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Blocking the Backlash:

The Positive Impact of DEI in Nonprofit Organizations



RACE TO LEAD
SURVEY



An initiative of
Building Movement Project

About the Building Movement Project



OUR VISION

Building Movement Project (BMP) imagines a world where all community members live with **dignity and power**, supported By **diverse and resilient organizations, networks and movements** that work to eradicate root causes of inequity and injustice.

OUR WORK

Now in our 25th year, BMP provides insightful **research**, practical **resources**, and pathways for transformative **relationships** that support nonprofit organizations, networks, and movements in their work to create a just and equitable world.

Tech Instructions



Attendees are not visible. Please use the Q&A feature to ask questions. Use the chat to send tech issues to BMP Admin.



This webinar is being recorded. Recording and slides will be available following the webinar.



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Poll: Get to know the audience



Which best describes your role?

- Aspiring Leader of Color
- Aspiring White Leader
- Current Leader of Color
- Current White Leader
- Capacity Builder / Intermediary of Color
- White Capacity Builder / Intermediary
- Funder
- Other

Moderators and Panelists



Crystal Coache

*Vice President of Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion & Belonging*
National Women's Law Center



Bri Carpenter

*Director of Employee Experience
and Culture*
Avalon Housing



Mercedes Brown

Race Equity Assessment Director
Building Movement Project



Frances Kunreuther

Co-Executive Director
Building Movement Project

Background and Context



2016, BMP conducted our first survey on race and nonprofit leadership

- ❑ Why – despite years of talk about the importance of diversity – there were not more people of color in executive leadership?

2019 survey added questions about “DEI” and workplace experience.

- ❑ How does a leader’s race affect the workplace experience for both BIPOC and white staffers?

2022 survey added questions about the impact of COVID and the “Racial Reckoning.”

- ❑ What is different now about leading nonprofit organizations?

Trends from Three Rounds of Surveys



- Over the course of the three years – 2016, 2019 and 2022 – the Race to Lead surveys have garnered over 12,000 responses.
- The composition of the survey sample has been remarkably similar over the years.
- Many key findings from past surveys continue to resonate with the most recent data from 2022.

Blocking the Backlash: Four Main Findings



1
DEI efforts increased between 2019 and 2022 with DEI training having the largest growth between the two survey periods.



2
Respondents were most positive about the workplace when their organizations employed five or more DEI strategies.



3
BIPOC respondents gave DEI strategies higher ratings of effectiveness more often than white respondents.



4
DEI initiatives do not equal racial equity. The effects of DEI were ambiguous when examining structural issues in the nonprofit sector.

3

4

The DEI Boom



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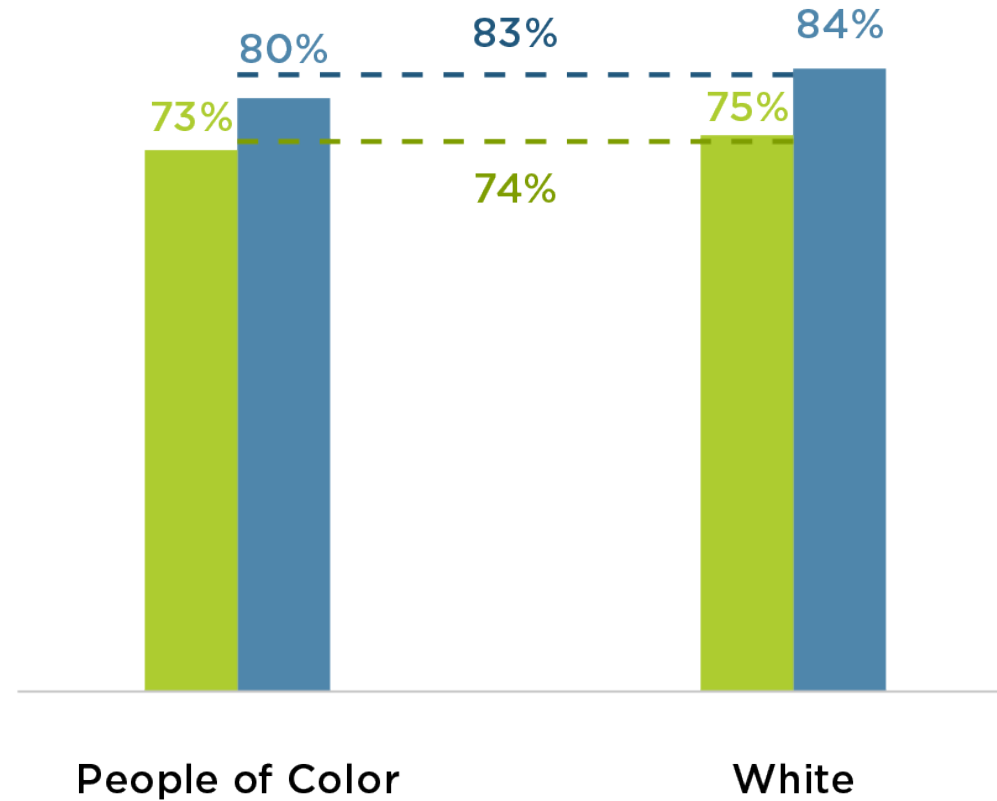


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Respondents Reporting “Yes” to Their Workplace Engaging in DEI



● 2019 ● 2022 ● 2019 OVERALL ● 2022 OVERALL





“

In March 2020, many organizations were faced with the reality of racism, and it became the topic of conversations in the workplace. My organization had begun DEI work before 2020, so it did not feel like a knee-jerk reaction when we continued them after George Floyd. I do feel like the work is more difficult in a distributed workforce vs. an in-office environment.”

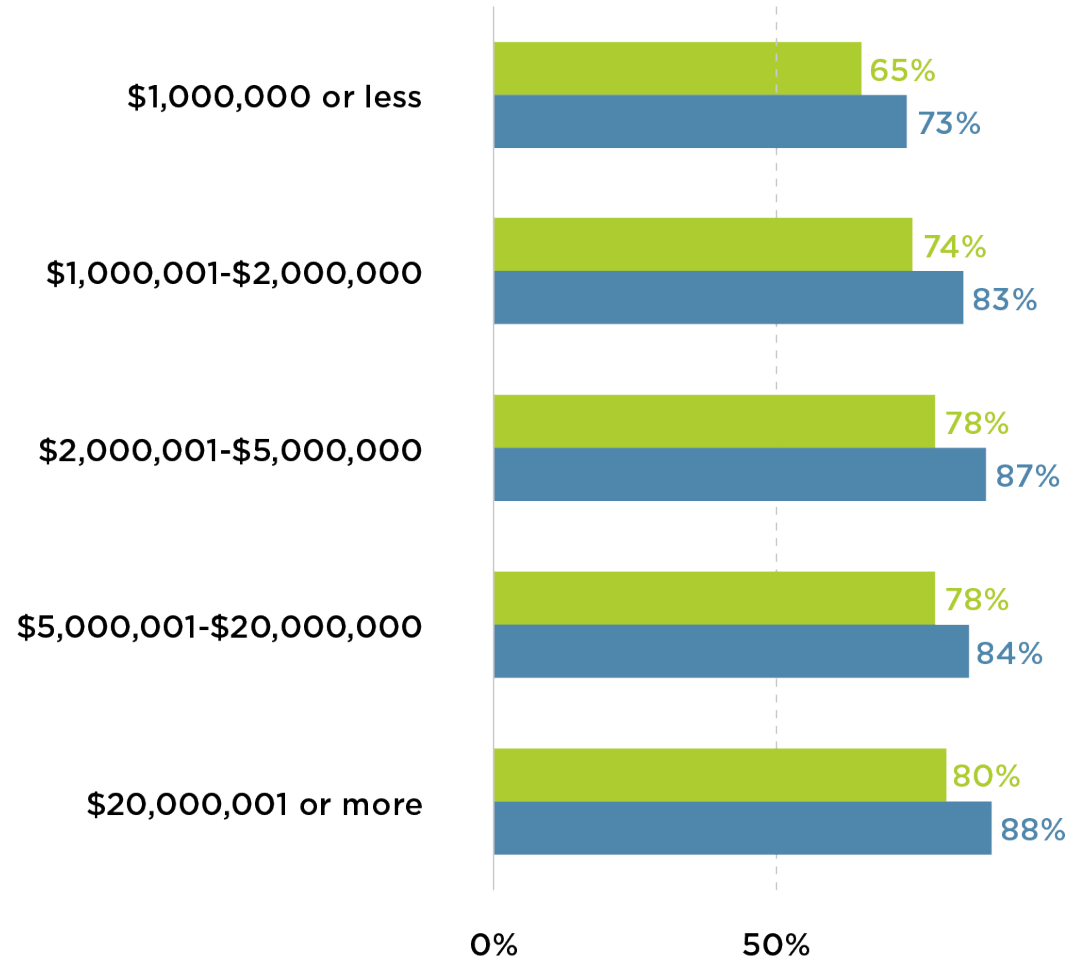
—Black Woman Senior

Manager

Respondents Reporting Organization Engaging In DEI By Budget Size



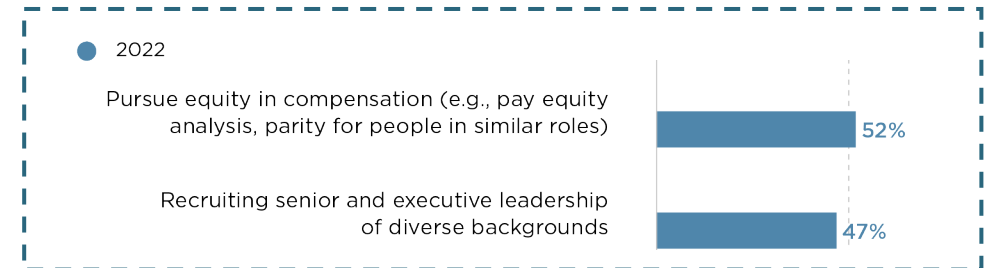
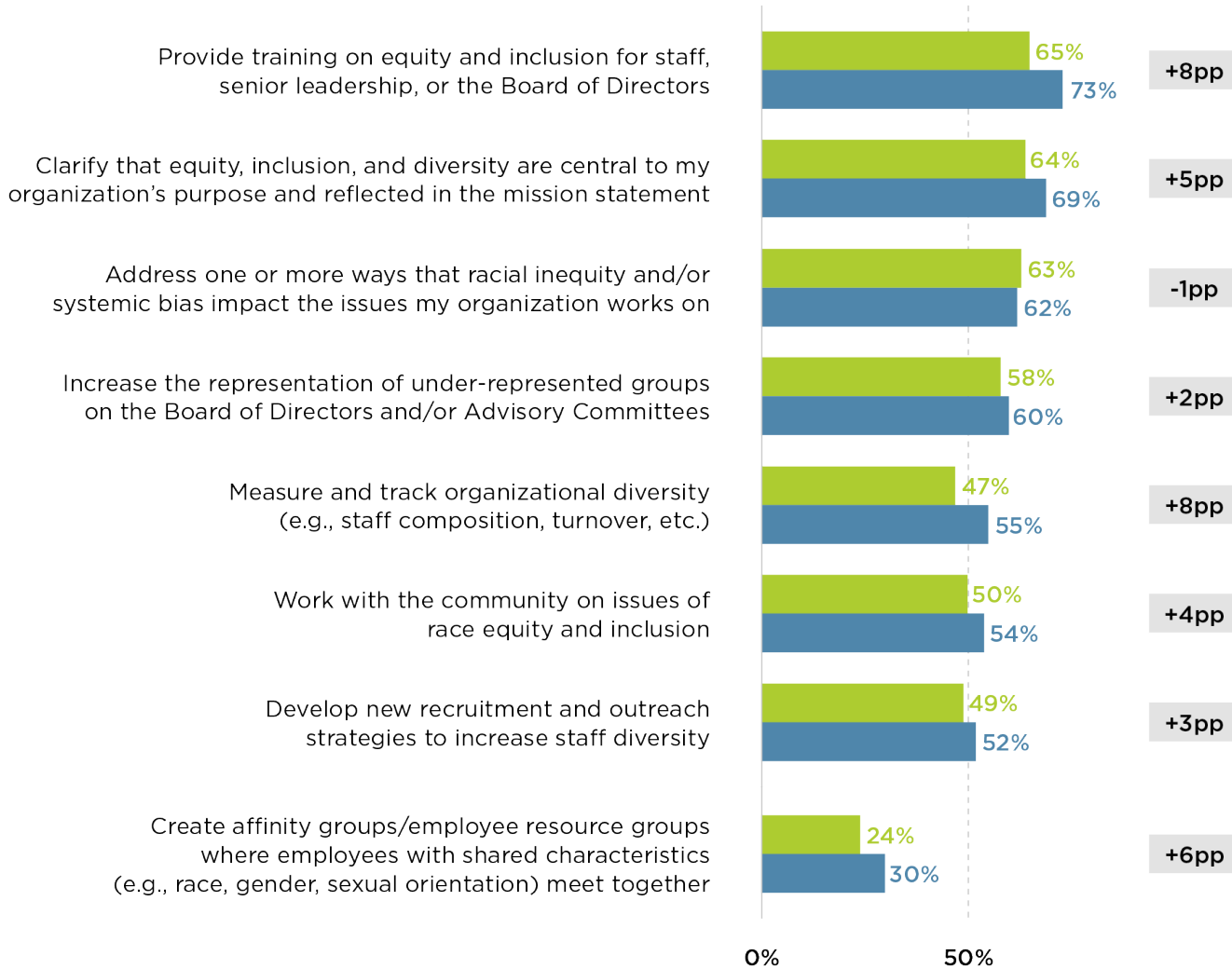
● 2019 ● 2022



DEI Strategies Respondents Reported Their Organization Employed



● 2019
 ● 2022
 ● CHANGE IN RESPONSE



DEI Strategy Effectiveness By Race of Respondents



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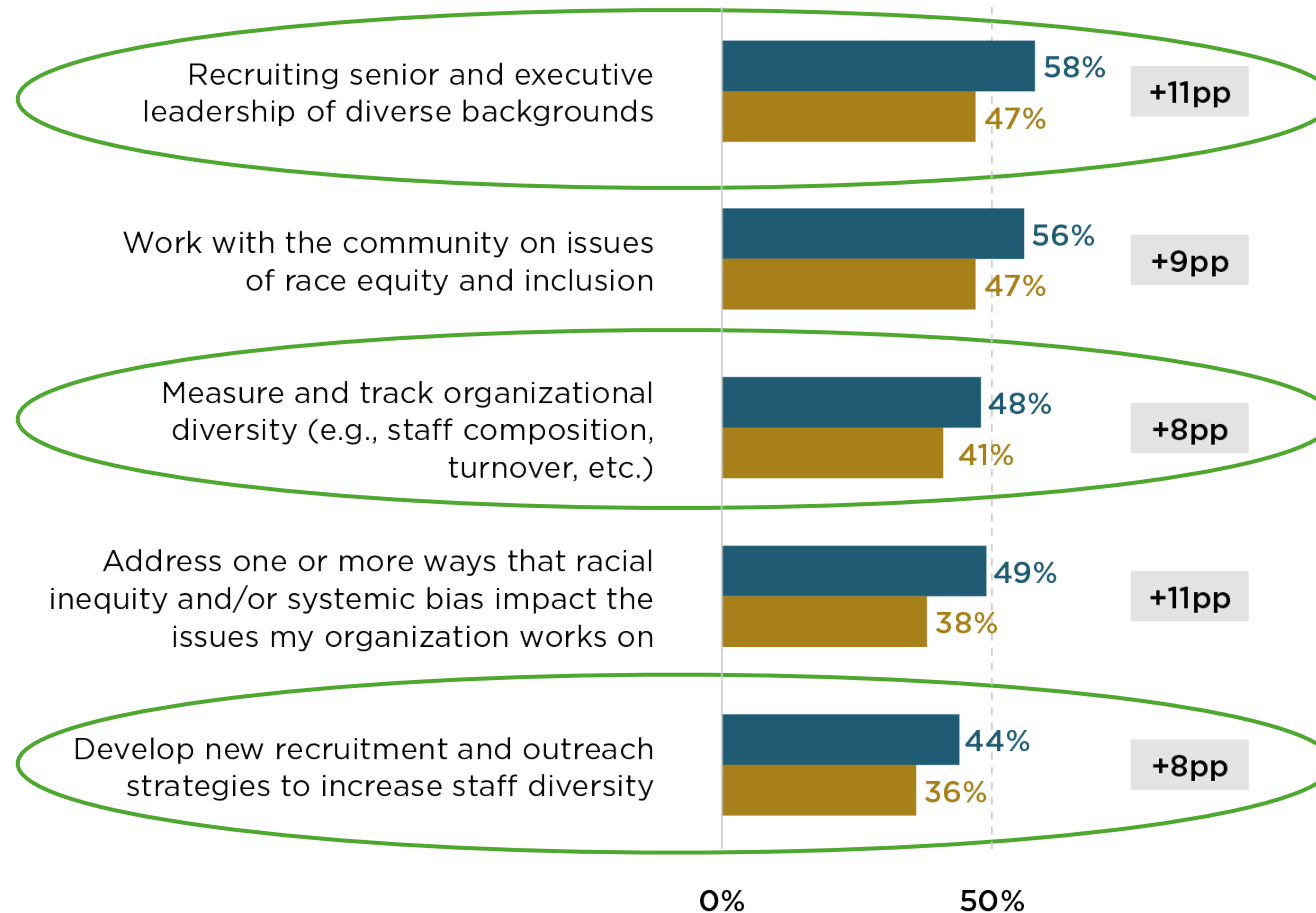
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DEI Strategies Rated More Effective By BIPOC Respondents



● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE

RESPONSES: EXTREMELY OR VERY EFFECTIVE

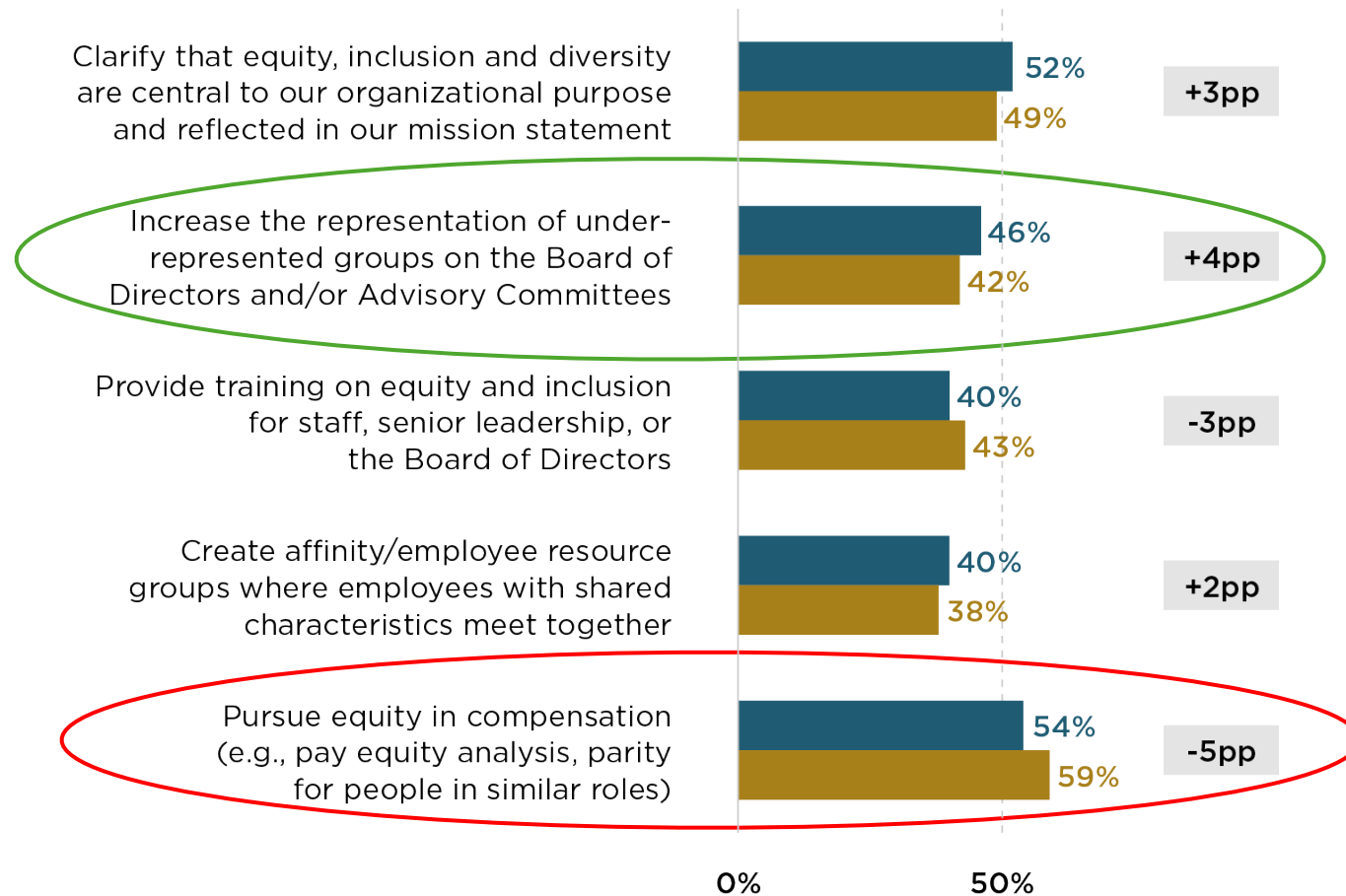


Four Strategies Rated Similarly By BIPOC and White Respondents

FIGURE 6 | DEI STRATEGIES RATED SIMILARLY EFFECTIVE BY BIPOC AND WHITE RESPONDENTS

● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE

RESPONSES: EXTREMELY OR VERY EFFECTIVE



More DEI Strategies Make a Bigger Difference



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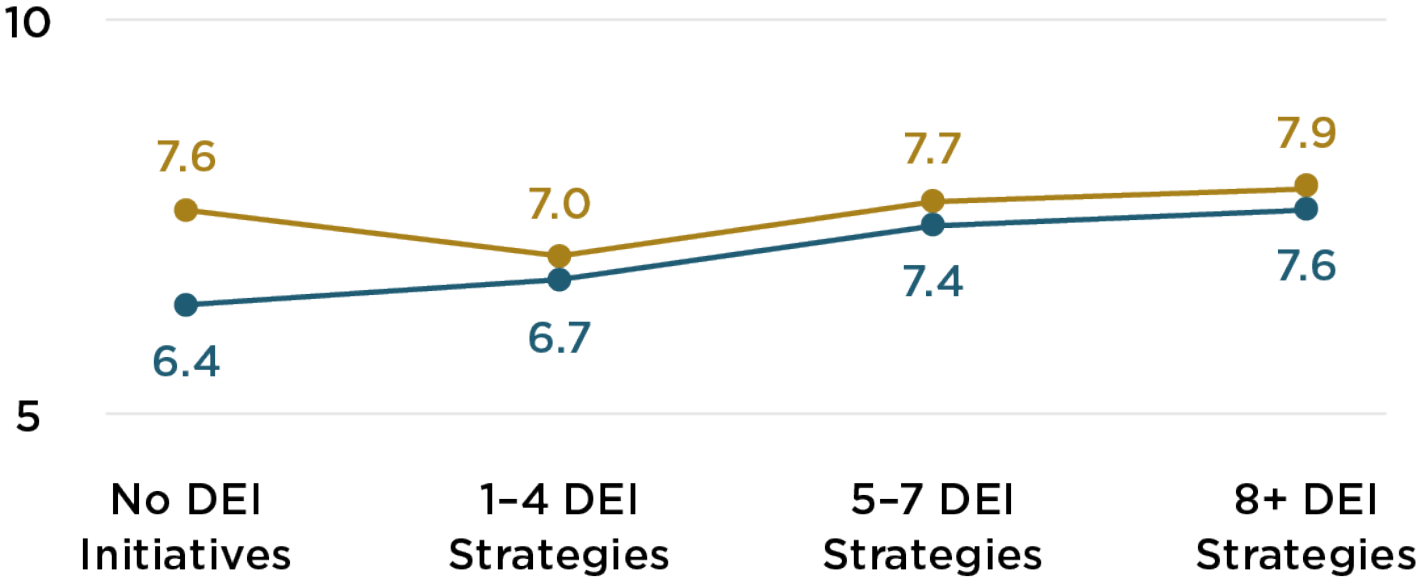
Intention to Stay Increases With More DEI Strategies



● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE

AVERAGE RESPONSES ON A SCALE OF 1 (EXTREMELY DISAGREE) TO 10 (EXTREMELY AGREE)

I would be happy if I worked at my organization 3 years from now

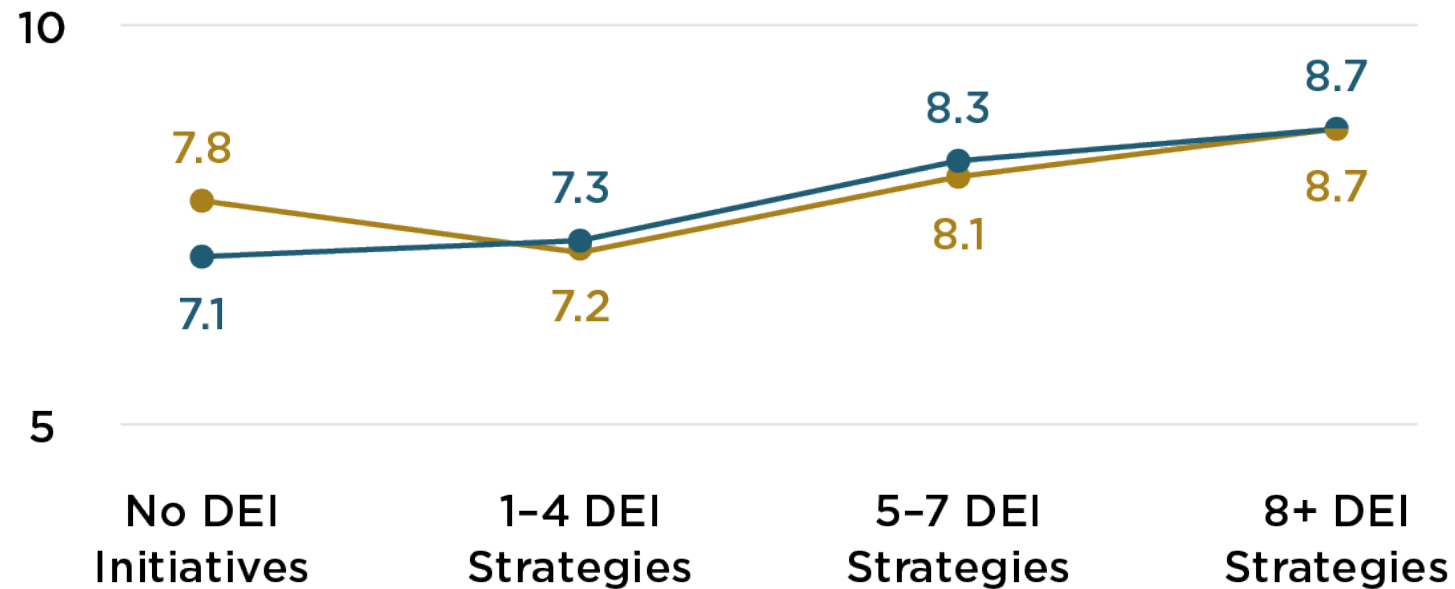


Sense of Voice Improves with More DEI Strategies

● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE

AVERAGE RESPONSES ON A SCALE OF
1 (EXTREMELY DISAGREE) TO 10 (EXTREMELY AGREE)

I feel I have a voice in my organization

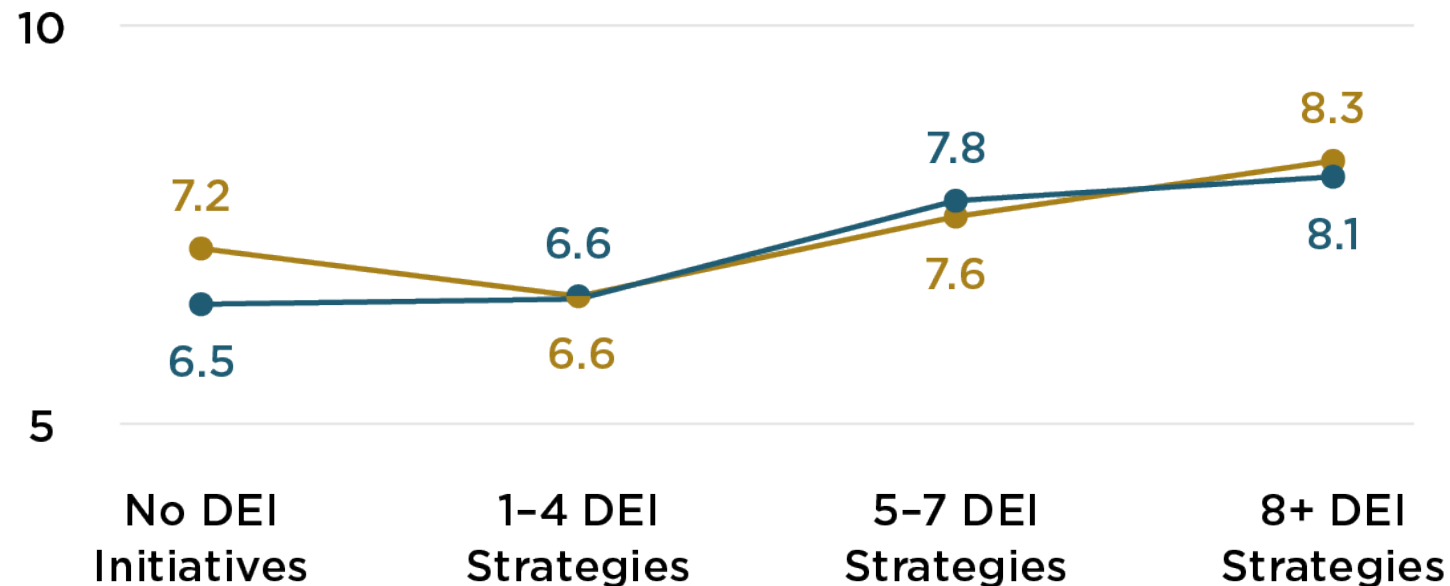


Sense of Being Consulted Improves with More DEI Strategies

● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE

AVERAGE RESPONSES ON A SCALE OF 1 (EXTREMELY DISAGREE) TO 10 (EXTREMELY AGREE)

I am consulted before my organization makes key decisions that impact my work





“

DEI is not just training to be completed. It needs to be ingrained in every process, procedure, and interaction. As I say to my Task Force members and everyone else, ‘It’s not a sprint; it’s a marathon.’”

—Black Woman Senior

Manager

DEI and Nonprofit Sector Racial Barriers to Advancement



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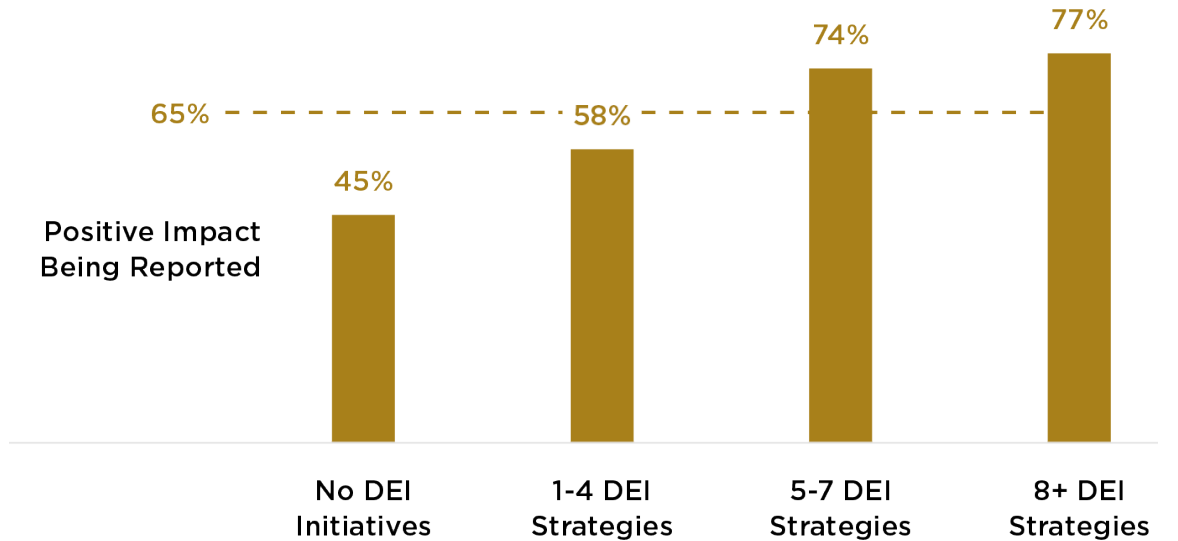
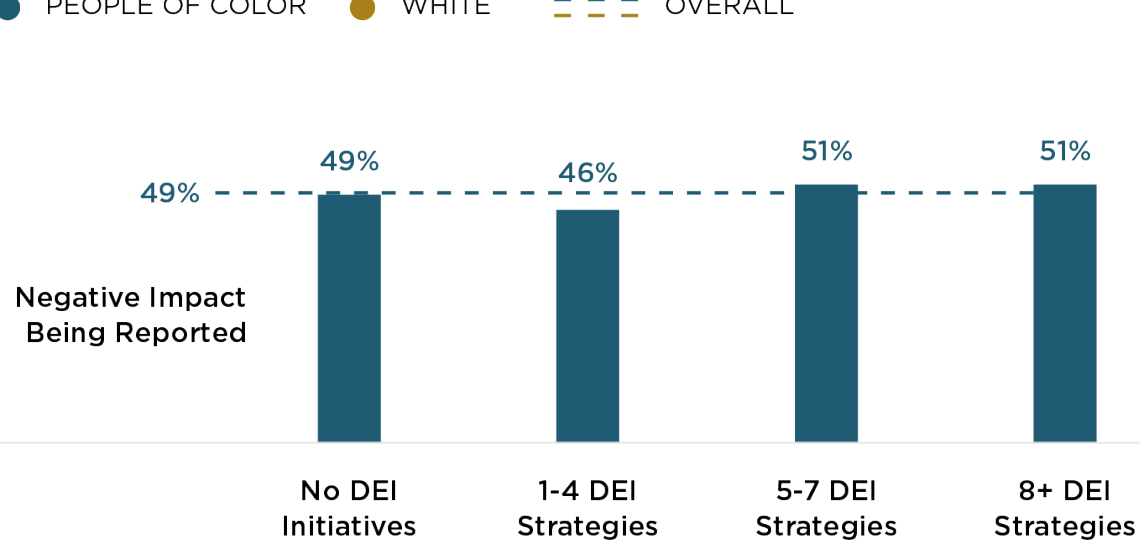


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Career Advancement By Number of DEI Strategies



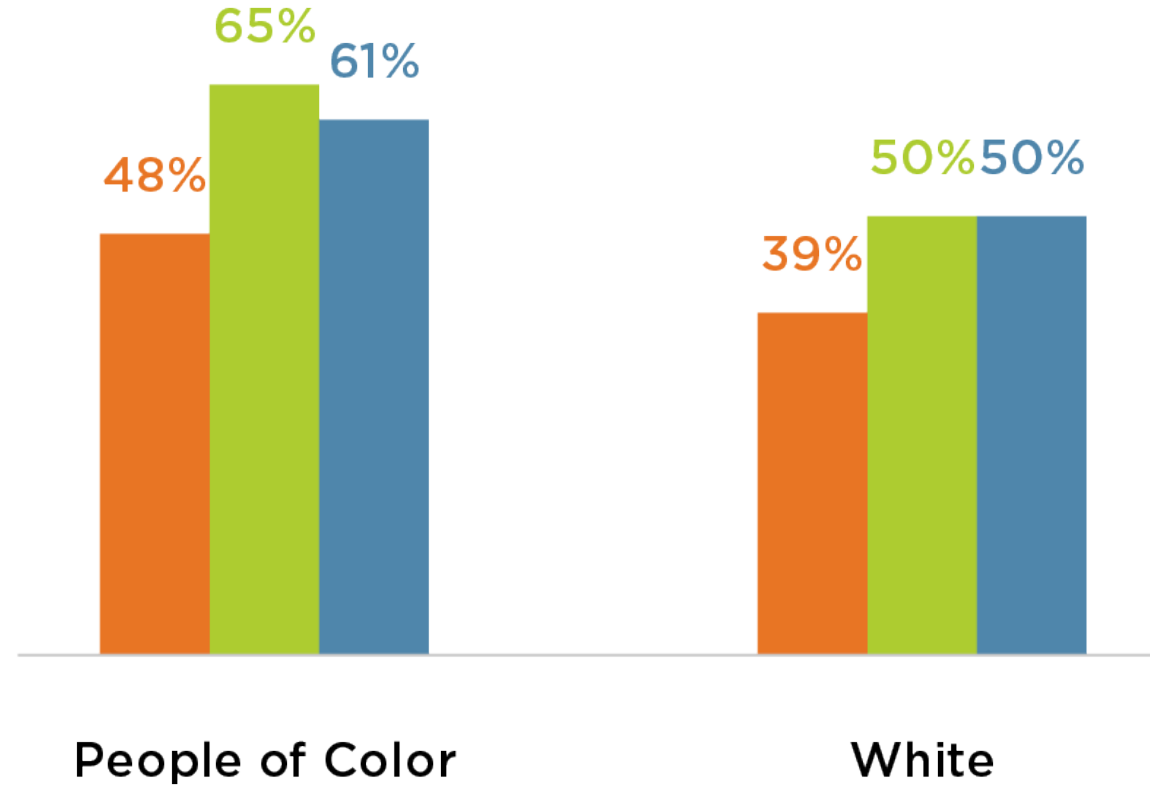
● PEOPLE OF COLOR ● WHITE — OVERALL



Perception of Nonprofits' Ability to Address Race Equity



● 2016 ● 2019 ● 2022





“

Nonprofits aren't *creating* tensions through DEI work, they're unearthing tensions that have always been there but it wasn't safe enough for BIPOC stakeholders to bring them up, but then they are absolutely often ill-equipped to handle those issues, especially historically white-led orgs.”

—White Gender Non-Binary Senior

Manager

Implications



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Implications



Fund DEI initiatives in small nonprofits.



Strengthen work to dismantle structural barriers.



Address concerns about effectiveness and resistance.



“

Most nonprofits I have worked for are very interested in doing DEI training, reframing their mission, and taking one-off symbolic actions to address racial and gender equity, but are unwilling to examine and fundamentally change the structural causes of inequities that usually rest in formal and unstated cultural aspects of how the organization runs, histories of leadership and how people are hired and promoted, and creating space and accommodations for different working styles, needs, etc.”

— White Woman Middle

Manager

Moderated Panel Discussion



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Audience Q&A



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Thank you!

Questions, comments?



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