

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at IDEO

IDEO is driven by the ambition to create positive impact in the world through design and creativity, and to help others do the same. Fostering a diverse community of talent and ensuring an equitable and inclusive workplace are essential to that ambition.

Across our global organization, we are committed to making IDEO a place where everyone has equal access to opportunity and growth, where our differences are celebrated and cherished, and where those differences fuel our collective creativity.

Building on best practices, IDEO approaches diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) in the way we approach design: as a continual work in progress that requires deep listening, collaboration, curiosity, building, evaluation, and revision. An important indication of our progress in building an inclusive organization is how the demographic diversity of our community evolves, especially at senior levels of the organization.

We will continue to share this information publicly by publishing summary data annually, along with the insights and actions that are shaping our journey.

We have included our summary data for the years of 2020 (page 1) and 2021 (page 18).

2020 DE&I SUMMARY

For the first time, we are publicly sharing IDEO's demographic data. These numbers, along with the steps we will take to improve them, are a crucial ingredient in our commitment to advancing equity and diversity. By owning this reality, and shining a light on our organization's shortcomings, we plan to create a culture of greater accountability.

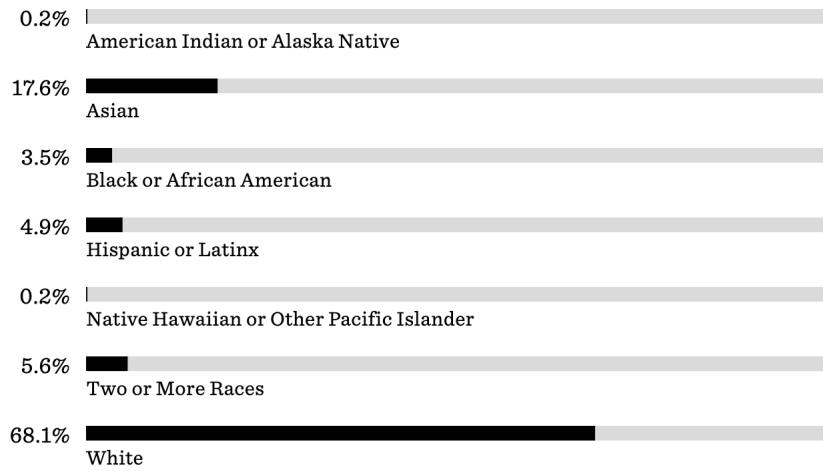
This information is collected from our employees at the time of hiring, and the specific data collected varies from country to country.

December 2020

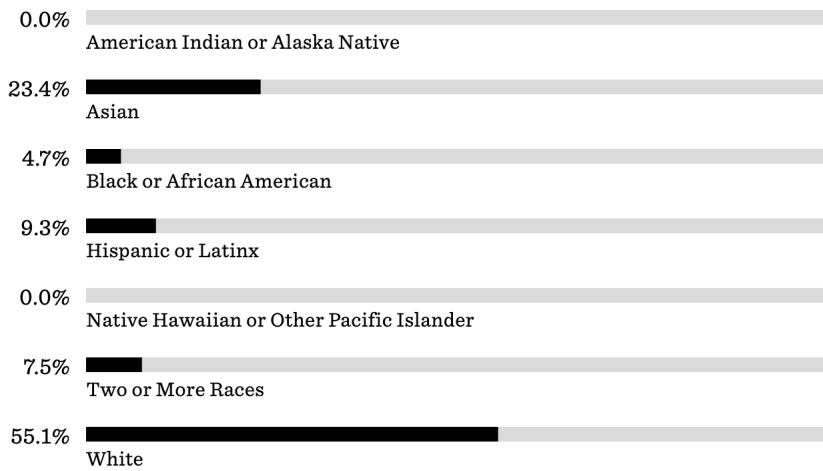
2020 Diversity Data

Race/Ethnicity (U.S.)

EVERYONE

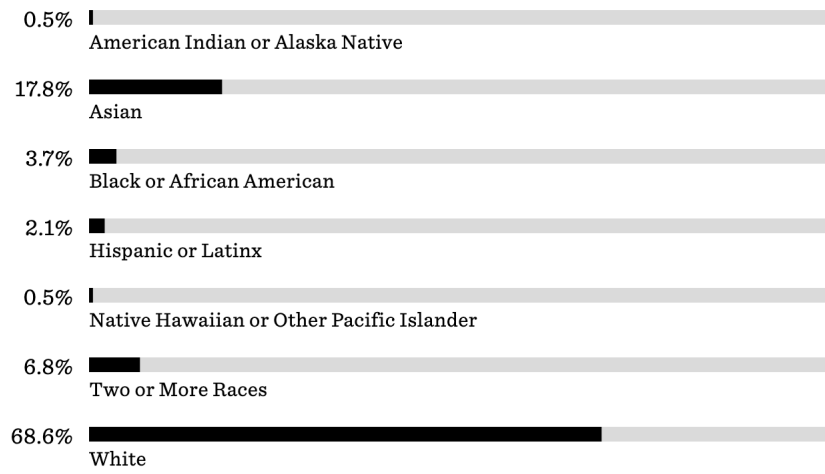


INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

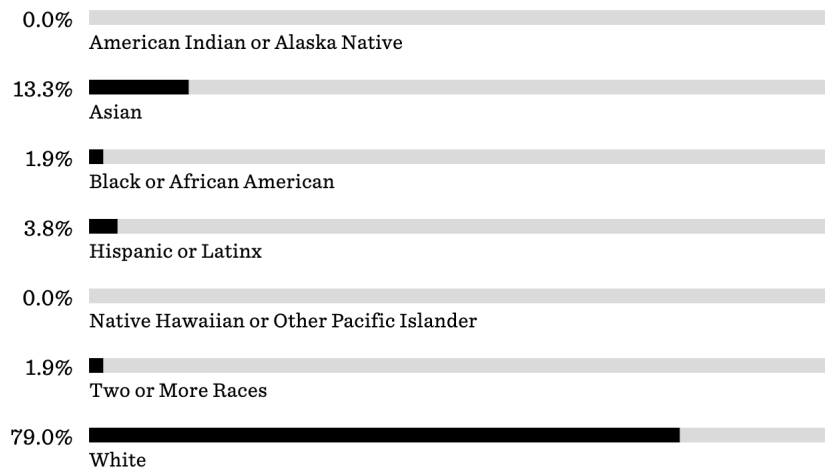


Race/Ethnicity (U.S.) *continued*

TEAM LEADS

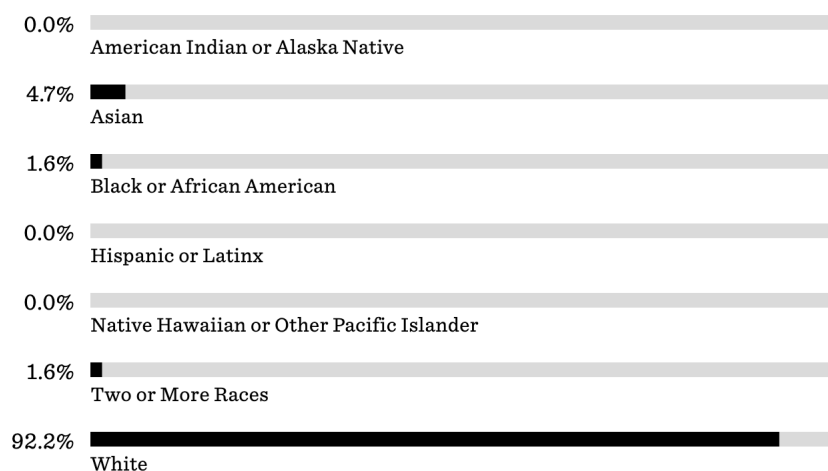


DIRECTORS



Race/Ethnicity (U.S.) *continued*

SENIOR LEADERSHIP



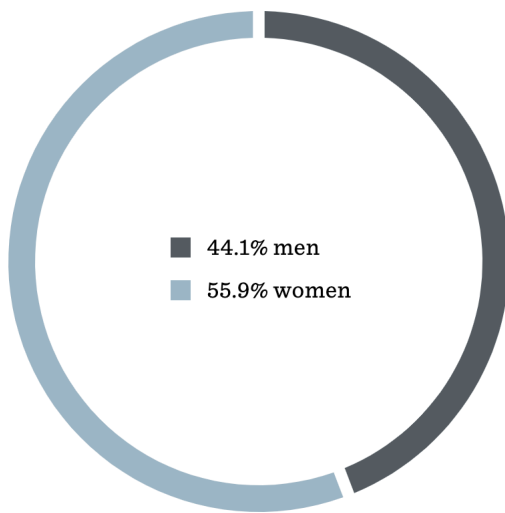
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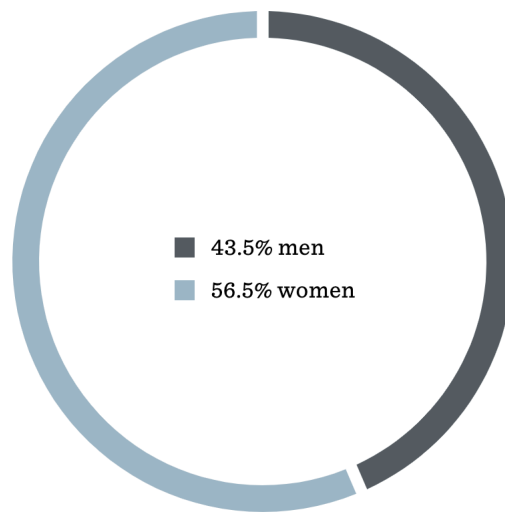
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- IDEO does not collect race/ethnicity data in countries outside the United States.
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 - **Individual Contributors** — Focus primarily on individual contributions to teams and/or departments.
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Gender – U.S. Data

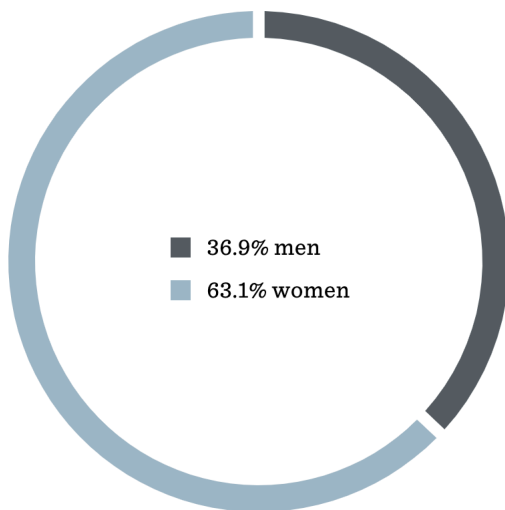
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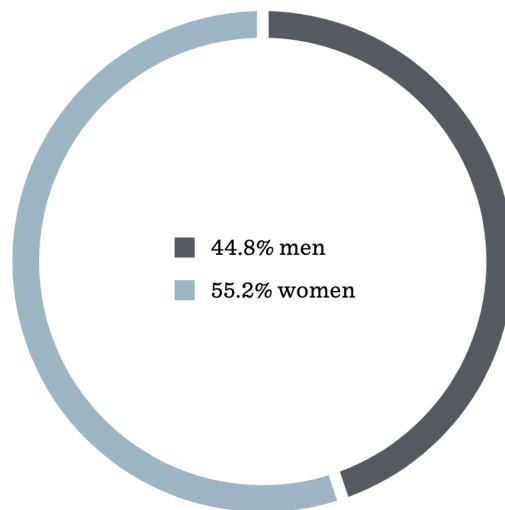
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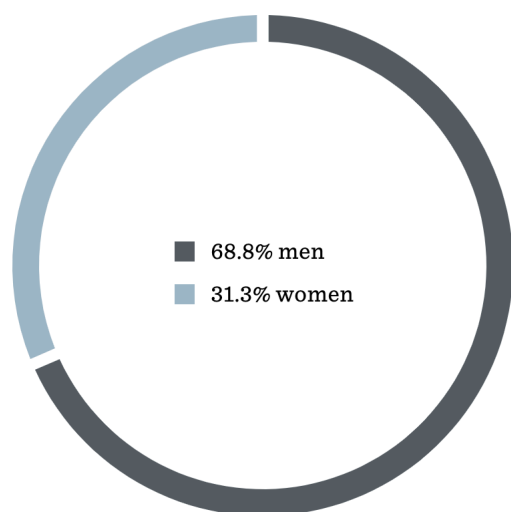


DIRECTORS



Gender – U.S. Data *continued*

SENIOR LEADERSHIP



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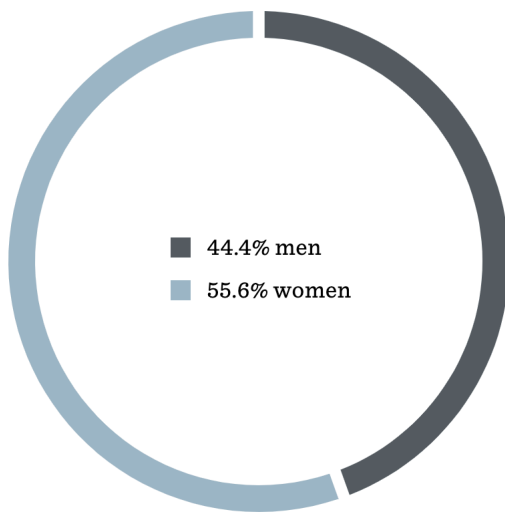
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We are mindful that in addition to the legal protections, cultural attitudes vary between countries with regard to collection of sensitive personal data. Our locations outside the U.S. are not required to self-identify their ethnicity and gender at time of hire. Historically, privacy laws and employee feedback have informed our limited collection of demographic data. In Europe and Asia, reporting requirements mean that some internal collection and analysis of assumed gender is required and is retained in our HR system. This system is the source of the information provided.

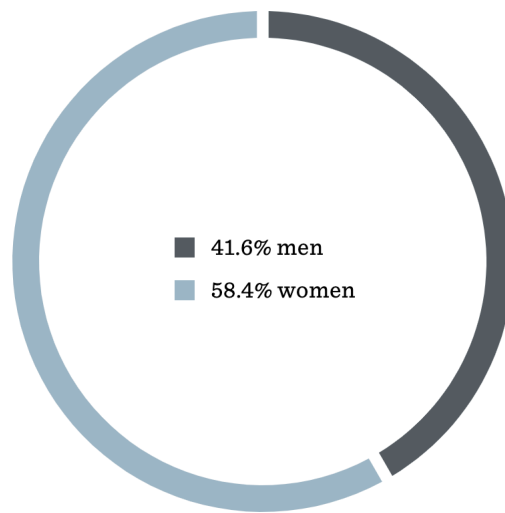
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Gender – Global Data

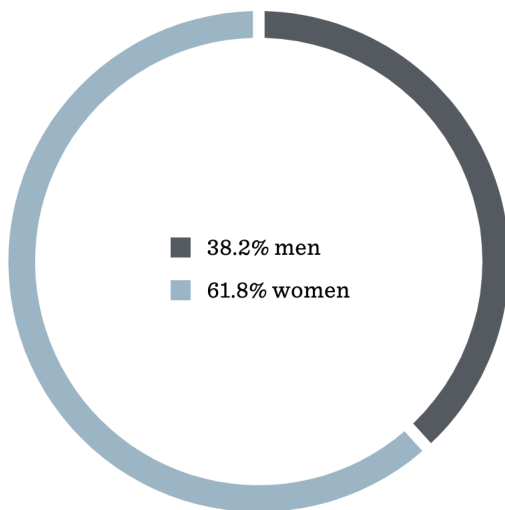
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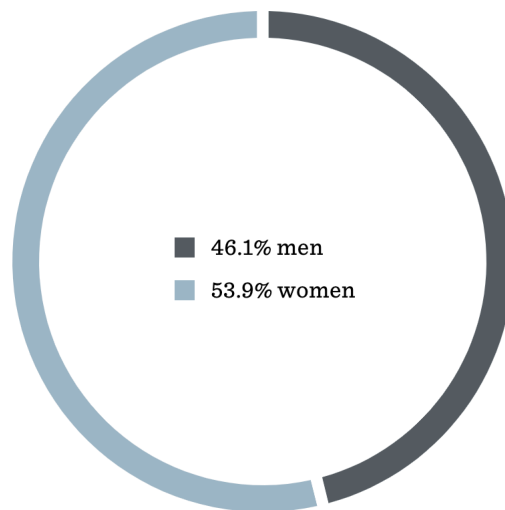
TEAM LEADS



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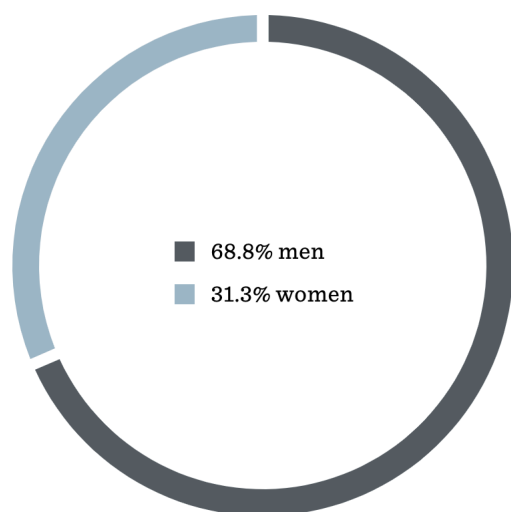


DIRECTORS



Gender – Global Data *continued*

SENIOR LEADERSHIP



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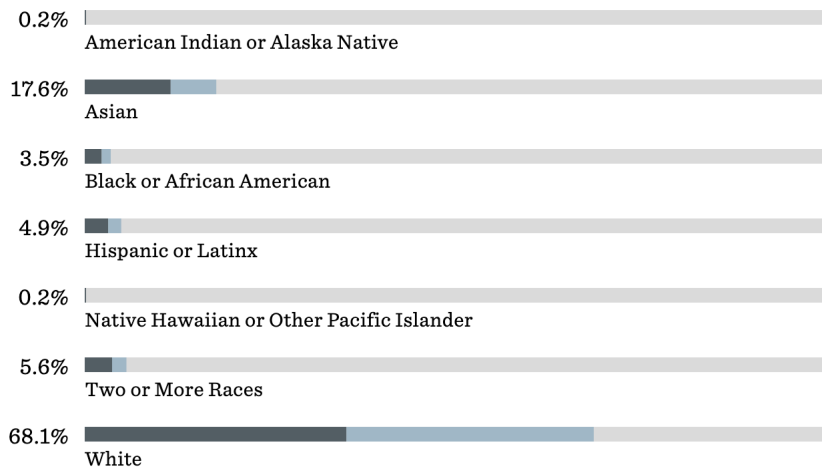
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Race & Gender Intersection (U.S.)

AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE



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2020 Data Observations

IDEO has long expressed a belief that diverse teams strengthen innovation, and we held up multidisciplinary teams as our primary example. Yet it is clear through this data that we have been underinvesting in building a community of people with diverse racial backgrounds and gender identities.

Design as an industry—and IDEO as an organization—has long been disproportionately composed of white men. People of color currently represent 31.9 percent of IDEO’s U.S. offices. Only 3.5 percent of the IDEO U.S. community is Black, and 4.9 percent is Hispanic/Latinx. While there is a lack of racial diversity across all levels, our senior leadership level is of particular concern, with only 7.8 percent people of color. IDEO needs to invest in hiring, retaining, and recognizing Black, Indigenous and Latinx employees at all levels, and especially at the director and senior leadership levels. This will not only strengthen our collective ability to do great work, but will help more IDEO employees see that there’s opportunity for growth and a future for them in this organization.

While we have made progress over the years in creating more gender balance, with women now representing 55.6 percent of our global community, there is a significant drop-off of women at the senior leadership level to only 28.4 percent globally. IDEO needs to invest in supporting more women in leadership roles overall, and in particular, retain women leaders through their transition from director-level roles into senior leadership.

Additionally, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) reporting does not include non-binary gender representation. An internal IDEO survey showed that our community includes individuals who identify beyond binary gender distinctions, including Agender, Androgynous, Bigender, Femme, Genderqueer, Gender fluid, Gender non-conforming, Questioning, Transgender, and Two Spirit. IDEO needs to ensure we are creating a safe and welcoming place for people to pursue their career aspirations, regardless of where one might identify on the gender spectrum.

2020 Actions

As of September 2020, we have many internal projects underway in line with our commitments to five focus areas: talent, training, community, design and culture. Nevertheless, we have a long road to travel and much still to learn before establishing the priorities that will move us toward real change. Here are the actions we have taken to date to begin designing sustained accountability into our organization, and our plans for continued progress toward this goal.

1. Elevate underrepresented voices

We created a new leadership group to steward the evolution of our culture.

The remit of this group is to guide the transformation of our organizational culture, norms, and power relations away from the historical white dominance of the design industry, and toward a more diverse and equitable future. The group includes IDEO's CEO and Chief of Staff, and is configured with a majority of women and BIPOC voices spanning a range of seniority, disciplines, and tenure.

We assembled a dedicated group to surface and share more equitable approaches to design.

This group is examining past and current IDEO work to highlight examples of design practice centered in equity and community. One of their primary objectives is to open new dialogues within the organization that re-examine and improve our design methods.

We will formalize the creation of Employee Resource Groups, including the framework for how these groups are established and funded, and how they engage with decision makers in our organization.

2. Assess our demographics and culture

We published IDEO's demographic data. For the first time, IDEO has compiled global demographic data, including U.S.-based EEO data. This data has been shared both internally and externally, creating a baseline for tracking and holding ourselves accountable.

We collected a more comprehensive view of our organization. EEO data does not allow us to accurately reflect IDEO's makeup and culture, in the U.S. or globally. This summer, we launched a more inclusive internal survey to learn about the many ways our community defines their individual identities, and the ways that people experience working at IDEO.

We will publish observations about our culture and the employee lifecycle at IDEO, internally and externally, collected through the more comprehensive survey and internal conversations. Observations from these inputs will then inform how we redesign internal processes and systems.

3. Develop targeted goals

We identified DE&I priorities for everyone in our U.S. offices. The demographic data clearly shows: 1) We need to increase the number of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) and women leaders, particularly at our most senior leadership level. 2) We need to hire, retain, recognize, and elevate BIPOC designers.

We will develop a set of targeted goals around recruiting, retention, and representation for our U.S. communities. We'll work on this collaboratively across IDEO, and leverage best practices and external expertise where necessary.

We will develop DE&I priorities in IDEO offices beyond the U.S. that respond to the dynamics of local cultures.

Our Foundational Commitments to DE&I

May 2023

In July 2020, IDEO made commitments to address systemic racism both internally and in the design industry at large. The statements we made were in response to the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in the United States, a horrific event that incited worldwide outrage, protest, and a demand for change across private and public sectors.

The journey that followed was a humbling one. We quickly realized that we had overcommitted ourselves by underestimating the challenges of creating systemic change, even within our own organization.

To ensure we could fulfill our commitments to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization, we sought the expertise of external collaborators. DEI Works Collective helped us refocus our internal goals, identifying where the most critical change was needed to impact those most marginalized within our walls.

IDEO has evolved since making our foundational commitments in 2020, and our pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion has evolved with us. To learn more about our approach today, visit [ideo.com/equity](https://www.ideo.com/equity). For more on how we design for inclusion across all of our work, head to [ideo.com](https://www.ideo.com).

Our Acknowledgment

Systemic racism is by design. It is the product of intentional choices made by individuals and institutions, which have compounded over time. The United States has over-policed, over-punished, and underinvested in the Black community.

Black people have lived with this reality for centuries. It should not have taken 8 minutes and 46 seconds of watching George Floyd suffer for the rest of society to awaken. Black people are incarcerated at five times the rate of whites. Mortality rates for Black mothers are over two times that of white mothers and the unemployment rate for Black workers is over two times the rate of their white counterparts. Our systems are inequitable, biased, and uphold racism in this country. The truth is that these systems are designed for racial disparity.

At IDEO, we haven't listened well enough—not inside our company, nor in the wider world. We are grateful for the comments we've received, from our colleagues and broader community, over the last two weeks. When we shared anti-racism resources last week on Instagram, it was centered on white guilt and it was wrong. We should have said clearly: Black Lives Matter. We should have called out the white dominance of the design industry, and recognized the harsh truths of our industry's role in perpetuating inequity. And we should have acknowledged directly that IDEO, as a leader, has been part of the problem.

We have a collective responsibility to design new systems. We have attempted to do so in some of our work, but we have not moved as quickly or as boldly as we should have. We cannot be successful until we re-examine our values, our relationships, and how we practice design itself. We acknowledge the long journey we have ahead of us as a company—to stand in full humility, reckon with white privilege, and unlearn the ways in which we have been socialized to maintain systems of racism.

June 2020

Our Commitments

As a global design firm, we've learned that Diversity Equity & Inclusion have different dynamics in each of the markets in which we are based: China, Germany, Japan, UK, and USA. Those dynamics grow even more disparate across the many global markets in which we work.

We commit to centering equity across IDEO in the following five focus areas: talent, training, community, design, and culture. We commit to assessing ourselves throughout our learning journey, towards deeply understanding what it means to become an equitable organization. We know that this will take time, and that is why these commitments are designed for the long-term.

Talent: *IDEO is nothing without its people. The excellence of this organization includes the numerous contributions of our Black colleagues. We acknowledge that we needed to lean on them in this humbling moment. We recognize that it is not their responsibility to repair our DE&I issues or usher us on the path away from systemic racism. We are grateful for their patience as we learn what is necessary for change. Ultimately, we need more of this brilliance at our company. We commit to:*

- Publicly share the demographic data from our US offices by the end of the summer and continue sharing annually. We will also establish and publish clear goals at that time.
- Ensure we're continuously diversifying our community by hiring, promoting, and cultivating more people of color, in particular Black, Indigenous, and Latinx designers.
- Continuing to recognize and reduce bias in our evaluation and talent support processes. We implemented a new 360 degree feedback system for all of IDEO at the end of 2019 to reduce bias in our bi-annual evaluations. We commit to making improvements to this process.
- Having pay equity across IDEO. We completed a gender equity pay review in late 2019, and are planning to review pay equity by race this year.

Training: *Becoming an equitable organization will take years to fully realize. We will embody inclusive leadership to better support our people and design practice. In the long-term, we will train our people in understanding what anti-racist principles are and how they would apply at IDEO. Here's where we are starting:*

- We are finalizing inclusive leadership curriculum for our enterprise leaders to participate in this fall. We will adapt and scale this training for the rest of our organization in 2021.
- IDEO began offering unconscious bias training, known internally as Real Talk Theater, to members of our leadership in August 2018. All of our partners and enterprise leaders had completed two modules as of April 2019. We brought this training to our Cambridge, Chicago, London, Munich, New York, Shanghai, and Tokyo studios, and have plans to hold the training in San Francisco. In the future, there will be new modules added on an ongoing basis.
- Last year, we created a training called the Craft of Interviewing, which aims to reduce bias in the hiring process. The training is currently in use in all of IDEO's global locations. Going forward, we will ensure that everyone who is a part of the interview process goes through this training.

Community: *We will establish and foster enduring relationships with communities of color to increase access and create more opportunities in the design industry. We will also take a proactive approach to support external organizations dedicated to dismantling systemic racism.*

- We have committed \$500,000 per year in design services for the next three years to support external organizations working on racial justice. We will share more details and a call to organizations in forthcoming communications.
- We will establish more partnerships with local organizations across our US offices. To date, we've partnered with [SMASH](#) (Oakland), [LINK Unlimited Scholars](#) (Chicago) and others on programs that expose young, underrepresented people to design.
- We will work with our Experience teams (who support our internal communities, facilities, and programming) to understand the number of [minority-owned](#) businesses we partner with as our vendors and suppliers, and expand those relationships where we are lacking.

Design: *We know that the design process must change, as well as how design work is executed across teams and locations. We're creating tools to check our own biases, center on communities, and expand our work from "designing for" to "designing with." We want to increase access to the design industry.*

- We commit to publicly sharing our best tools and recognizing the tools of others, in order to have conversations about how to move the design field forward.
- We will give talks in new places, collaborate with different universities, and support additional programs (like we have with [the Consortium](#)) to diversify the design practice.

Culture: *We will re-evaluate the white-dominant company culture that persists, understand the ways in which that culture can be exclusive, embrace new perspectives and experiences, and redefine what it means to be an IDEOer.*

- We are launching a company-wide survey that will measure our cultural diversity and attitudes towards inclusion by the end of 2020. We commit to sharing these attitudes and insights externally to learn and share best practices.
- IDEO will recognize two new paid holidays annually for our US-based employees: Juneteenth and Election Day. This year they will be Friday, June 19 and Tuesday, November 3.

These are our first set of commitments. We are working on more and will continually update this page with new commitments, as well as reports on our progress.

2021 DE&I SUMMARY

An important measure of our progress will be the ongoing evolution in the diversity of our community. We will continue to share that information publicly, publishing summary data annually about demographic representation at IDEO.

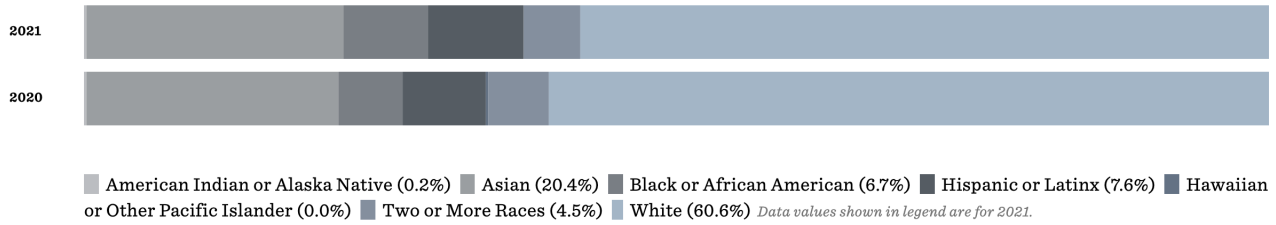
December 2021

2021 Demographic Data

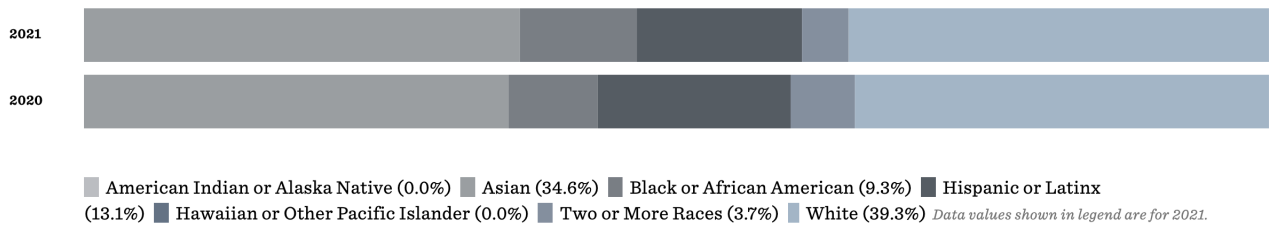
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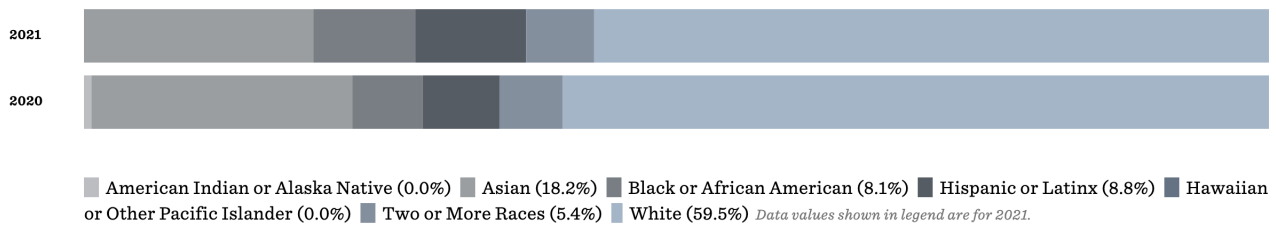
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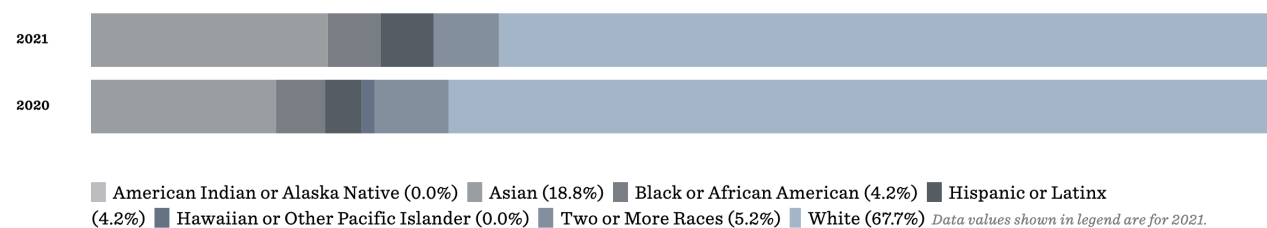


TEAM LEADS

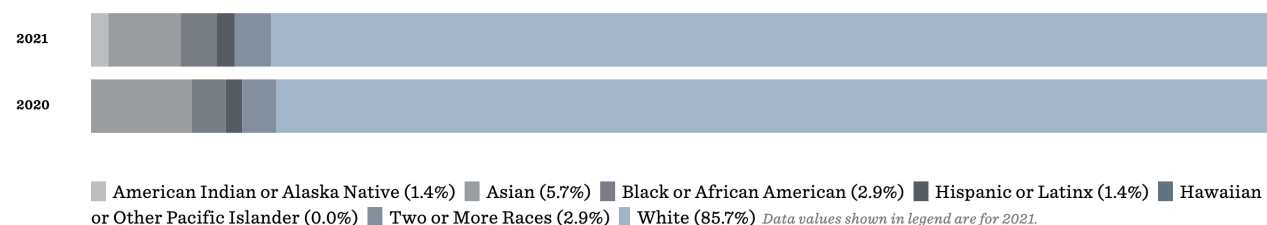


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SENIOR LEADERSHIP



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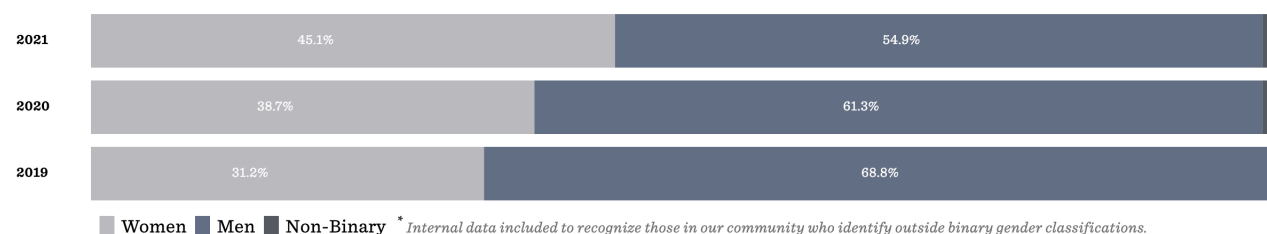


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Gender – U.S. Data *continued*

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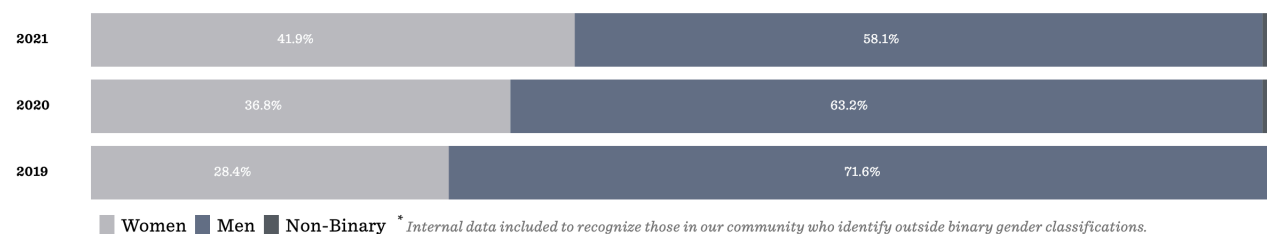


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Gender – Global Data *continued*

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Race & Gender Intersection (U.S.)

AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE



ASIAN



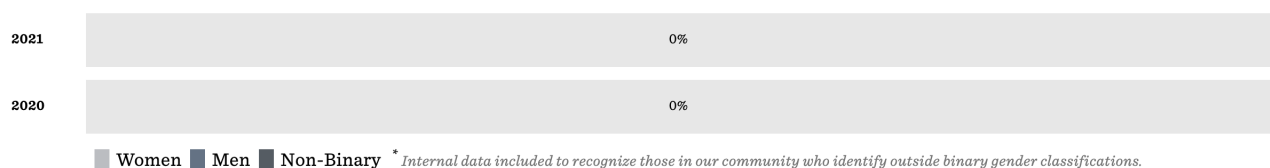
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN



HISPANIC OR LATIN



HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER



Race & Gender Intersection (U.S.) *continued*

TWO OR MORE RACES



WHITE



DATA DETAILS

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IDEO’s employment data, in accordance with government requirements, inaccurately presents gender as binary. We don’t agree with this presentation and want to publicly recognize the members of our community who identify outside a binary gender framework, including Agender, Androgynous, Bigender, Gender non-conforming, More than one, Questioning, and Two Spirit.

2021 Data Observations

IDEO needs more Black, Indigenous, and Latinx employees at all levels, especially at the director and senior leadership levels. 37 percent of IDEO's US workforce identifies as people of color in 2021, in 2020 it was 32 percent. However, IDEO's U.S. community is still only 5 percent Black, less than 1 percent Indigenous, and less than 7 percent Hispanic/Latinx. While the proportion of people of color in leadership positions grew from 8 percent in 2020 to 15 percent in 2021, we must continue to build on this foundation.

Women represent 57 percent of our global community (the same as in 2020), yet the proportion of women at the senior leadership level is measurably smaller than base representation. In the last year, the gap was somewhat reduced: the proportion of women in senior leadership roles rose from 28 percent globally to 37 percent, a 30% change. We must continue to bring more women into leadership roles and retain women leaders transitioning into enterprise leadership in order for gender representation at senior levels to be consistent with the base representation in the company, overall.

Additionally, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) reporting does not include non-binary gender representation. By our own standard, that makes our gender data incomplete. This limitation does not compromise our efforts to make IDEO a safe and welcoming place for people of all genders to pursue their career aspirations.

2021 Actions

An important focus in 2021 has been to ensure that our work to build an inclusive and equitable culture can result in lasting change. We have listened inside IDEO, across the design industry, and in the world to better understand the root causes of the inequity we intend to design out of our systems.

A number of insights from that work have informed the evolution in our DE&I strategy in 2021. These include:

DE&I is (and must be) contextual. It's critical to allow our communities in different geographies to define DE&I for their local context.

Onboarding matters. Onboarding of new team members is a critical moment in determining someone's trajectory of belonging.

Ambiguity can be a barrier to inclusion. Ambiguity in our performance and compensation systems, in particular, are a source of particular frustration.

Over-reliance on social capital is also a barrier. A creative culture that relies on social capital is a system that advantages some groups over others.

Redesign needs to start with systems. Formal structures transfer burdens from individuals to systems, where most of those burdens belong.

These insights, coupled with a series of structural changes and trainings over the past year, have helped us develop and iterate our approach to this work.

For the year ahead, we are organizing our work to build a diverse team and inclusive culture at IDEO into four key initiatives:

1. Ensure that all of us learn to adopt **mindsets and behaviors** that support inclusion.
2. Build **internal systems** that promote broad representation and equitable access to opportunity and information.
3. Support the authentic integration of inclusive, responsible, and ethical **design practices** into our core capabilities.
4. Expand **access to design** for communities that are underrepresented or excluded from it.

In 2021, these initiatives, built from our stated commitments in 2020, encompass efforts from teams in every region across IDEO, including:

- DE&I leadership groups in each geography in which we operate
- Employee Resource Groups as formal structures for identity groups to foster community and connect with global leadership
- Coaching support for people of color at IDEO for self-directed needs
- An internal community-led collective to evolve our design practice and put inclusivity and equity at its core
- Engagements to refresh our compensation philosophy and set conditions for pay equity
- Mandatory interview training for all involved in hiring to promote consistency and decrease bias during interviews
- Mandatory inclusive leadership training for everyone in a management position
- Systems to support anonymous feedback and reporting
- Workshops for all at IDEO to understand trust as a foundation for inclusion
- Equal access to learning resources that include modules on DE&I fundamentals
- Design workshops for youth in Chicago, London, San Francisco, and Tokyo, including communities that have had less access to the design industry
- A fellowship to expand opportunity in design through a paid, full-time employment experience at IDEO, designed specifically for BIPOC individuals (in partnership with RepresentED)
- Started relationships with and provided in-kind design services for three external organizations working on racial justice

There is much work ahead, including the fulfillment of outstanding commitments from 2020. In 2022, we will advance our four key initiatives with particular focus on programs that support and enable inclusive leadership, widespread trust and psychological safety, effective allyship and accompliceship, a strong network of Employee Resource Groups, and the growth and retention of people from underrepresented communities.