Initial Report & Survey Methodology

NEXT GEN ARCH

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI) INITIATIVE

AIA
New York

Contents

AIA National 2017 Diversity Statement

The American Institute of Architects, as part of the global community, champions a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the profession of architecture to create a better environment for all. Achieving this vision has a direct impact on the relevance of our profession and the world's prosperity, health, and future.

Introduction

AIA New York's Diversity and Inclusion Committee seeks to foster dialogues about diversity and give agency to issues of inclusion and representation through engagement, education, and empowerment.

While New York is famed for being a diverse city and has the largest number of AIA members nationwide, thus far there has been no consolidated benchmark data for architectural professionals within the NYC metro community. Therefore, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee began the 2017 AIANY Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Member Survey as part of the Next Gen Arch research initiative funded by an AIANY Committee Excellence Grant. The aim of the survey was to quantify the current representation in the chapter, to capture certain perceptions about equity in the profession, and to build on existing local, state, and national efforts.

Some selected findings from the EDI survey were released in conjunction with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee's involvement in the A'18 Conference on Architecture and later that summer with A Call to Act(ivism); Echoing Whitney Young, 50 Years Later, a Center for Architecture exhibition curated by committee co-chair Danei Cesario. The exhibition linked survey findings to the historic challenge issued by Whitney Young during his keynote speech at the 1968 AIA Conference. Echoing headlines of half a century ago, current events have illuminated the remaining room for improvement in social, racial and economic equity.

These research results will hopefully serve as a genesis for dialogues around necessary cultural shifts in the profession and as a resource for industry members and leaders to set actionable goals in their respective organizations.
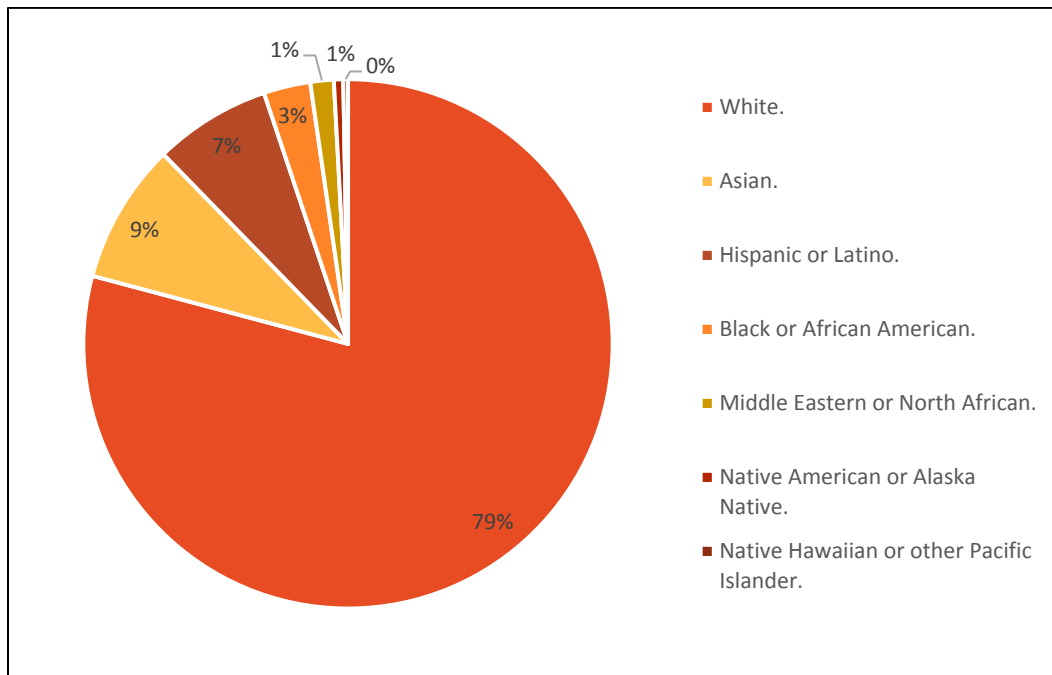
Project Development

Timeline of the Development of the Research Project

The EDI survey was run in the spring and summer of 2017 and distributed among the AIA New York community via email, with results reviewed and analyzed by Reitman Research & Strategy over the course of the fall. The process was a pilot program; many lessons have been learned along the way and will be applied to future data collection efforts.

Survey Overview

Overall, 448 people participated in the survey. Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents were female, while 61 percent were male. Most survey respondents identified as white (79 percent) while 12 percent identified as Underrepresented Architects of Color (see additional explanation below) and 9 percent identified as Asian.

Figure 2: Race of Respondents

Legend:
- White.
- Asian.
- Hispanic or Latino.
- Black or African American.
- Middle Eastern or North African.
- Native American or Alaska Native.
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

Figure 3: Race of Respondents Recoded into Three Categories[1]

- White Architects
- Underrepresented Architects of Color
- Asian Architects
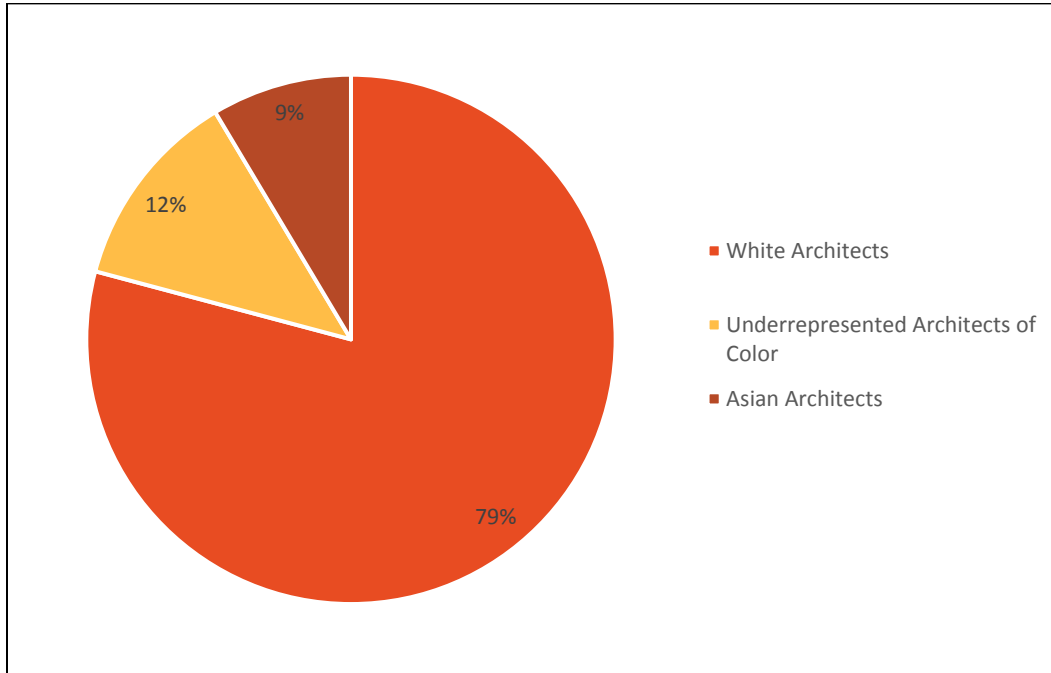
[1] To run meaningful analyses, we recoded the expanded race variable into three categories to indicate varying levels of underrepresentation by race. According to the EEOC,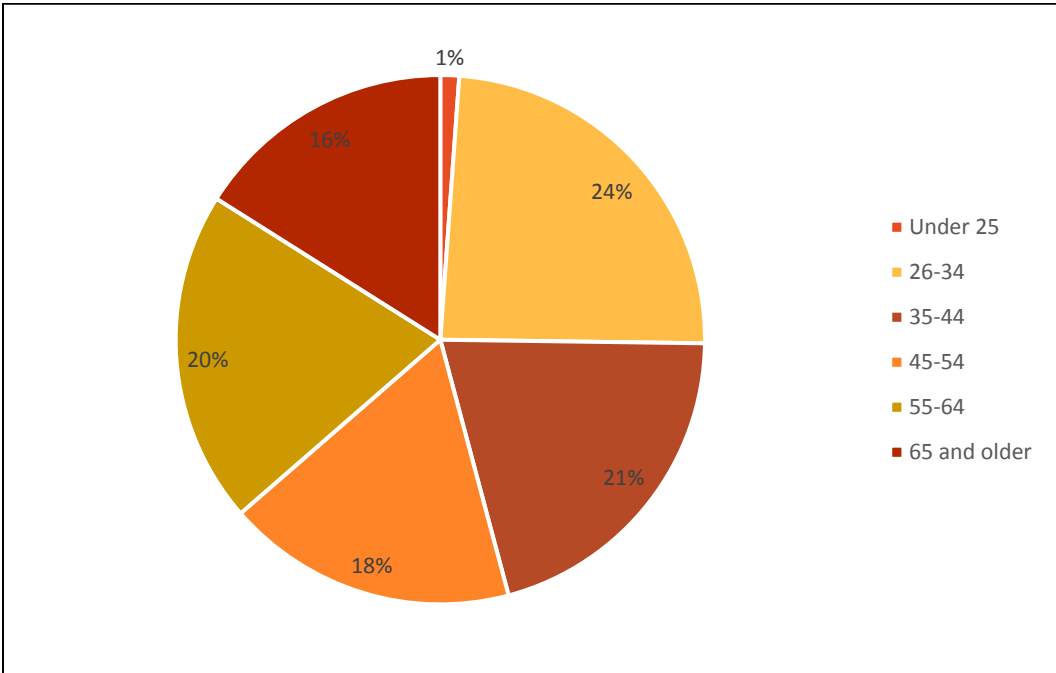 a rule of thumb for estimating underrepresentation is when less than 80% of what would be expected from the estimated labor pool for that group is represented in the occupation. These three categories therefore include: "Underrepresented Architects of Color" (those who identified as Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African, Native American or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander), Asian Architects (those who identified as Asian but are pulled out of the former category because they are overrepresented in the profession) and White Architects (who are also overrepresented in the profession but may have fundamentally different experiences from Asian Architects).

Figure 4: Gender of Respondents

Pie chart:
- Male Architects: 61%
- Female Architects: 39%
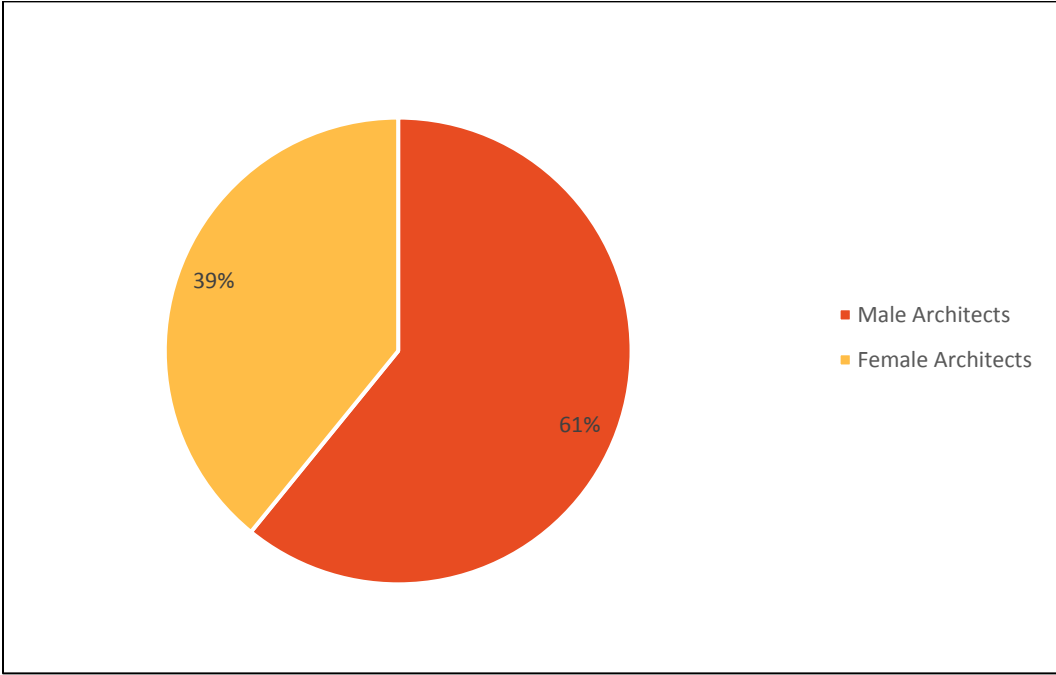
Figure 5: Age of Respondents (categorized from raw numbers)

Pie chart:
- Under 25: 1%
- 26-34: 24%
- 35-44: 21%
- 45-54: 18%
- 55-64: 20%
- 65 and older: 16%

Figure 6: Income of Respondents (categorized from 36 original categories)

Legend:
- <75K
- 75-99K
- 100-149K
- 150K+

(23% / 26% / 30% / 21%)
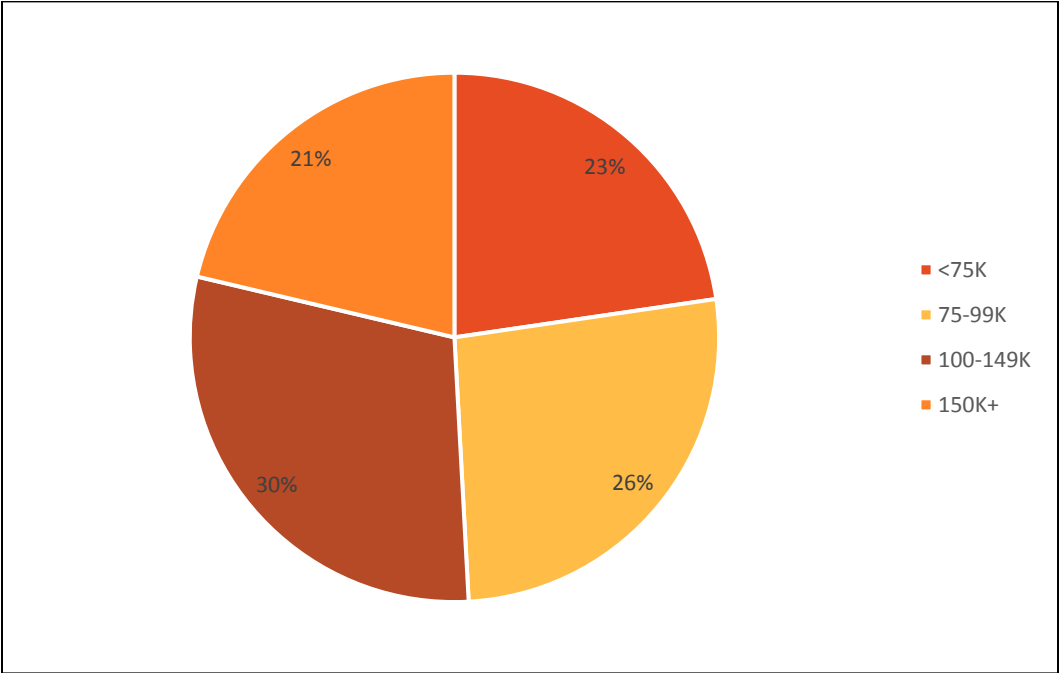
Figure 7: Membership Type of Respondents

Legend:
- Architect-chapter
- Associate-chapter
- Non-member
- Architect Fellow-chapter
- Architect Emeritus-chapter
- Architect Fellow Emeritus-chapter
- International Associate-chapter

(69% / 13% / 7% / 6% / 4% / 1% / 0%)
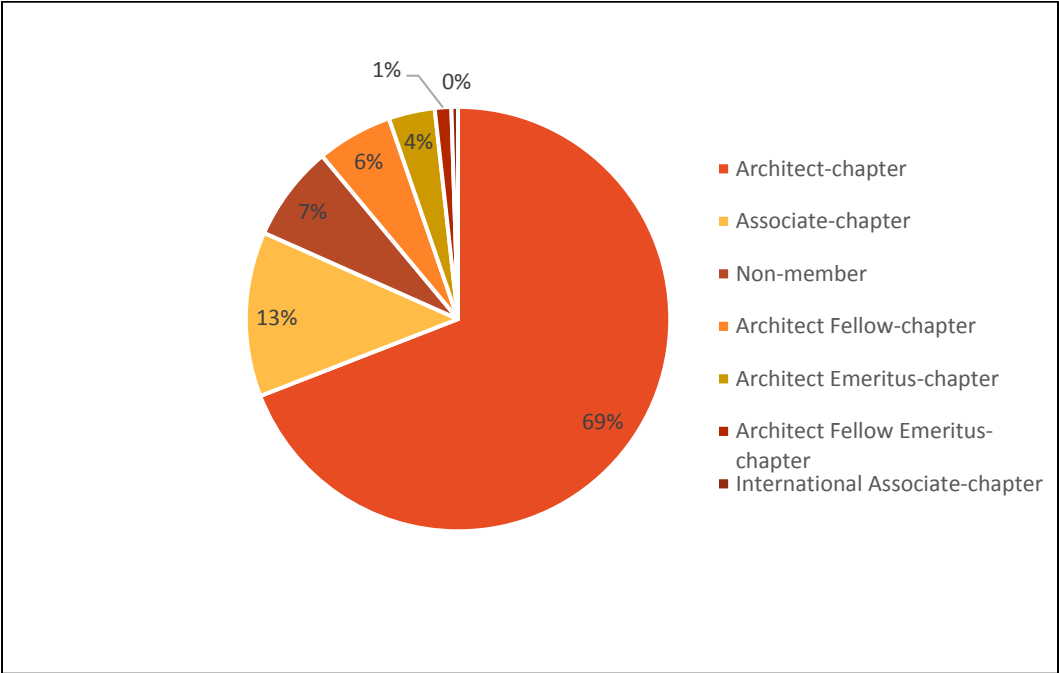
Figure 8: Employment Status of Respondents

- Employed for wages.
- Self-employed (freelance, sole proprietor, etc.).
- Retired.
- Out of work and looking for work.

1%
4%
22%
73%
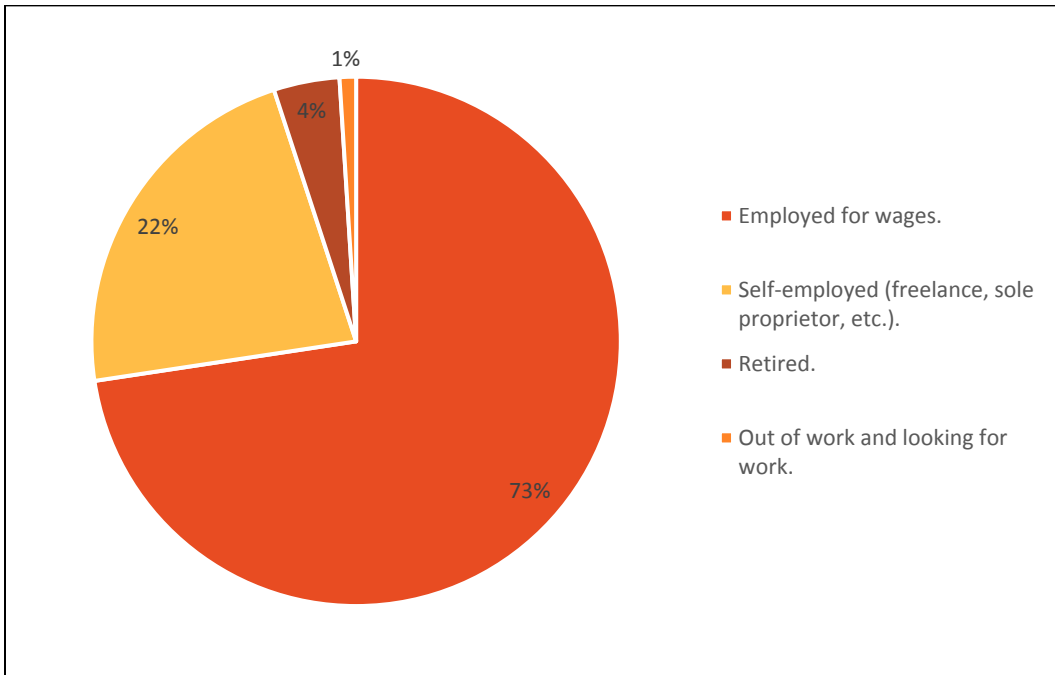
Figure 9: Type of Workplace of Respondents

- Architecture with interior design.
- Architecture only.
- Architecture with other design disciplines.
- Other (please specify).
- Architecture with engineering.
- Engineering with architecture.

5%
3%
15%
18%
32%
27%
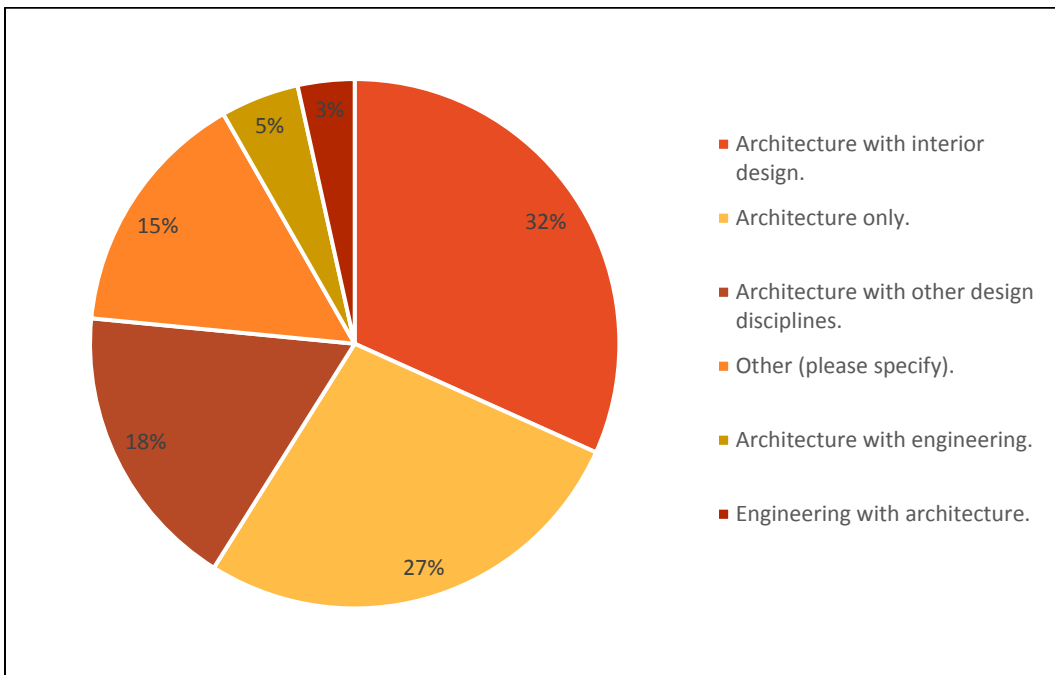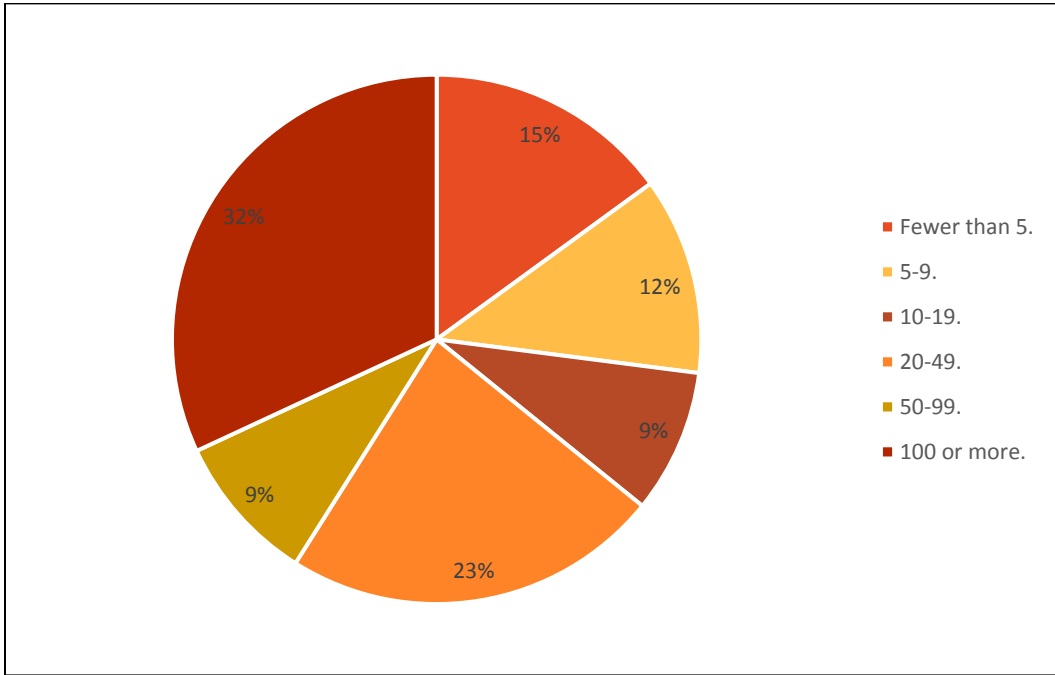
The average number of year respondents had worked in their current offices was 10.32.

Development of Research Questions

Since the data was so rich, and could be understood in so many ways, the AIANY Diversity and Inclusion Committee decided to narrow the range of focus to a specific set of prioritized research questions. To do so, they walked through an exercise that asked them to first reflect on current race and gender patterns in the profession. They then asked themselves what criteria they were using to judge whether a question should be prioritized in this research. Finally, they used these criteria to write and rank a set of research questions that seem most important.

The criteria exercise highlighted a specific interest in looking at the influence of bias in hiring, job duties and promotion; in seeing more diversity in the higher ranks of the profession; in stopping the "sieve" draining the field of underrepresent architects of color and female architects; and exploring both financial and emotional reasons for leaving the profession.

The AIANY Diversity and Inclusion Committee used these criteria to come up with a set of nine priority research questions:

1. Are UAC and/or women experiencing bias in hiring?
2. Are UAC and/or women receiving fair compensation?
3. Are UAC and/or women experiencing bias in recruitment?
4. Are UAC and/or women being provided clear steps to promotion?
5. Are UAC and/or women not having milestones recognized with increased responsibility or title change?
6. Are UAC and/or women exposed to a wide range of experiences?
7. Are UAC and/or women facing identity-related stresses, such as microaggressions or imposter syndrome?
8. Are UAC and/or women invested with the authority to make project decisions?
9. Are UAC and/or women facing too many time/energy demands?

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in AIANY: Baseline Exploration

The following section explores where AIANY is right now with respect to these research questions, using the data obtained from the survey described above.

Given that the survey was designed with different questions in mind, its data does not address some of the research questions developed later in the process as well as it could. Therefore, two of the research questions (Q1 and Q3) could not be addressed by available data but will be a focus for future research initiatives.

Q2. Are UAC and/or women receiving fair compensation?

Figure 11: "How much money do you earn?" by race[2]

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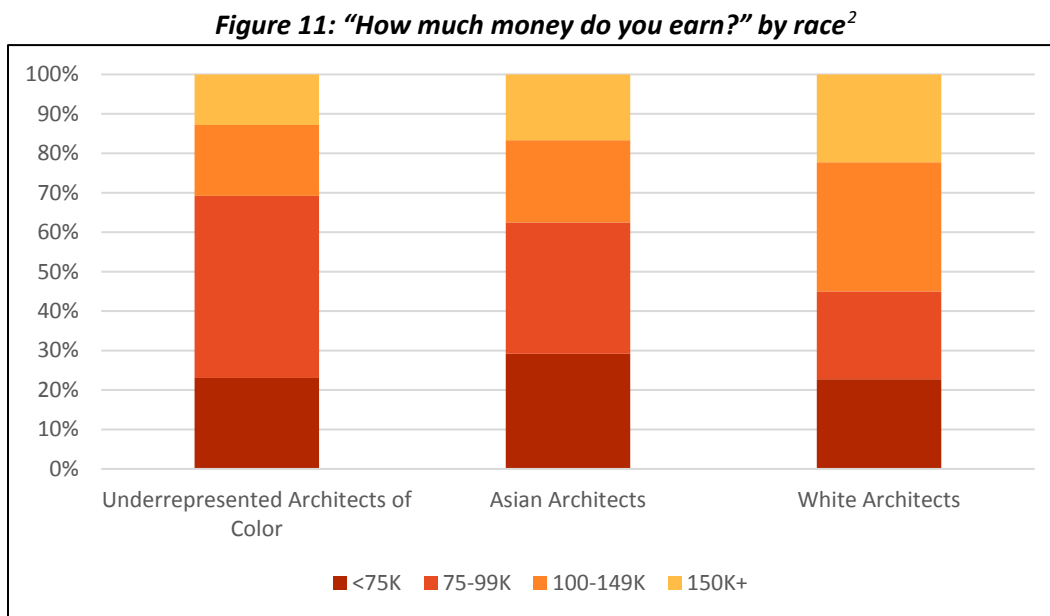
[2]Income data was collapsed from 35 categories to 5 categories that represent a relatively equal distribution of respondents.

Figure 12: "How much money do you earn?" by gender
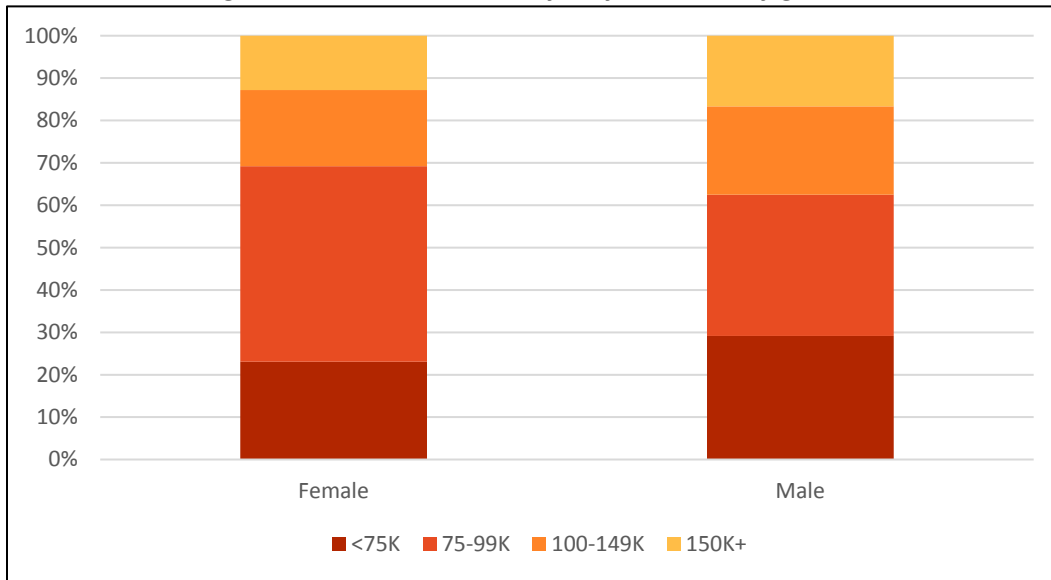
The income of underrepresented architects of color varies significantly from the income of Asian and white Architects (p < .05). Underrepresented architects of color are most likely to make between $75,000 and $99,000 a year. White architects are most likely to make $100,000 a year or more.

The income of male and female architects also varies significantly (p < .05). Women are more likely to make between $75,000 and $99,000 and men are more likely to make $100 a year or more.

Q4: Are UAC and/or women being provided clear steps to promotion?

Figure 13: "Present office supports licensure by providing mentorship." by gender
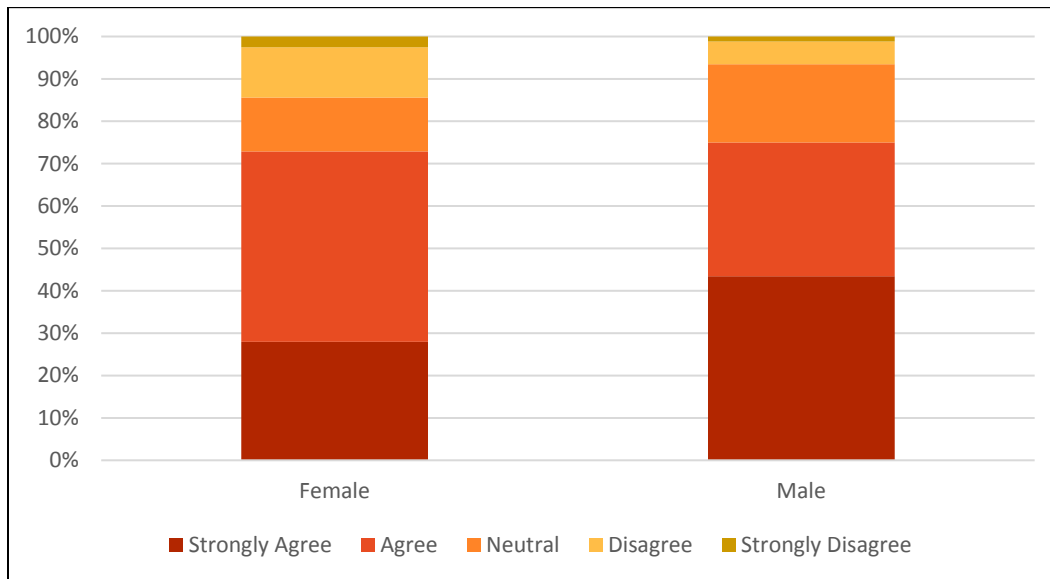
Male architects are more likely than female architects to strongly agree that their present offices support licensure by providing mentorship (p < .01).

Q5: Are UAC and/or women not having milestones recognized with increased responsibility or title change?

Respondents discussed this issue in addressing why they are considering leaving the profession. It also arose in the comments submitted during the Next Gen Arch: Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Symposium.

> *"Male architects are given greater compensation, responsibility, and more interesting projects. I find that the prospect of fighting an uphill battle for a meager financial return is not appealing. I would rather switch to a field with greater monetary compensation and better balance of power between the genders." (Asian woman)*

> *"I often feel that my pay doesn't reflect the breadth of my responsibilities and experience, and that because I'm competent I often end up with more tasks than others. It's stressful, not as rewarding as it once was, and I often think that others not in the field of architecture have it easier. I think the 2007 downturn and the subsequent pay cut I had to take, hurt my earning potential for the future, and that I'm constantly fighting to gain ground again." (White woman)*

> *"Bad pay; we design projects that we can't even buy a studio at let alone a one-bedroom apartment! Seems like this job has become just coordinating consultants." (White woman)*

> *"What do the employers who pay men more have to say about that practice?" (unknown)*

## Q6: Are UAC and/or women exposed to a wide range of experiences?

To answer this question, we recoded the list of 30 activities asked in the survey into five primary categories based on positional hierarchy within a typical architecture firm (Table 1). This analysis allowed for a comparison of types of activities by gender and race.

Table 1: Activities Associated with Professional Levels in Architecture

Activity	Intern	Junior Architect	Associate Architect	Project Architect	Partner/ Owner
Office housekeeping (office supplies, coffee, etc.)	X				
Marketing (brochures, website, etc.) or competitions	X	X			
Conceptual or schematic design[3]	X	X	X	X	X
Site surveys or field visits		X	X		
Drafting and red lines		X	X		
Punch list		X	X		
Millwork design or drawings		X	X		
Shop drawings		X	X		
Construction documents		X	X	X	
Directing contractors or consultants			X	X	
Writing specifications			X	X	
Selecting finishes, fixtures, etc.			X	X	
Construction administration			X	X	
Code research and compliance			X	X	
Construction details			X	X	
Coordination of consultants' drawings			X	X	
Managing a team				X	
Project manager or project architect				X	
Certification of payments to the contractor				X	
Filing, expediting, or plan review with a building agency				X	
Client meetings				X	X
Fee proposals				X	X
Hiring or recruitment				X	X
Firm representative				X	X
Design of structure				X	X
Travel requirements				X	X
Presentations to community or public entities				X	X
Stamping drawings					X
Office management (payroll, taxes, etc.)					X
Ribbon cutting					X

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[3] Did not include because activities not specific to role

Figure 14: Present activities include those associated with Junior Architects by race
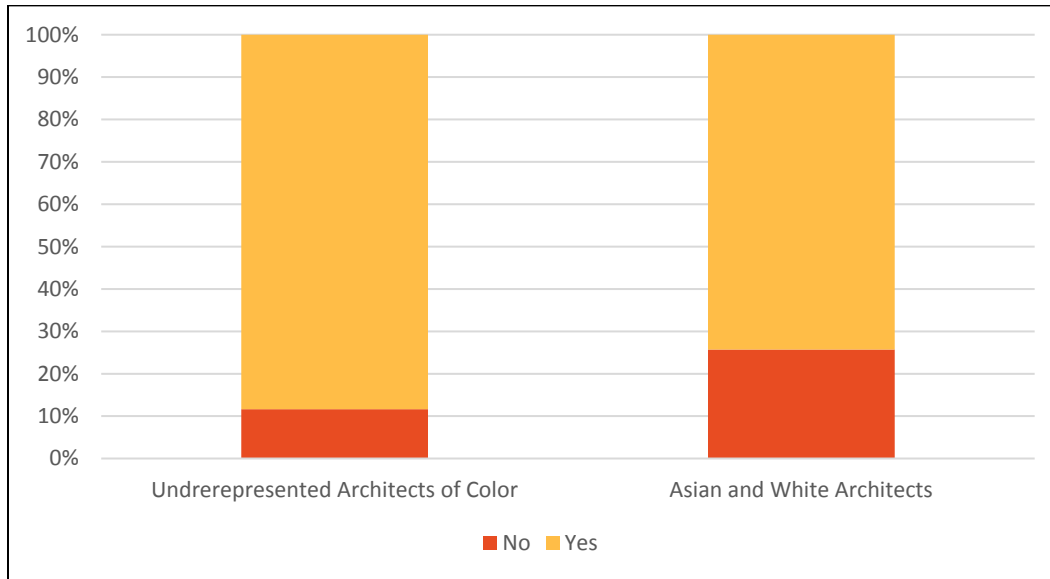
Underrepresented architects of color were significantly more likely to say they were presently doing activities associated with Junior Architects than Asian and White architects (p < .05). This difference holds true even if you control for the age of the architect.

Respondents discussed this issue in addressing why they are considering leaving the profession.

> *"No new projects." (White woman)*

> *"Lacking creative satisfaction." (Person of color)*

> *"Desire to do something more impactful in the need we have for change than single projects. Inspiration - I don't find construction details and administration and shop drawings inspiring." (White woman)*

Q7: Are UAC and/or women facing identity-related stresses such as microaggression or imposter syndrome?

Figure 15: "Why are you considering leaving the profession: workplace culture." by race
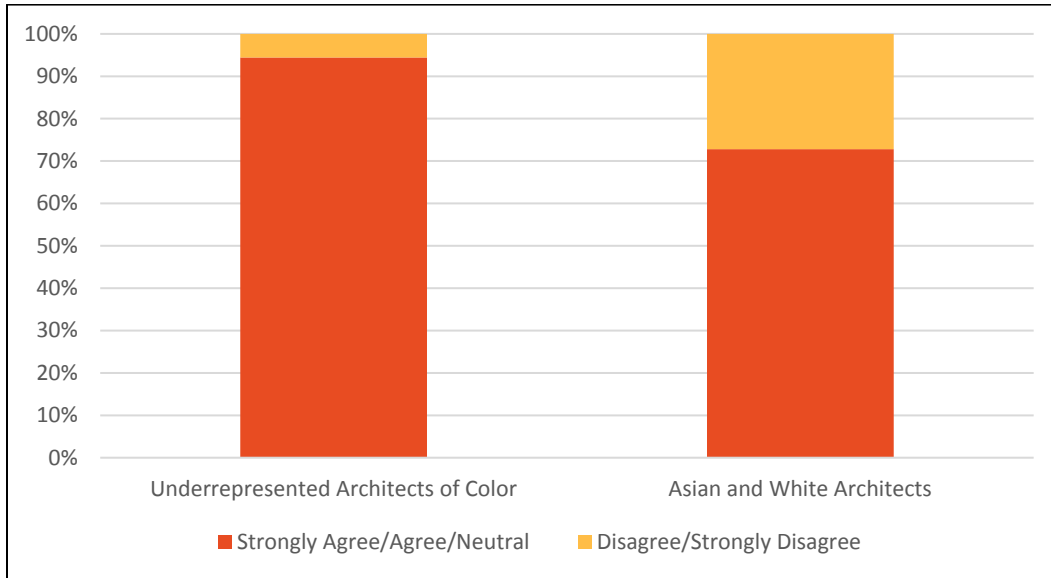
Figure 16: "Why are you considering leaving the profession: workplace culture." by gender
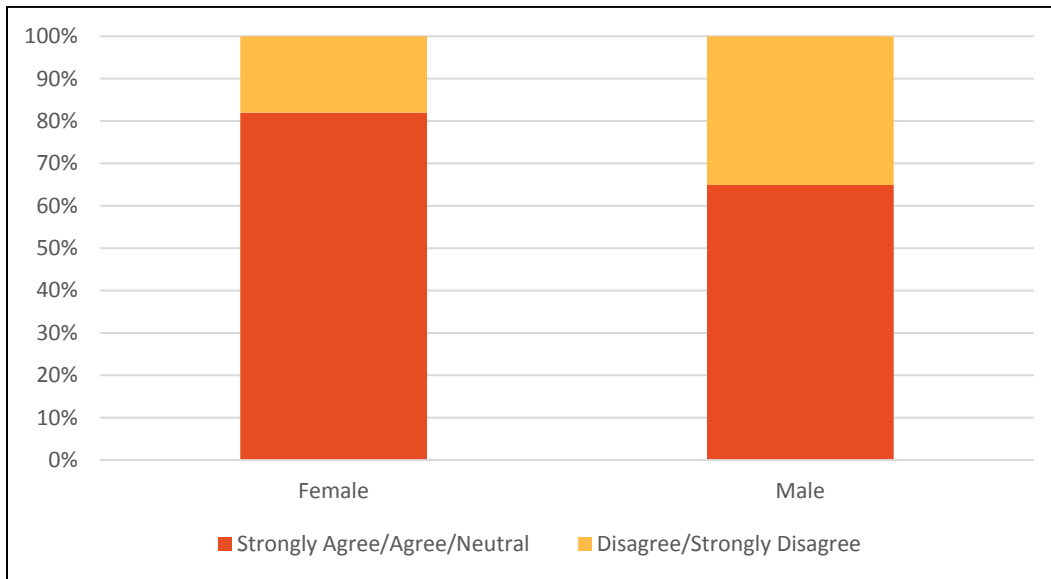
Underrepresented architects of color and women were significantly more likely to say they agreed that workplace culture (positive environment, leadership, equity) was why they were considering leaving the profession (p < .05).

Respondents also discussed this issue in addressing why they are considering leaving the profession. It also arose in the comments submitted during the Next Gen Arch: Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Symposium.

> *"I dream about working in an environment where all the employees matter, not just the men. Please note that I manage my office and am in position of control. But the profession is just getting too hard (or it isn't getting better after 30 years I thought we'd be past this stuff)." (White woman)*
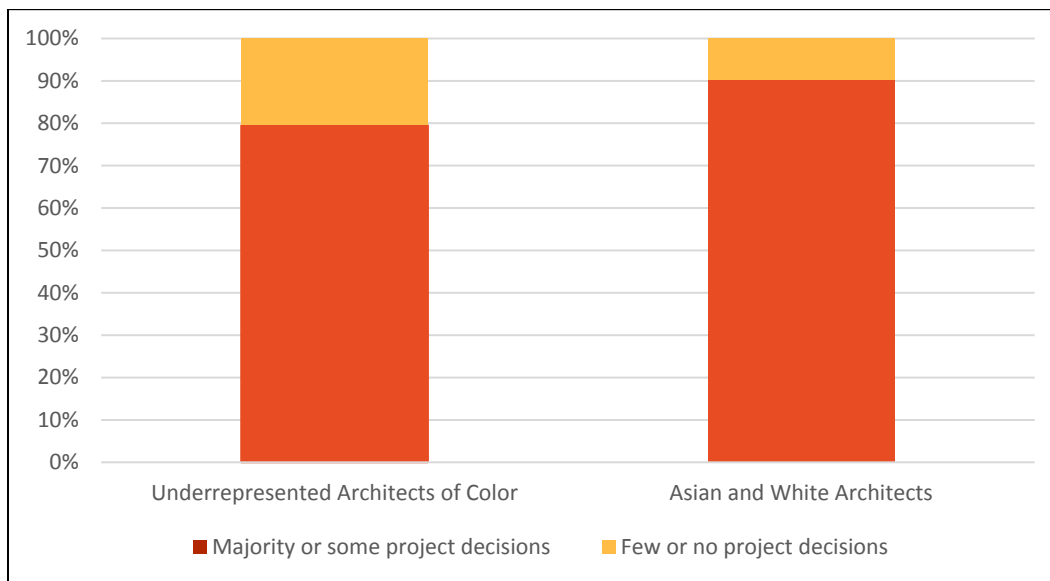
> *"White male dominated culture." (White person)*

> *"Lack of respect from developers who want to 'play architect.'" (Person of color)*

> *"How do your individual firms unconsciously center whiteness? If you are not sure, how can you figure it out?" (unknown)*

**Figure 17: "Check the statement that most accurately reflects your work." by race**

Asian and White architects were more likely to say they make the majority or some project decisions than underrepresented architects of color (p < .05).

In addition, one respondent discussed this issue in addressing why she is considering leaving the profession.

> *"I have considered leaving architecture because of the lesser opportunities for women. In my workplace, women are not trusted to make important decisions- they can only progress if they are in project managing or technical coordination- things that are proven to work certain way, and where there are numbers to support their effort. Women are not trusted to make design decisions, hence there aren't any women designers in the firm that reach senior positions. they are either forced to change career path (into interior design, project management or technical) or leave. I think I am reaching the point at the firm where I will have to leave, since my current position is in design." (White woman)*

Q9: Are UAC and/or women facing too many time and/or energy demands?

Figure 18: "Are you the primary caregiver?" by gender
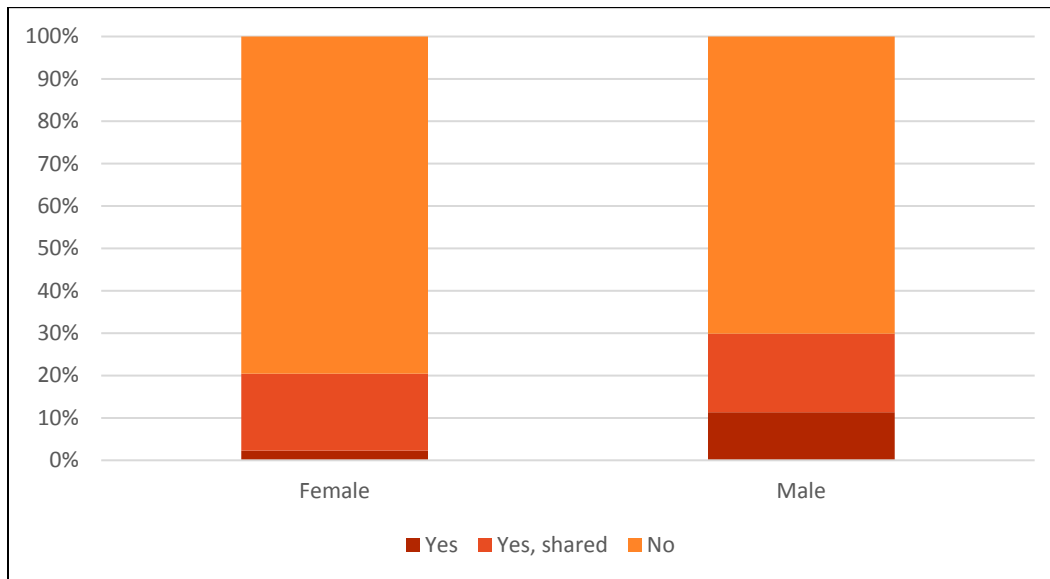
Male architects are more likely than female architects to report being the primary caregiver for a child, grandchild, parent, or other person with needs (p < .05).

Respondents also discussed this issue in addressing why they are considering leaving the profession.

> *"We compete fiercely for projects, clients want it faster and faster and it is just not as much fun as it used to be." (White woman)*

> *"Maximizing impact of my work on high priority issues of social equity, health and wellness, families and cities and sustainability." (White woman)*

> *"Balancing work and life is a second job within itself." (Black woman)*

Conclusions and Next Steps

Summary of Findings

This analysis of the survey data aligned with the research questions produced a series of findings:

1. The income of Underrepresented Architects of Color (UAC) varies significantly from the income of Asian and White architects. Underrepresented architects of color are most likely to make between $75,000 and $99,000 a year. White architects are most likely to make $100,000 a year or more.
2. The income of male and female architects also varies significantly. Women are more likely to make between $75,000 and $99,000 and men are more likely to make $100 a year or more.
3. Male architects are more likely than female architects to strongly agree that their present offices support licensure by providing mentorship.
4. Female architects do not feel that their milestones are recognized with increasing responsibility. They cite being given less interesting projects or being overburdened with projects without accompanying compensation.
5. Underrepresented architects of color were more likely to say they were presently doing activities associated with junior architects than Asian and White architects. This difference holds true even if you control for the age of the architect.
6. Underrepresented architects of color and women felt that their assigned projects lacked creative satisfaction, inspiration or impact.
7. Underrepresented architects of color and women were significantly more likely to say they agreed that workplace culture (positive environment, leadership, equity) was why they were considering leaving the profession.
8. Women and underrepresented architects of color discussed problems with a white male dominated culture, a lack of respect, and a working environment where only male employees matter.
9. Asian and White architects were more likely to say they make the majority or some project decisions than underrepresented architects of color.
10. Women felt they were given less responsibility due to a lack of trust that they can make design designs.
11. Male architects are more likely than female architects to report being the primary caregiver for a child, grandchild, parent, or other person with needs.
12. Women felt that the strain of an increasingly stressful workplace competed with other priorities such as making an impact and attending to other aspects of life.

Recommended Next Steps

This initiative has yielded important findings that help to inform the research process going forward.

1. These nine research questions should be used to guide the data collection process each year. That way AIANY can track changes over time.
2. The set of methodological tools used to answer these questions may need some modification to answer these questions in the most clear and comprehensive manner possible. Table 1 summarizes these potential changes.
3. The data can be summarized each year in the form of a template (Table 2), that allows for an annual comparison of the current and past years.

Table 1: Data Available and Needed to Answer Research Questions

Are UAC and/or women…	Available Data	Needed Data
1. Experiencing bias in hiring?	-	- Architect survey/focus group question hiring experience - Firm applicant tracking tool
2. Receiving fair compensation?	- How much money do you earn? ** - Why are you considering leaving (Economics)	- Firm pay data
3. Experiencing bias in recruitment?	-	- Firm applicant tracking tool - Firm checklist on recruitment practices
4. Being provided clear steps to promotion?	- Provides mentorship *	- Firm checklist on promotion practices - Architect survey/focus group on path to promotion
5. Not having milestones recognized with increased responsibility or title change?	- Rewards licensure with a change in title, responsibility, or compensation - Frequency that you contribute to the following activities	- Architect survey/focus group on recognition
6. Exposed to a wide range of experiences?	- Provides a broad range of work experiences - What are your present activities? (variety) - Why are you considering leaving (nature of the work)	- Architect survey/focus group on daily experiences in workplace
7. Facing identity-related stresses such as microaggressions or imposter syndrome?	- Why are you considering leaving (workplace culture, other)	- Architect survey/focus group on daily experiences in workplace
8. Invested with the authority to make project decisions?	- Check the statement that most accurately reflects your work (project decisions, direct team)	- Architect survey/focus group on daily experiences in workplace
9. Facing too many time/energy demands?	- Why are you considering leaving (Family, Time demand) - Primary caregiver *	- Architect survey/focus group on daily experiences in workplace

Table 2: Draft Template to Use in Data Collection Going Forward

Question	Female Architects	Male Architects	Under-represented Architects of Color (UAC)	Asian Architects	White Architects
% of Recruits					
% of Hires					
% of Promotions					
Median Compensation					
% Senior Level Positions					
% Say Exposed to Wide Range of Experiences					
% Say experiencing identity-related stresses					
% Say invested with authority to make project decisions?					
% Say facing too many time and/or energy demands					
% of Hiring Practices Undertaken					
% of Recruitment Practices Undertaken					
% of Promotion Practices Undertaken					
% of Retention Practices Undertaken					