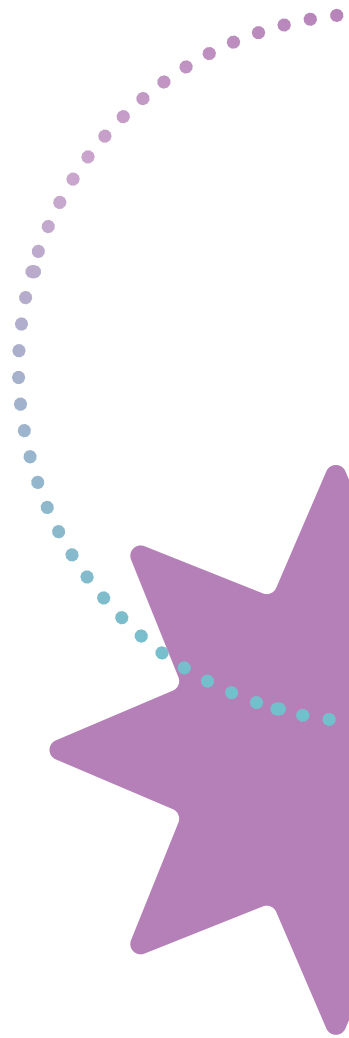
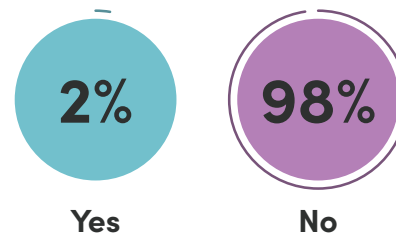
Do you identify as a person with a disability, or are you a person with accessibility needs?



Do you identify as an immigrant or refugee?



Do you identify as a protected veteran?



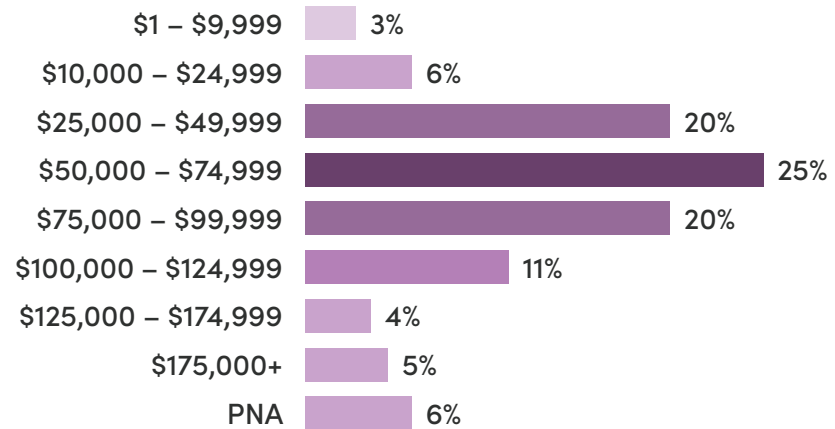
# Professional Profile


Respondents also included information about their educational and professional backgrounds.

# 81%

have a Bachelor's Degree as their highest level of education.

Personal income before taxes (2022)





**“Increasing diversity does not, by itself, increase effectiveness; what matters is how an organization harnesses diversity, and whether it’s willing to reshape its power structure.”**

Harvard Business Review  
Nov/Dec 2020





# Take-aways

# Overview

We asked more than 50 questions in our *Survey for Creatives*. On the following pages are some of the data that stood out from the following sections:

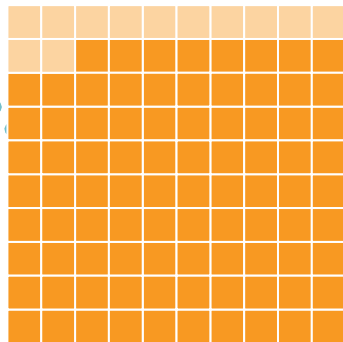
- ▶ Employment Information
- ▶ Financial Compensation
- ▶ Identity at Work
- ▶ Workplace Harassment
- ▶ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Response data for all of the survey questions in the appendix.

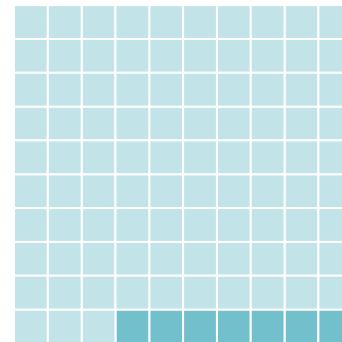


# Employment

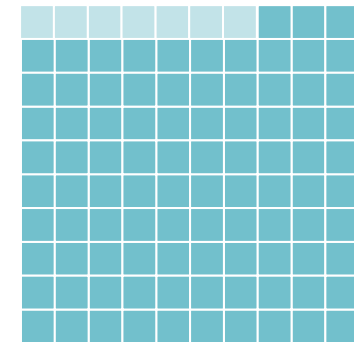
Employment rates are high, but there's a strong preference to **avoid on-site office environments.**



**88%**  
are employed



**7%**  
feel safe being  
**on-site full time\***

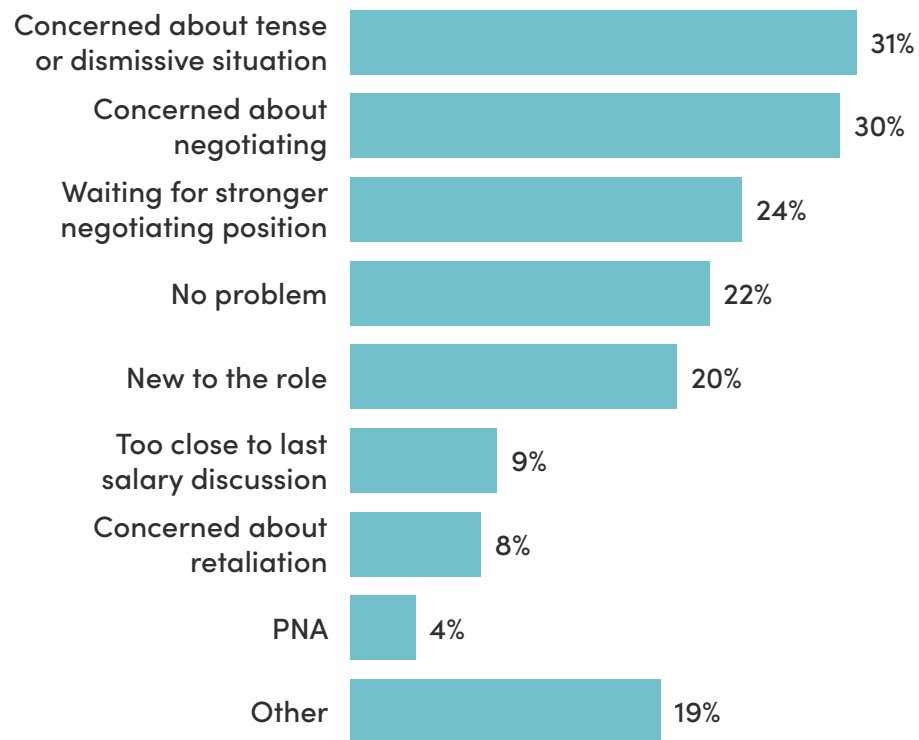


**93%**  
feel safest in a  
**WFH or hybrid environment\***

\*The word safe means something different to each person. As such, we did not include a definition of safety in our survey question, and left that up to each individual's interpretation when responding.

## Financial compensation

We asked creatives how they feel about asking for a raise.\*



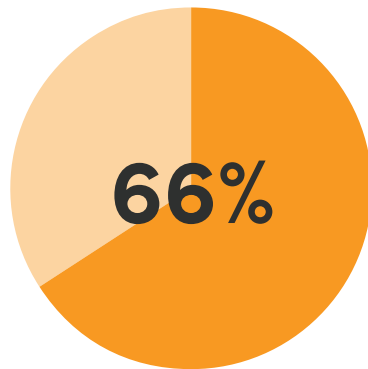
\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.

### Some responses from "other"

- ▶ I have asked for a raise 2+ years ago and have experienced retaliation.
- ▶ Concerned with asking for a raise during a time where business has been slow, clients have canceled engagements due to economic uncertainty.
- ▶ My employer gives me raises regularly as well as bonuses.

## Financial compensation

Pay transparency isn't  
the norm yet.



Salary/rate for their role  
was **NOT** posted in the  
original job description.

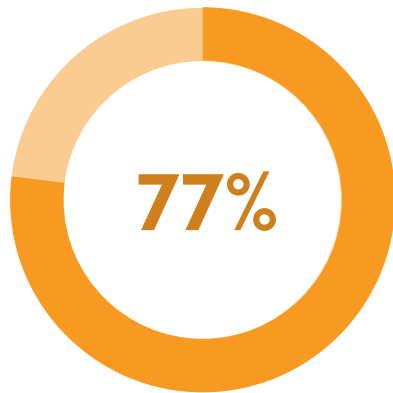
### DID YOU KNOW?



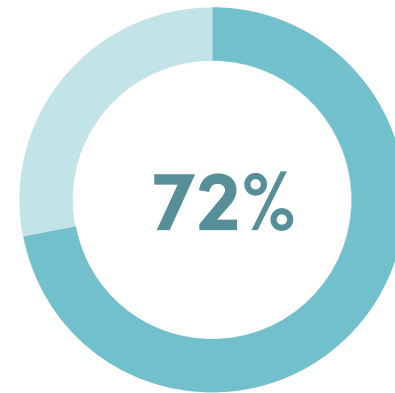
Only **seven states**  
have state-wide pay  
transparency laws,  
according to ADP.

## Identity at work

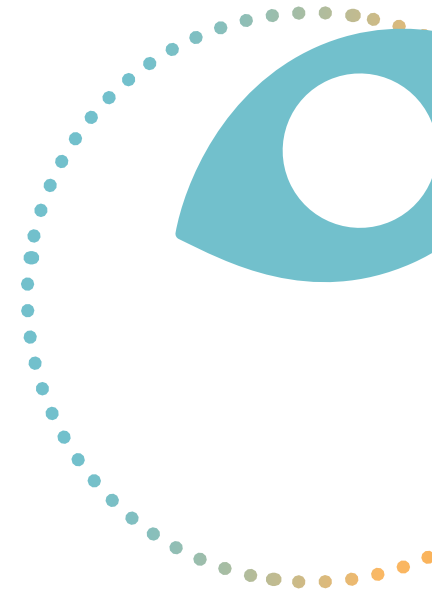
Many creatives have a **positive experience** around promotions and identity.



**Have not felt that their identities are erased or ignored.**



**Have not experienced being passed up for a promotion.**



## Identity at work

Yet, work environments are  
**not welcoming to everyone.**

Feel they need to change  
the way they talk or act  
to fit in.

**38%**

Experienced or witnessed  
others using racist  
language or references.

**20%**

**The DEI actions of  
the company are  
a charade.**

Survey Respondent



## Identity at work

**“ Most of leadership is white and cis-male with no efforts to support those of us lower in the hierarchy with marginalized identities.**

Survey Respondent





## Identity at work

Creatives have experienced the following in the workplace.

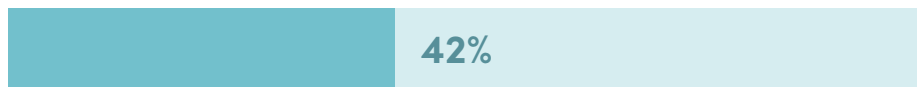
**Being assigned responsibilities different from the job description.**



**Being excluded from important meetings.**



**Having ideas ignored, overlooked, or unattributed.**

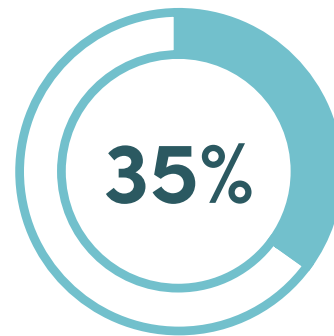


## Workplace harassment

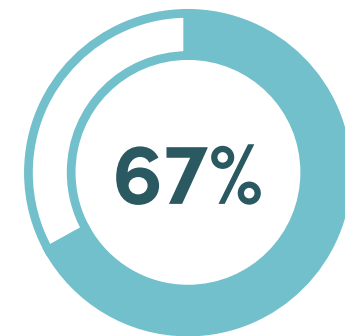
Harassment isn't gone from the workplace, but some say they've seen improvement.



**Have experienced workplace harassment.**



**Can safely submit feedback and concerns.**



**Have seen feedback lead to internal changes.**

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

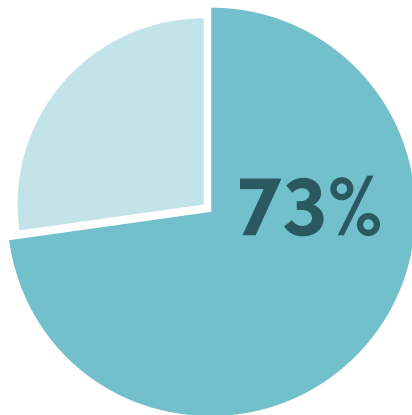
**ff** **When we're talking  
about diversity,  
it's not a box to check.  
It is a reality that should  
be deeply felt and held  
and valued by all of us.**

**Ava DuVernay, American filmmaker**

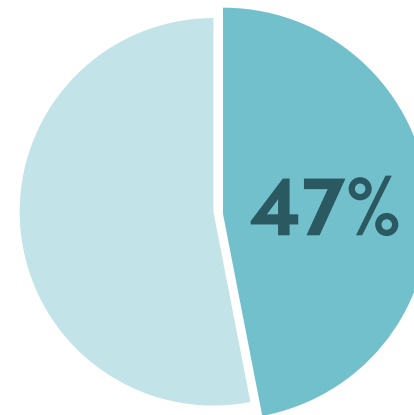


## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

A majority recommend their workplace, and **efforts to diversify teams are lagging.**



**Would recommend their place of work to someone with a marginalized identity.**



**Say that recognizable efforts are being made to diversify teams.**



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)



**“ The company doesn’t seem interested in prioritizing DEI+Justice work. Leadership is consistently too bogged down with out of control work schedules to even consider it, and we seem too proud to admit that we may need to hire someone else to lead us through trainings appropriately (as we are not qualified to do so ourselves). ”**

**Survey Respondent**



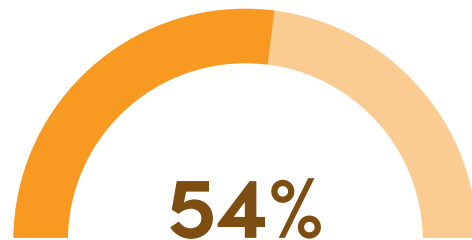
**“ They’re the most welcoming and inclusive group of coworkers I’ve ever known. This comes from the top down. ”**

**Survey Respondent**

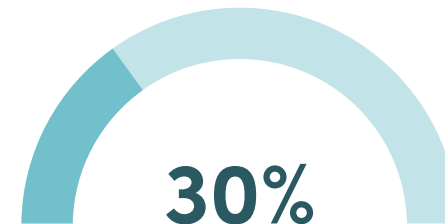


## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

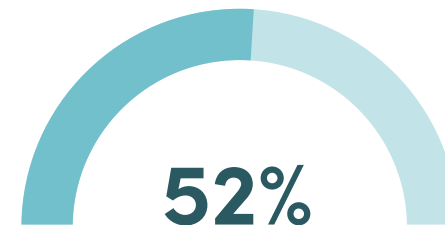
Some workplaces have prioritized DEI initiatives, **but more effort can still be made.**



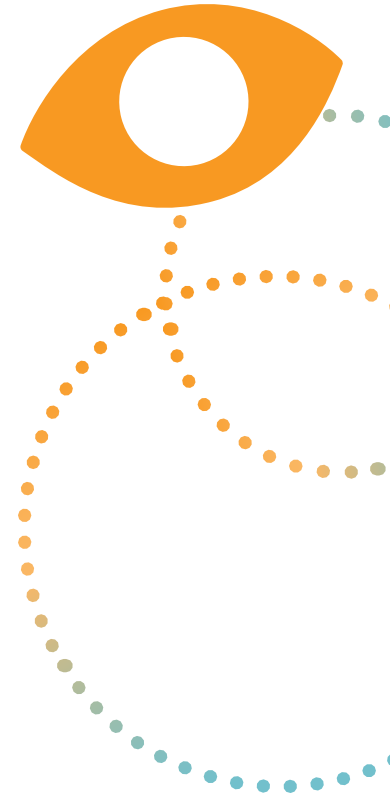
**Feel that the organization they work for prioritizes DEI-related efforts and programs.**




**Feel supported by their company's DEI efforts.**



**Feel neutral about their company's DEI efforts.**



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

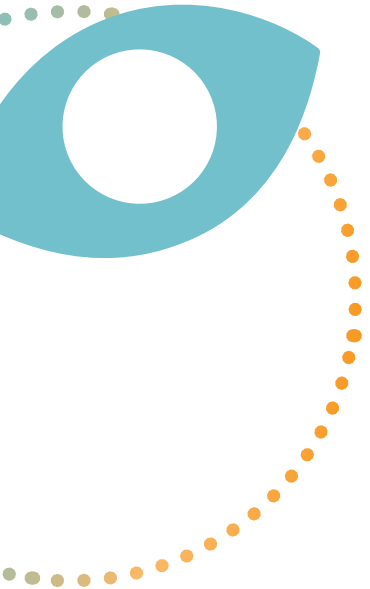


**ff** **The company makes a point to hire and give opportunities to people from marginalized communities, which I admire and that is rare. The company also offers a number of employee resource groups from those communities which makes it easy to find support and community on the inside.**

**Survey Respondent**



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)



**“The company I work for seems to genuinely believe that diversity is important in the workplace and takes actions to be more equitable and inclusive. We have an active DEI group at our company that is open to anyone to join. We also have around 40% of our staff identifying as Black, Indigenous, or as People of Color, so it also means they would not be entering as much of a dominantly white space as many agencies.”**

Survey Respondent





# What Now?

# 44

# What now?

Whether you are an agency or creative, we can all do our part to uplift and encourage more diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in our workplaces. This is by no means a complete list, but these are some ideas to help start DEI conversations and initiatives at your workplace. If you have any suggestions or thoughts on initiatives that have gone well, please share them with us!

## A note on safety

We understand that everyone may not feel comfortable, or even safe, bringing up the following suggestions in the workplace. Allies and accomplices, this is where you come in. If you see oppression and inequities in the workplace, this is your chance to speak up!

The Transparency Initiative resources listed in this section can be found at [thetransparencyinitiative.org](https://thetransparencyinitiative.org)

# Creatives

## Interested in taking next steps?

If you're interested in taking next steps, here are some things you can do.

- ▶ Ask your HR or management team what they are doing to embed DEI in the workplace. Encourage your friends and coworkers to speak up and do the same.
- ▶ Visit our [Resource Hub for Creatives](#) for information on finding Affinity groups (outside of workplace) in the Portland area.
- ▶ Get involved in your workplace's Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). If you don't have ERGs, consider starting one with your peers, and identifying a member of senior leadership for support.
- ▶ Encourage your workplace to participate in [The Transparency Initiative](#) to help foster greater accountability around DEI efforts.

## Volunteer with us

**The Transparency Initiative** is committed to fostering transparency around DEI efforts in the Portland creative community. We hope you will join us in making this an ongoing effort. Whether you have the time to volunteer or you can champion DEI efforts within your workplace, the initiative would love your support!

- ▶ Participate in our [2023 Survey for Creatives](#) (open September through December 2023).
- ▶ Volunteer with **The Transparency Initiative**.
- ▶ Spread the word about our initiatives to other creatives and agencies.
- ▶ Visit the [Get Involved](#) page on our website for a list of ways to get involved with TTI.

# Agencies

## Interested in taking next steps?

If you're interested in taking next steps, here's a list of what you can do...

- ▶ Work with a DEI consultant to develop metrics to hold your agency accountable for their DEI efforts.
- ▶ Start affinity groups or gauge interest in affinity groups in your organization.
- ▶ If possible, make DEI initiatives a factor in executive pay and make sure it has visible support from the C-level all the way to lower management.
- ▶ Allocate funds to an ongoing DEI budget.
- ▶ Visit our [Resource Hub for Agencies](#).
  - Check out the DEI consultants directory.
  - Review hiring directories.
- ▶ Attend workshop programming by AIGA and DEI partner organizations.

## Volunteer with us

**The Transparency Initiative (TTI)** is committed to fostering transparency around DEI efforts in agencies within in the Portland creative community. We hope you will join us in making this an ongoing effort.

- ▶ Participate in the *2024 Survey for Agencies*.
- ▶ [Join the AIGA PDX mailing list](#) to learn about the latest TTI news and our next survey launches.
- ▶ Offer to share, and encourage participation in, the *2023 Survey for Creatives* within your workplace (open September through December 2023).
- ▶ Get on the waitlist to join a **TTI** Focus Group for Agencies.
- ▶ Spread the word to other agencies and encourage them to participate as well.
- ▶ Contact our Design for Good Director if you would be open to talking about your DEI initiatives with us. You can email [designforgood@portland.aiga.org](mailto:designforgood@portland.aiga.org).

# 05 Appendix

# Appendix

## Survey for Creatives Responses

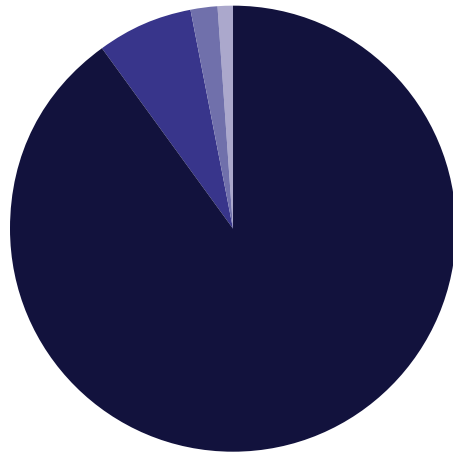
The following appendix contains every question included in the 2022 *Survey for Creatives*. Multiple choice or non-essay questions include an easy-to-read graphic representation of the responses. Essay questions are in the appendix. However, due to the personal and sometimes identifying nature of responses, we are not including essay responses.

In an effort to extend personal power and choice, and to opt out of answering specific questions that may be emotionally triggering, we included the **Prefer Not To Answer** option for many of the questions. We include these responses throughout the report as **PNA**.



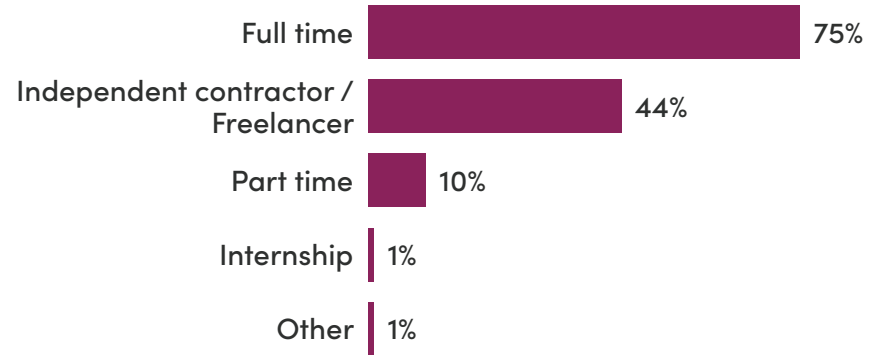
# 01 Employment

1a. What is your employment status?



- Employed / working 90%
- Not employed, looking for work 7%
- Not employed 2%
- Retired 1%

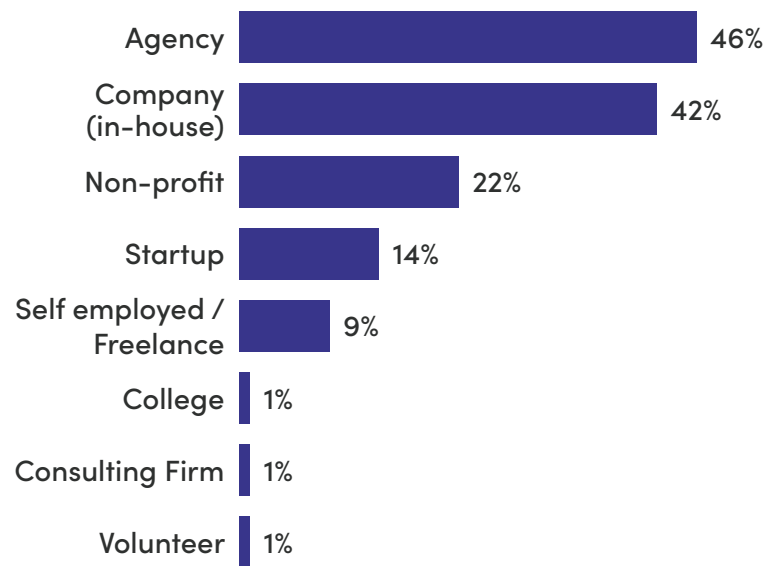
1b. Employment type? (select all that apply\*)



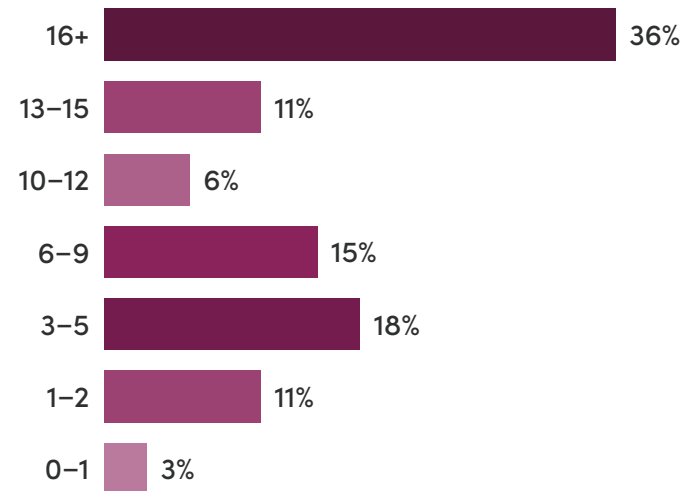
\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.

# 01 Employment (continued)

1c. What type of organization do you work with/for? (select all that apply\*)



1d. How many total years of experience do you have working in the creative, advertising, and/or marketing industries?

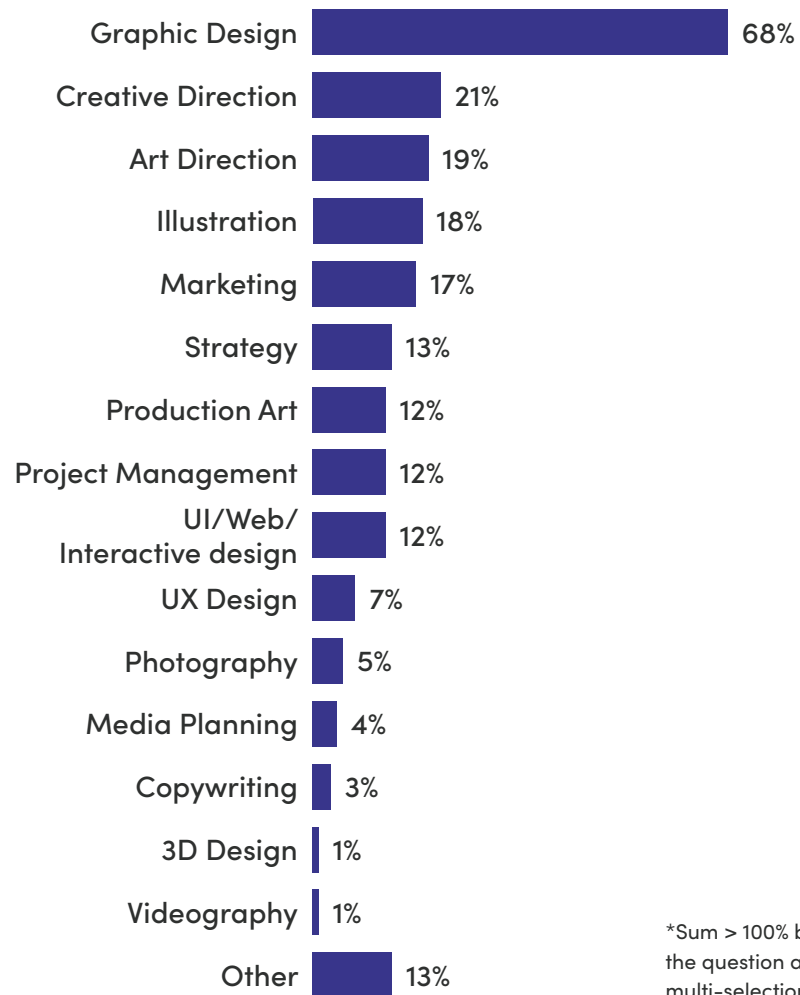


\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.



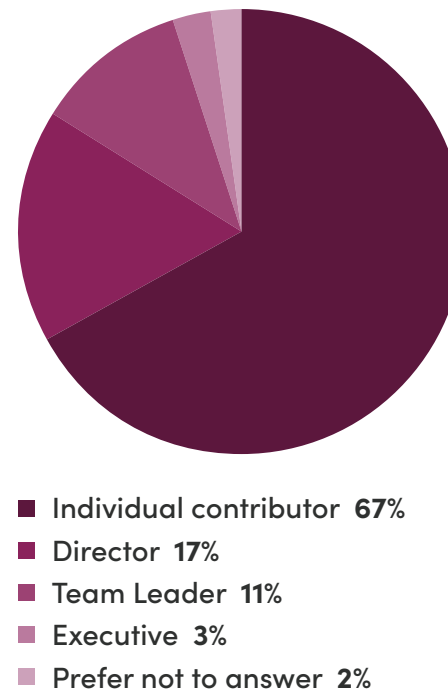
# 01 Employment (continued)

1e. What do you mainly do for your current role?  
(select all that apply\*)



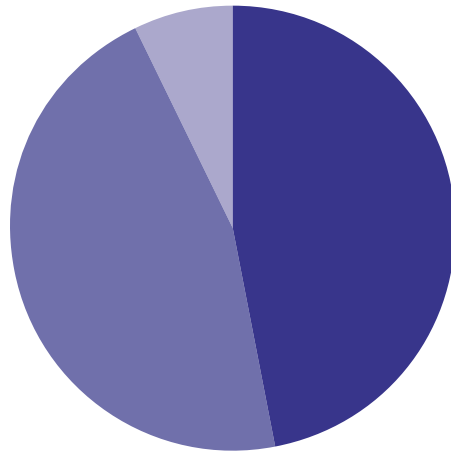
\*Sum > 100% because  
the question allowed for  
multi-selection.

1f. What best describes your current role?



## 01 Employment (continued)

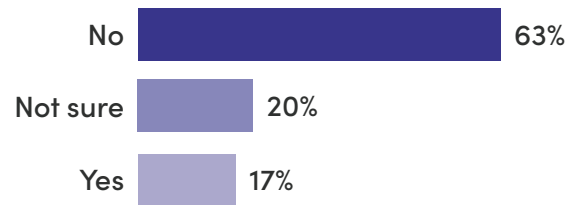
1g. In which work environment do you feel the safest?



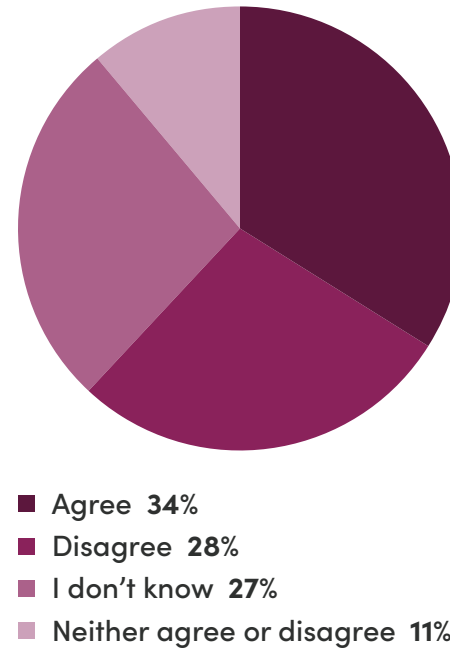
- Fully remote 47%
- Hybrid 46%
- In the office 7%

## 02 Financial Compensation

2a. Was the salary/rate for your role posted in the original job description?

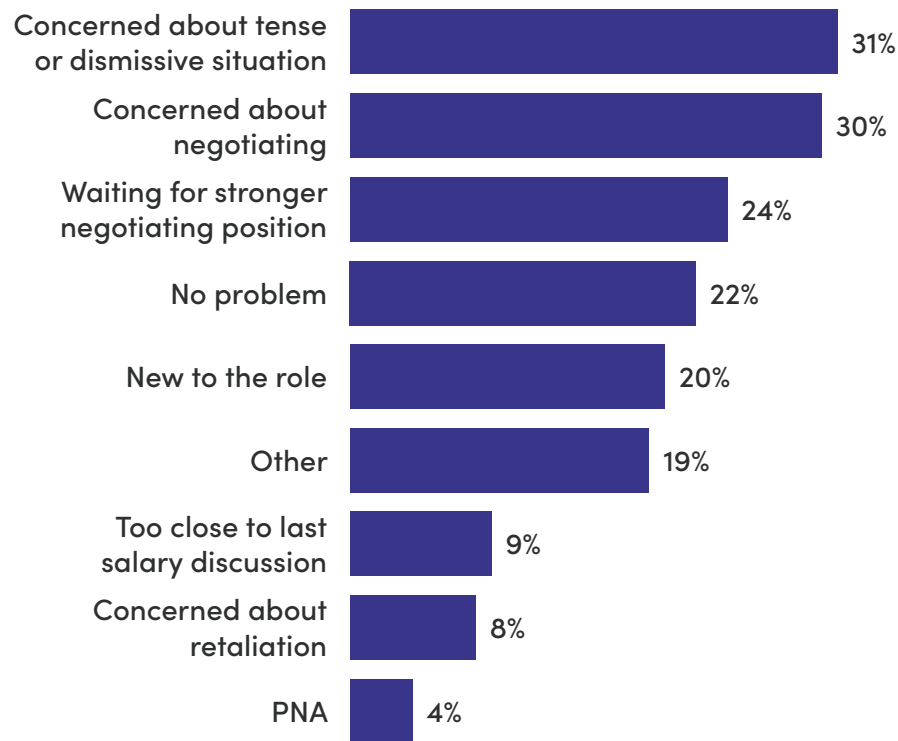


2b. How does the statement below align with your current work experience: My base pay (before benefits) is competitive compared to similar positions at other companies.



## 02 Financial Compensation (continued)

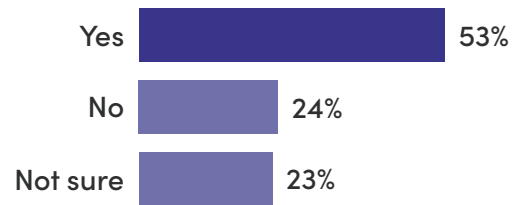
2c. When it comes to asking for a raise, which of the following best describes your position? (select all that apply\*)



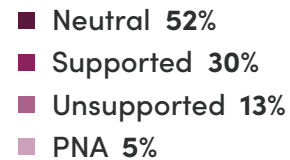
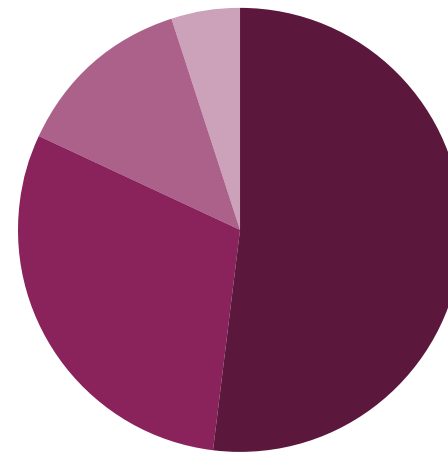
\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.

## 03 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

3a. Does the organization you work for prioritize DEI-related efforts and programs?

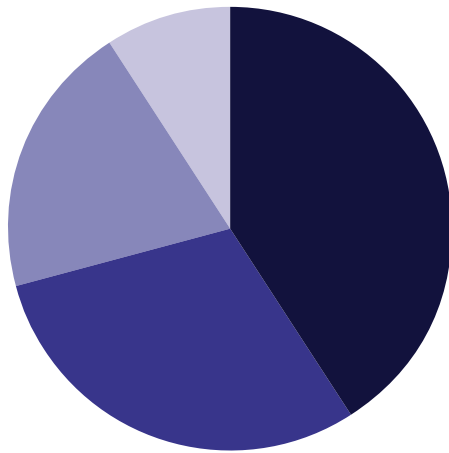


3b. If the organization prioritizes DEI-related efforts and programs, do you feel supported by those efforts?



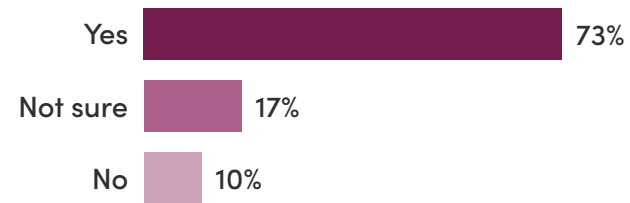
## 03 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (continued)

3c. Have you ever participated in programs, trainings, workshops related to DEI at this company?



- No 41%
- Yes, voluntarily 30%
- Yes, because it was required 20%
- Other 9%

3d. Would you recommend someone from a marginalized community to work at/with the company you're employed by?

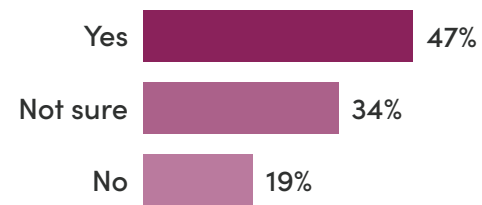


## 03 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (continued)

3e. Why would you recommend the company to someone from a marginalized group? (ESSAY)

3f. Why would you not recommend the company to someone from a marginalized group? (ESSAY)

3g. Are there recognizable efforts being made to diversify project teams? (via age, background, experience, race, gender, ability, etc.)



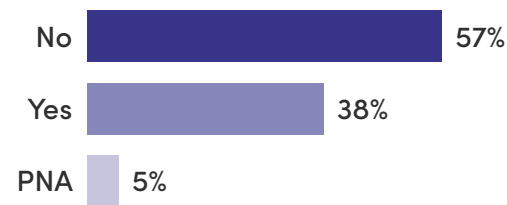
## 04 Identity at Work

### 4A. AT WORK, HAVE YOU FELT ...

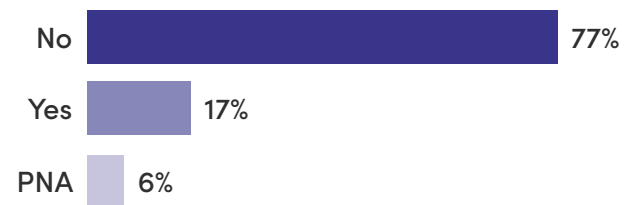
Q1. Tokenized in your role because of a marginalized identity you hold?



Q2. That you need to change how you talk or act to fit in?



Q3. That your identities are erased or ignored?

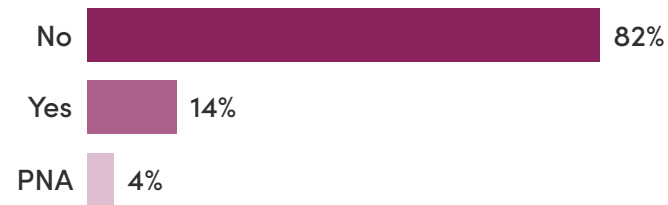




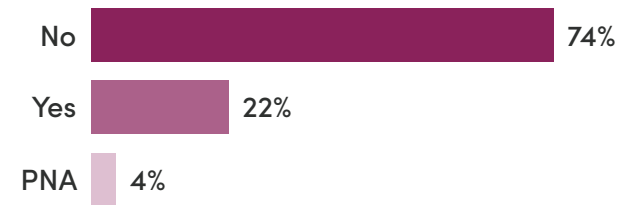
## 04 Identity at Work (continued)

### 4B. AT WORK, HAVE YOU BEEN TOLD ...

Q1. You are aggressive or loud?



Q2. You are not experienced enough?



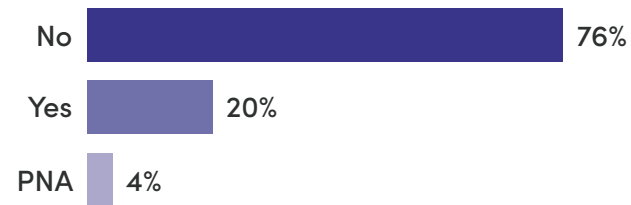
Q3. That you were hired to fill a diversity quota?



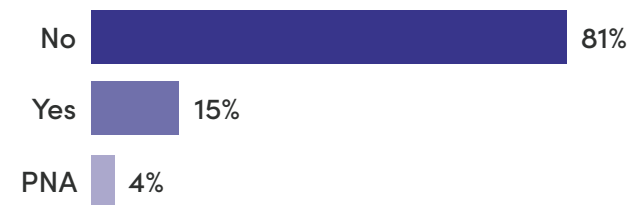
## 04 Identity at Work (continued)

### 4C. AT WORK, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED OR WITNESSED ...

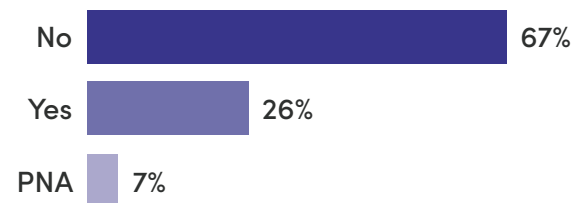
Q1. Others using racist language or references?



Q2. The use of homophobic or transphobic language or references?



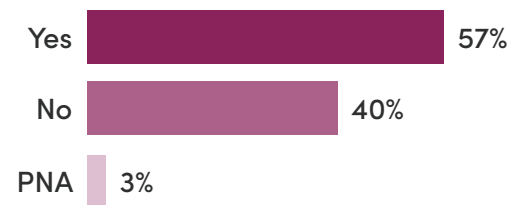
Q3. The use of memes, gifs, or emojis of Black or Brown people by non-Black or Brown people?



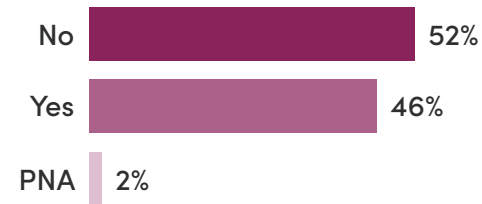
## 04 Identity at Work (continued)

### 4D. AT WORK, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ...

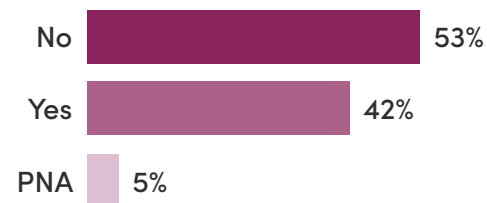
Q1. Being assigned different responsibilities than the job description?



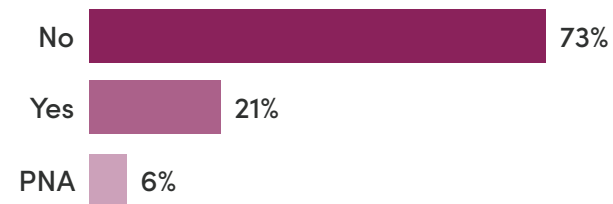
Q2. Being excluded from important meetings?



Q3. Having your ideas ignored, overlooked, or unattributed?



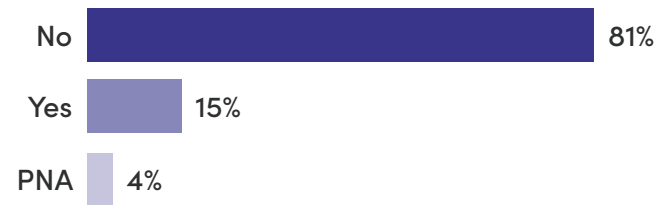
Q4. Being passed up for a promotion?



## 04 Identity at Work (continued)

### 4E. AT WORK, HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ...

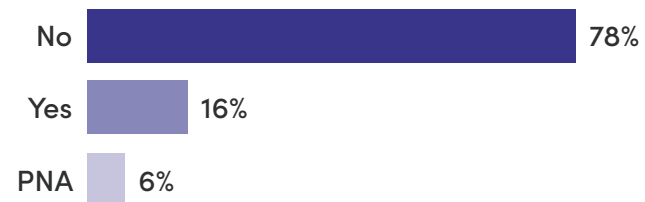
Q1. Being asked to educate others about your identities?



Q2. Others assuming that you're a spokesperson for a community of people?

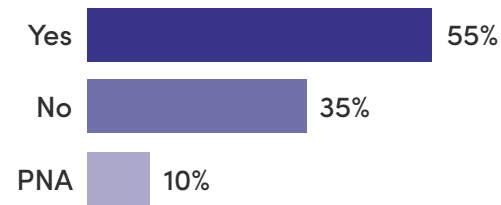


Q3. Cultural appropriation by non-members of marginalized groups?

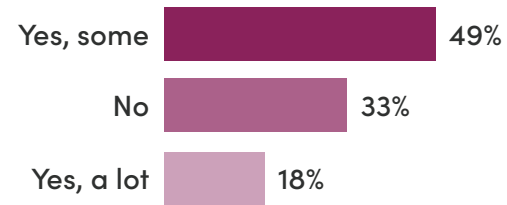


## 05 Workplace Harassment

5a. Can you safely and anonymously submit feedback and concerns?

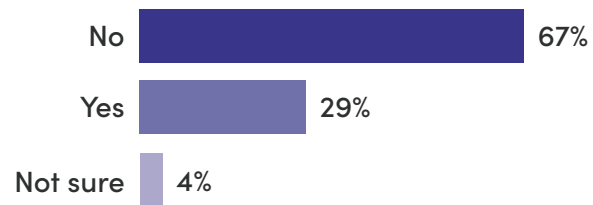


5b. Have you seen feedback lead to internal changes?

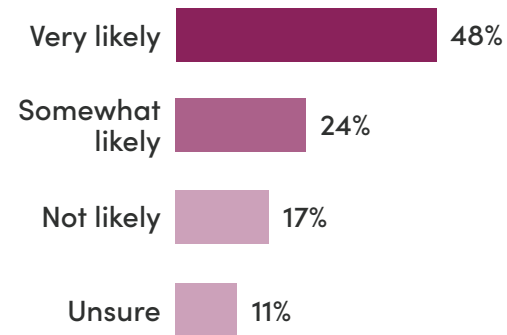


## 05 Workplace Harassment (continued)

5c. Have you experienced workplace harassment?

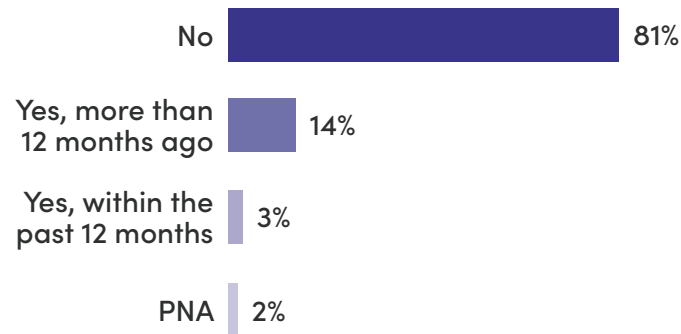


5d. In your current organization, how likely would you be to report workplace harassment?



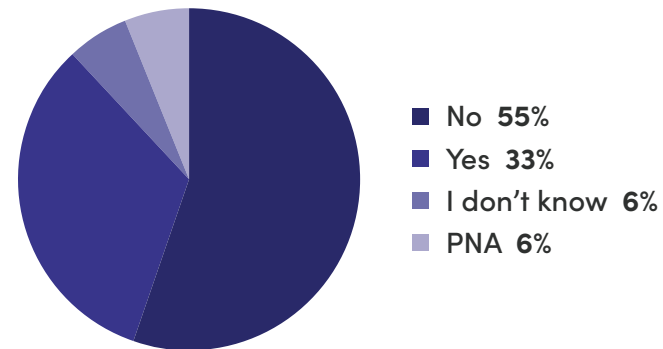
## 05 Workplace Harassment (continued)

5e. Have you ever reported an instance of workplace harassment?

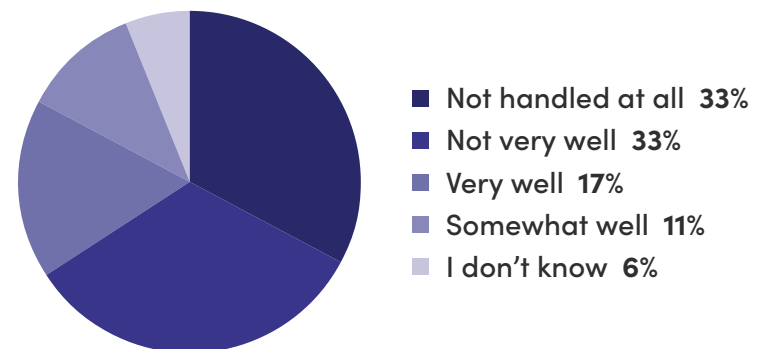


If respondents answered yes to question 5e, they were asked the three questions displayed on the right. There were 18 responses.

5f. Have you experienced retaliation after reporting workplace harassment?



5g. How do you feel your report(s) of workplace harassment were handled?

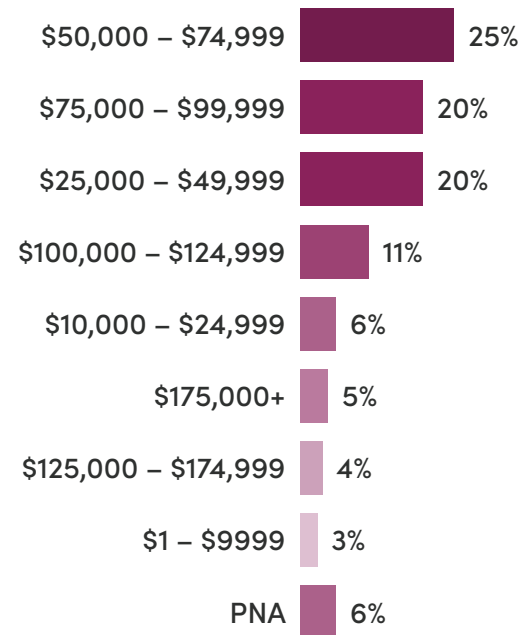


5h. Feel free to share any additional information about your experience if you would like. (ESSAY)

## 06 Demographics

A selected representation of demographic responses is included at the beginning of this report, in *Section 2, Demographics*. The graphic representations in this appendix section may look different as they are more comprehensive.

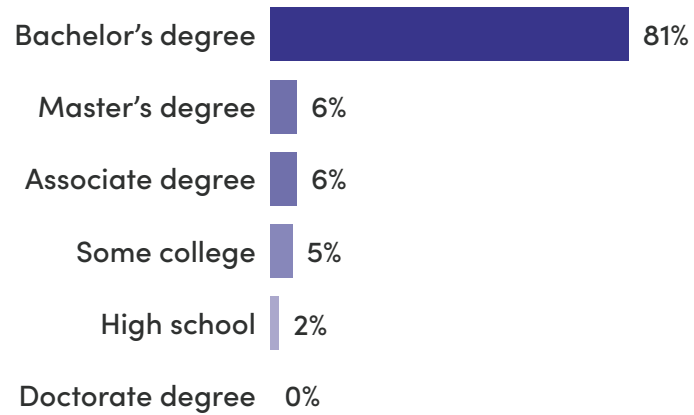
### 6a. Which of these describes your personal income before taxes last year?



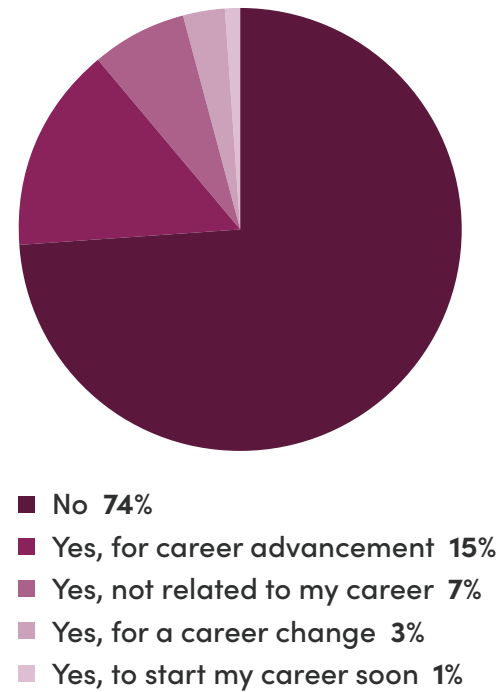


## 06 Demographics (continued)

6b. What is your highest level of education?

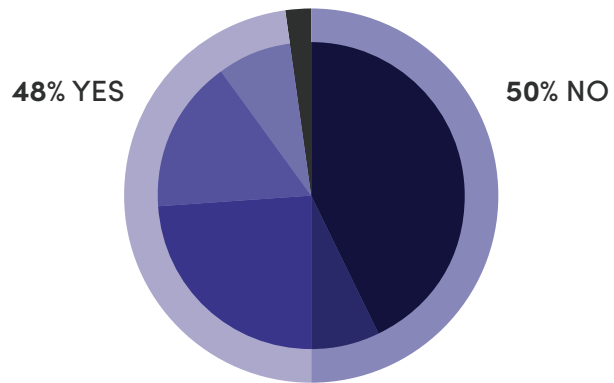


6c. Are you currently in school, classes, or training?



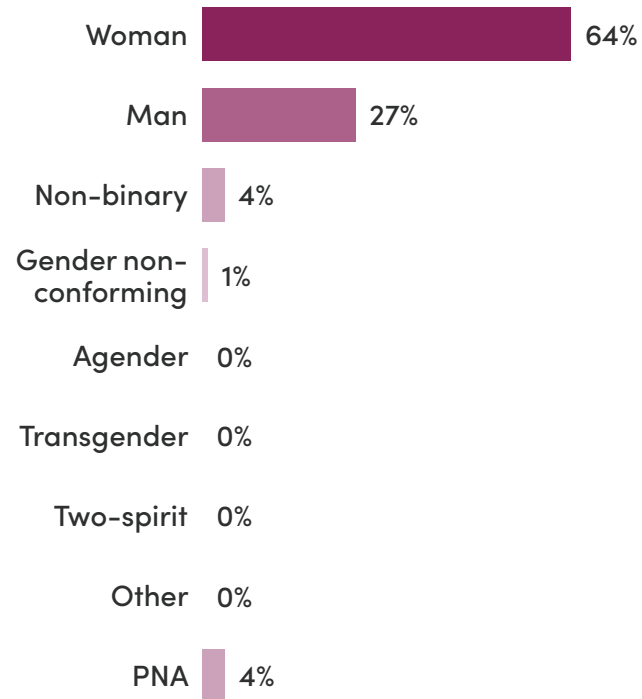
## 06 Demographics (continued)

6d. Have you completed training or certification programs in the design field?



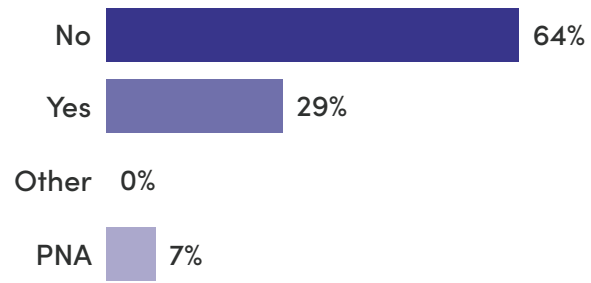
- NO, never 43%
- NO, I started but did not complete program 7%
- YES, training program only 24%
- YES, both certification and training program 16%
- YES, certification program only 8%
- Other 2%

6e. What best describes your gender identity?

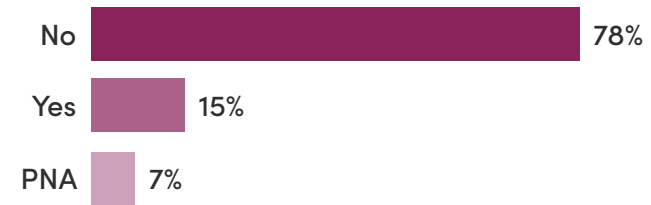


## 06 Demographics (continued)

6f. Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?

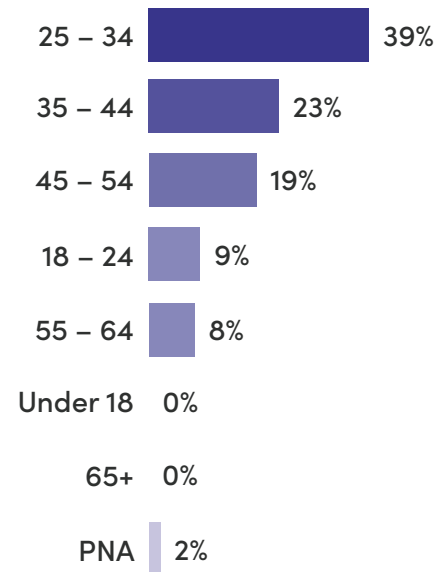


6g. Do you identify as a person with a disability, or are you a person with accessibility needs?

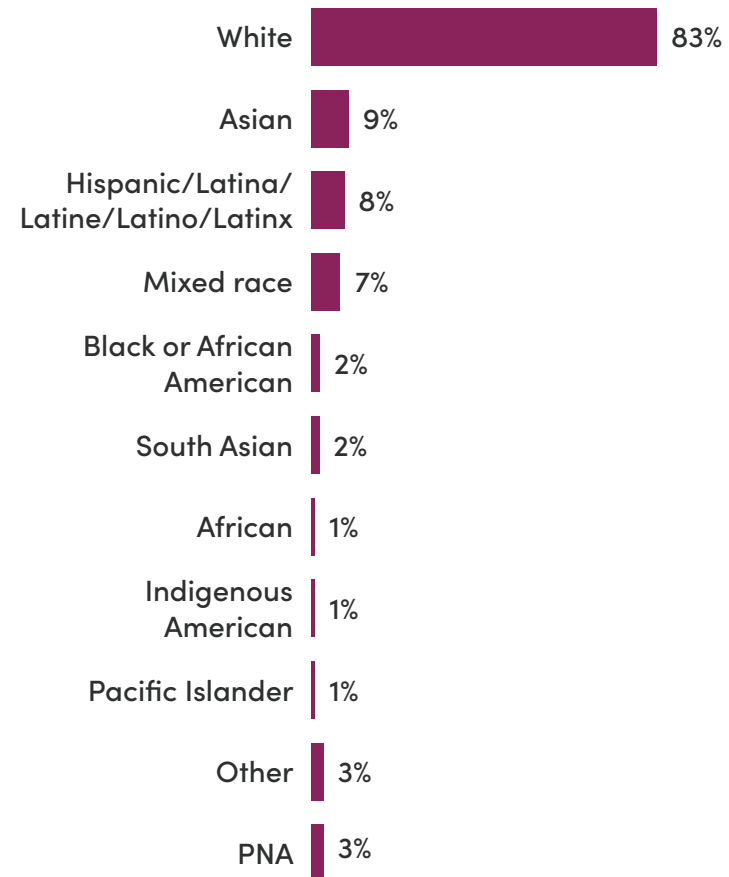


## 06 Demographics (continued)

### 6h. What is your age?



### 6i. How would you describe yourself? (select all that apply\*)



\*Sum > 100% because the question allowed for multi-selection.

## 06 Demographics (continued)

6j. Do you identify as a protected veteran?



6k. Do you identify as an immigrant or refugee?

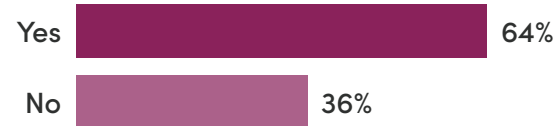


## 07 Extra

Is there anything else that you would like to share with us about your experience being a creative professional in Portland, OR? (ESSAY)

## 08 Extra

Would you allow us to anonymously share portions of your story from Question #7 on our channels so that we can amplify the voices of creatives like you?



# Thank you

For questions or comments on  
this report, please email us at  
[designforgood@portland.aiga.org](mailto:designforgood@portland.aiga.org)

the  
transparency  
initiative