



DEI Outlook 2023



A Note from Leadership

At APCO, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) comprise one of our core principles. More importantly, DEI is a strategic priority for our business. As a global advisory and advocacy firm, the ability to convene diverse views together in an environment that enables colleagues to bring their full selves to the table is critical for the efficacy and impact of our work. In 2023 a series of significant challenges touched all corners of the country and impacted many of our colleagues professionally and personally. It was also a year where years of progress on DEI saw seemingly insurmountable challenges. Against this backdrop, we stand firm as a business in our commitment to Accelerate What's Right.

We'll continue to build upon our foundational principles of accelerating our people, our cultural competencies and our clients and communities. In this report you will learn about our progress, our learnings and how we are setting our focus in this next year ahead. We look forward to working together to Accelerate What's Right.

With warm regards,




Kelly Williamson (She/Her)
President, North America



Margery Kraus (She/Her)
Founder and Executive
Chairman



Brad Staples (He/Him)
CEO



Evan Kraus (He/Him)
President and Managing
Director of Operations



Semhar Tesfay (She/Her)
Director, Human Resources
Head of DEI at APCO



Agnieszka Yank (She/Her)
Chief Talent Officer

Table of Contents



INTRODUCTION

- 04 / About this Report
- 05 / Terms to Know
- 06 / About APCO
- 07 / Awards & Recognition
- 08 / Accelerate What's Right
- 10 / North America: A Closer Look
- 12 / Expanding our Data

ACCELERATING OUR PEOPLE

- 14 / Overview
- 15 / Key Takeaways
- 16 / 2023 North America Employee Demographics
- 20 / Recruitment
- 21 / Retention & Development
- 23 / Promotion & Compensation
- 24 / Employee Resource Groups

ACCELERATING OUR CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- 27 / Overview
- 28 / Key Takeaways
- 29 / Building Cultural Competency Through Learning & Development
- 30 / Courageous Conversations

ACCELERATING OUR CLIENTS & COMMUNITY

- 32 / Overview
- 33 / Key Takeaways
- 34 / Supporting Clients in Accelerating What's Right
- 35 / Convening Opportunities for Learning & Inspiration
- 36 / Community Activities

ACCELERATING FORWARD

- 38 / Charting Our Path Forward
- 39 / Thank You
- 40 / Previous Reports

About this Report

At APCO, we pride ourselves on being catalysts, driving progress. We know that true impact requires us to initiate change and sustain progress over time; we must adapt to new challenges and continuously measure ourselves. Our third annual North America DEI report is more than just a display of our efforts and advancements. The report also represents our commitment to transparency and accountability in areas where we seek to improve. This year's report has shifted to cover the full calendar year, allowing for clearer benchmarking of our progress, including previously unrecorded promotion data.

This report is a collaborative effort between APCO's executive leadership, our North America DEI Program—Accelerate What's Right—and our North America Equity & Justice Practice. If you have questions, feedback or want copies of the materials mentioned on this page, please feel free to [get in touch with us](#).

A Note Regarding Demographics

Our demographic data is measured against the Diversity Action Alliance (DAA) benchmarking data. The DAA is a "coalition of public relations and communications leaders joining forces to accelerate progress in the achievement of meaningful and tangible results in diversity, equity and inclusion across [the] profession." We believe it is essential to track our data, monitor progress and benchmark it to the industry to see where we are and where we need to be. This data is from the DAA's latest 2022 report.

Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

APCO's commitment to DEI begins with clear definitions to guide our organizational frameworks.

DIVERSITY: As an advisory company that helps some of the biggest companies move the needle on complex issues, having a team that is diverse and views issues through distinct lived or learned lenses is critical. We define diversity along a broad range of dimensions that include, but are not limited to culture, ethnicity, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, language, national origin, age, physical abilities, neurodivergence, religion/spirituality and political beliefs. We also prioritize diversity of educational background, professional journeys, and personal experiences.

EQUITY: Equity is about creating practices and policies that support employees so they can thrive. Being equitable involves acknowledging and addressing structural inequalities and creating equal access to opportunities. Accelerating equity means acting proactively and intentionally to ensure our policies and frameworks reflect fair treatment and access, while considering unique individual circumstances.

INCLUSION: Inclusion is about fostering an environment where every employee feels valued and can contribute fully. It goes beyond assembling diverse teams; it's about ensuring that perspectives are heard and regarded with respect. Accelerating inclusion happens when employees feel valued and their differences are respected and embraced.

Terms to Know

You will see the following acronyms and terms throughout this report. Some of these are used broadly and some are specific to APCO.

ANHPI: Asian, Native-Hawaiian & Pacific Islander

AWR: Accelerate What's Right

BAAM: Black and African Ancestry Movement

DAA: Diversity Action Alliance, a coalition of public relations and communications leaders that publishes industry-level diversity data that APCO uses as a benchmark.

DEI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

ERG: Employee Resource Groups

EARLY CAREER: Project Assistants, Project Consultants, Associate Consultants

HBCU: Historically Black Colleges and Universities

HIS: Hispanic-serving Institution

HRC: Human Rights Campaign

IAC: International Advisory Council

KCI: Key Client Initiative

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

LEADERSHIP (TEAM): NA Management Team which encompasses a group of regional leaders responsible for overseeing local offices and managing national practices. This includes Managing Director, Deputy Managing Director, and Practice Leads.

L&D: Learning & Development

LGBTQ+: Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Queer

MIDDLE LEVEL: Consultants, Senior Consultants, Associate Directors, Senior Associate Directors

NA: North America

NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Health

NALT: North America Leadership Team

POC: People of Color

SENIOR LEVEL: Directors, Senior Directors, Executive Directors

STAR: Situation Task Action Result

WLG: Women's Leadership Group



40 years in business
1200 employees
80 global markets
30 offices

APCO is a global advisory and advocacy firm helping leading corporations, foundations and governments navigate a complex world and create lasting impact.

Founded in 1984, with one woman's vision and bold action, APCO has grown into an independent, majority women-owned firm of more than 1,200 employees with work spanning 80 markets around the world. Our strategic advisers, consultants and creators have deep expertise in a range of financial, competitive, political and societal issues. Headquartered in Washington, D.C. with 30 offices across the Americas, Europe, Middle East & Africa and the Asia Pacific.

By bringing diverse people and ideas together, and working beyond traditional boundaries, APCO builds the un/common ground upon which progress is made.

APCO Values

APCO's Values are embedded into how the company operates and guide employees' decisions and actions every day. The values we put forth - to everyone throughout the organization - reflect our dual commitment to our people and our clients.

Boldness:

We push boundaries to produce better ideas that solve the most challenging problems of our time.

Inclusivity:

Our culture champions the diversity of people, embracing their thoughts and experiences.

Curiosity:

We hunger for learning and improvement in all we do, keeping us at the cutting edge.

Empathy:

We seek to understand the perspectives of clients, colleagues and stakeholders to better meet their needs.

Awards & Recognition

We are proud to be building a culture that values our people, supports our communities, and creates an environment that fosters creative and impactful solutions for our clients as they respond to society's toughest challenges. Being recognized for this work is humbling and keeps us accountable to our progress. We are deeply appreciative of the industry awards that APCO has received this past year, some of which are detailed below and none of which would have been possible without the hard work of our exceptional people.

Ragan's 2023 CSR & Diversity Awards - IKEA and APCO

Observer PR Power List 2023

PRovoke NA Corporate Agency of the Year finalist

PRovoke 2023 Top 5 Best Agencies to Work For, North America

Forbes World's Best Management Consulting Firms 2023 List

Forbes America's Best Management Consulting Firms 2023 List

Skyline Awards 2023 - Wabash and APCO & Schneider and APCO



Accelerate What's Right

An Overview

Accelerate What's Right is APCO's North America program to advance diversity, equity and inclusion within our company, client initiatives and our communities. Our vision is to cultivate an environment where our people can bring their full selves to work and be champions for meaningful progress within and beyond our own walls. Three strategic pillars drive our work:

Accelerating Our People:

From recruiting to retaining and advancing our talent, we aim to create an environment of belonging, equity and inclusion for everyone.

Accelerating Our Cultural Competency:

Through training, convening and collaborating, we are strengthening cultural competency critical for ensuring our work to accelerate our people, community and clients is sustainable.

Accelerating our Clients & Communities:

By holding ourselves accountable for our impact on our communities, building cultural competency among our clients, and working to advance equity and justice for our clients, we accelerate what's right externally.

Each year, we dig deeper into these areas to evaluate our efforts against actionable, measurable goals based on where we have identified opportunities to create more progress. These opportunities and goals outlined are in the following report.

Accountability

We have revamped key performance indicators (KPIs) for senior leaders to include DEI measures. These KPIs are also considered for compensation and bonus decisions. Leaders cannot receive "exceeds expectations" or "outstanding" without clear contributions to an inclusive culture at APCO. This is measured by their engagement with inclusive leadership trainings, DEI activations, and how they implement DEI to assemble teams, hire equitably and uplift our values.

North America: A Closer Look

North America Demographics

Here is a high-level view of our North America (NA) demographics. This data is further broken down in the Accelerating Our People section.

BY THE NUMBERS				DIVERSITY AND GENDER		
383	41	31	16	69.8%	36.7%	We implemented new measures to track gender expansive identities in 2023 on a Self-ID basis. 16.7% of NA has opted to share their gender.
Full-Time Employees	2023 New Hires	Interns (not included in total people numbers)	Part-Time Employees	of North America identify as women	of North America is racially diverse	

North America Leadership Team

APCO's North America Leadership team oversees the strategic and operational progress of APCO's North America business.

RACE BREAKDOWN

67%	33%
White	POC

NA LEADERSHIP

24
Members

GENDER BREAKDOWN

54%	46%	0%
Women	Men	Non-binary/GNC

Board of Directors

APCO's board of directors and global leadership team work to ensure APCO provides best-in-class service and thoughtful and inspiring counsel while remaining a responsible corporate citizen.

RACE BREAKDOWN

89%	11%
White	POC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

9
Members

GENDER BREAKDOWN

33%	67%	0%
Women	Men	Non-binary/GNC

International Advisory Council (IAC)

The IAC is comprised of more than 185 global leaders in various industries and includes former politicians, industry leaders, academics, diplomats and more. Given the different definitions of diversity, globally, we don't currently track the composition and diversity of this Global body. To see our current IAC members: [click here](#).

GENDER BREAKDOWN

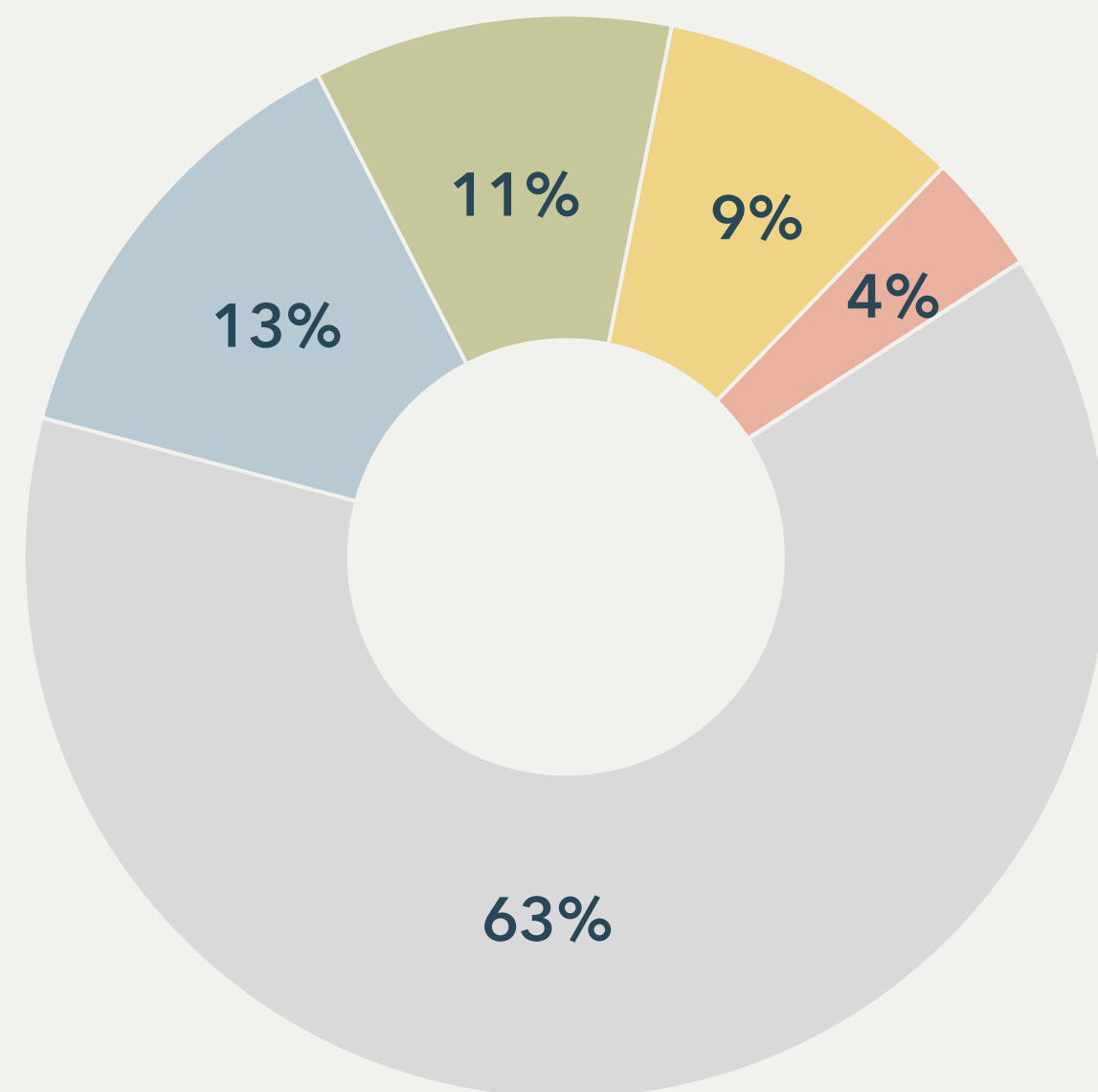
34%	66%
Women	Men

IAC

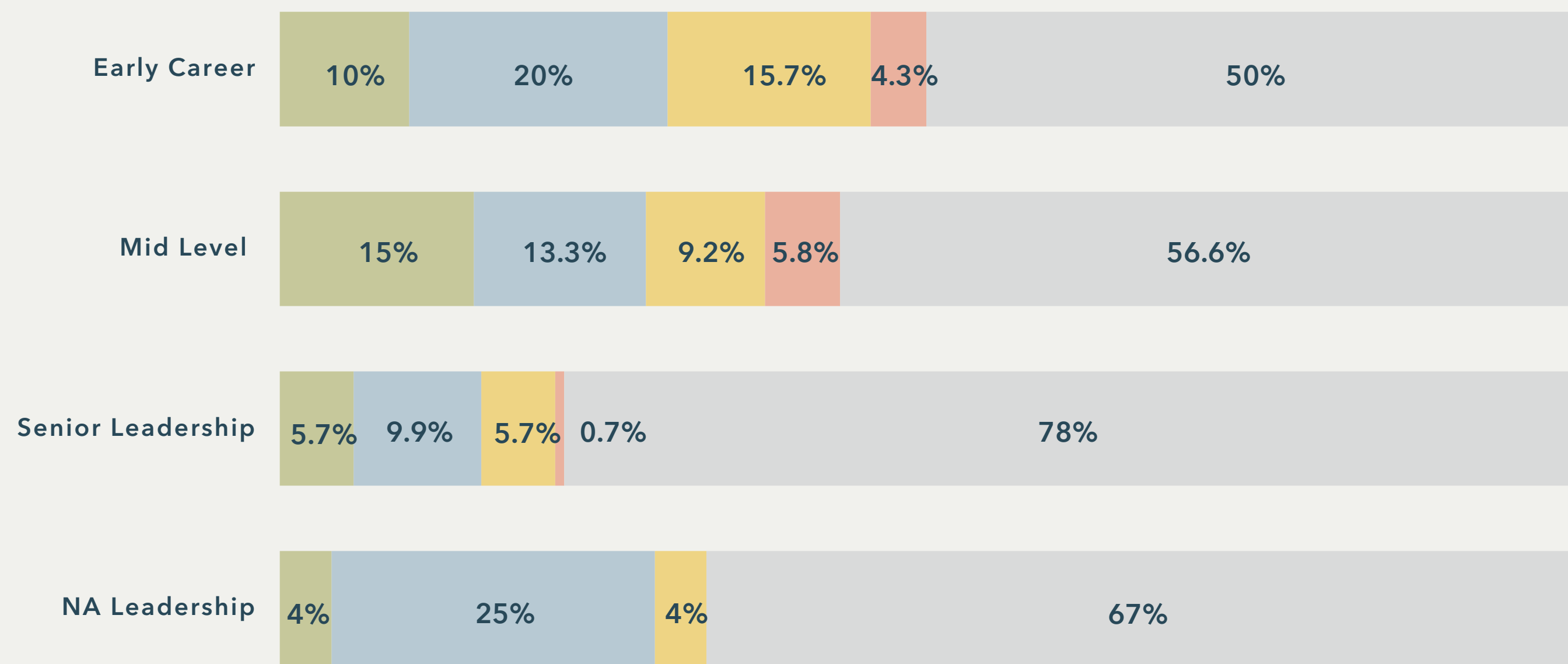
185
Members

North America: A Closer Look

Race/Ethnicity



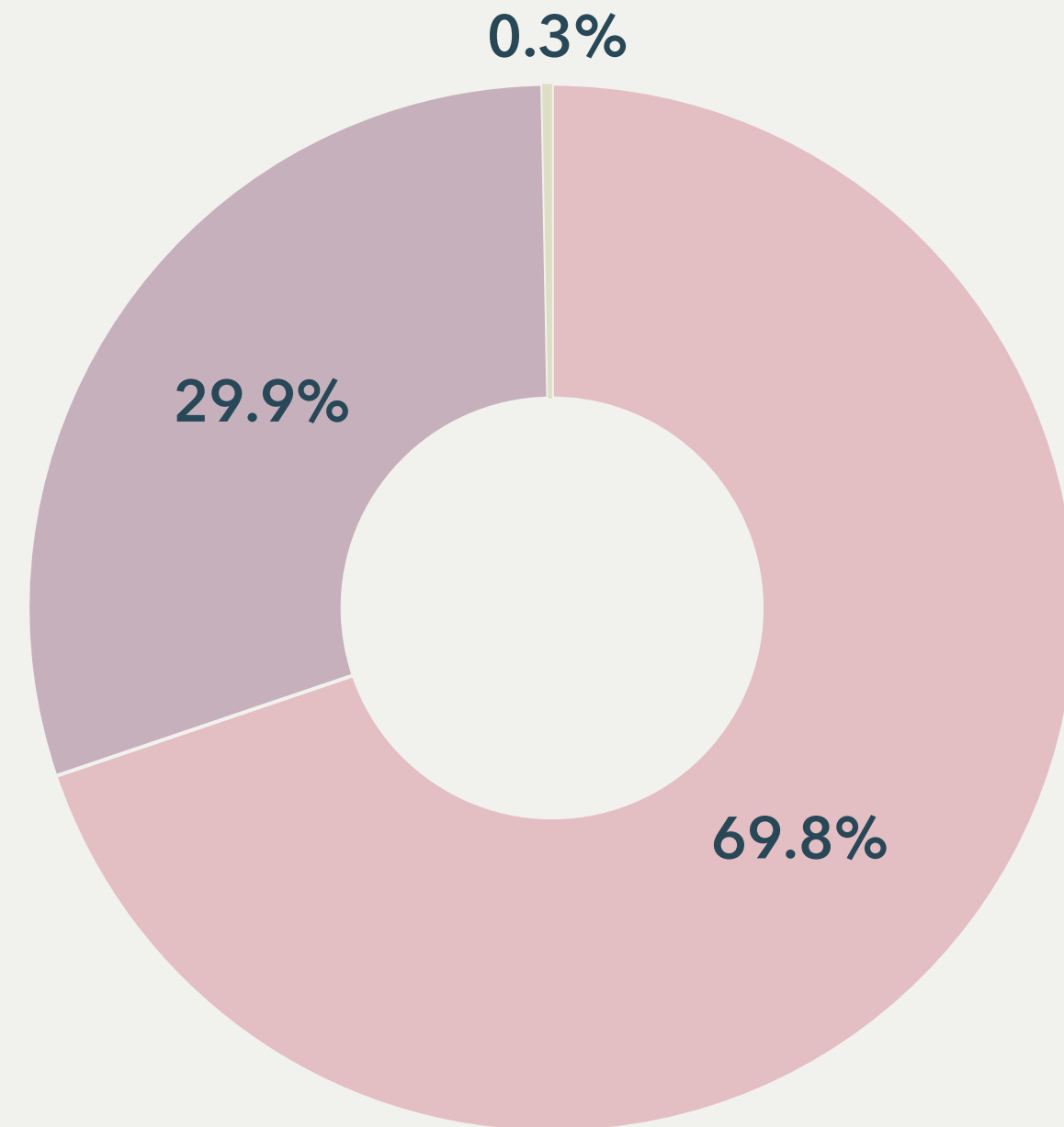
Race/Ethnicity by Level



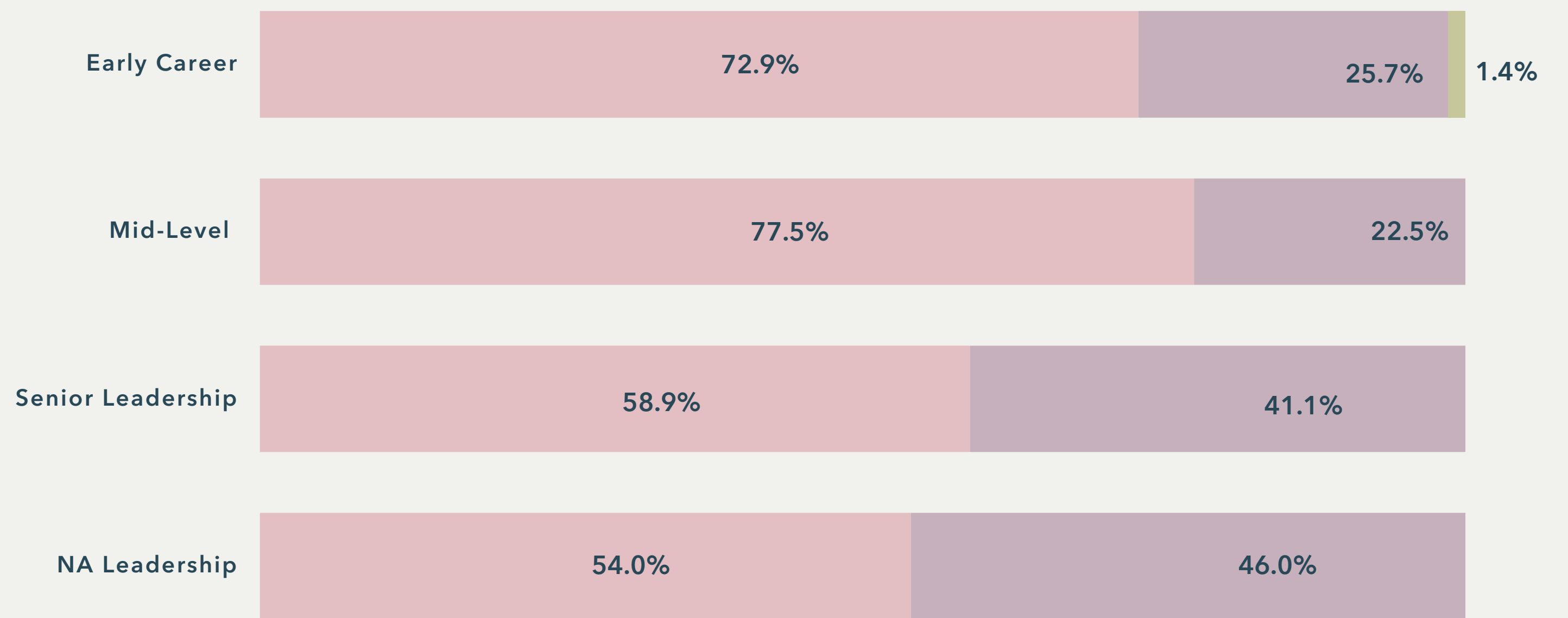
Black/African American Asian Hispanic or Latino Two or more Races White

North America: A Closer Look

Gender



Gender by Level

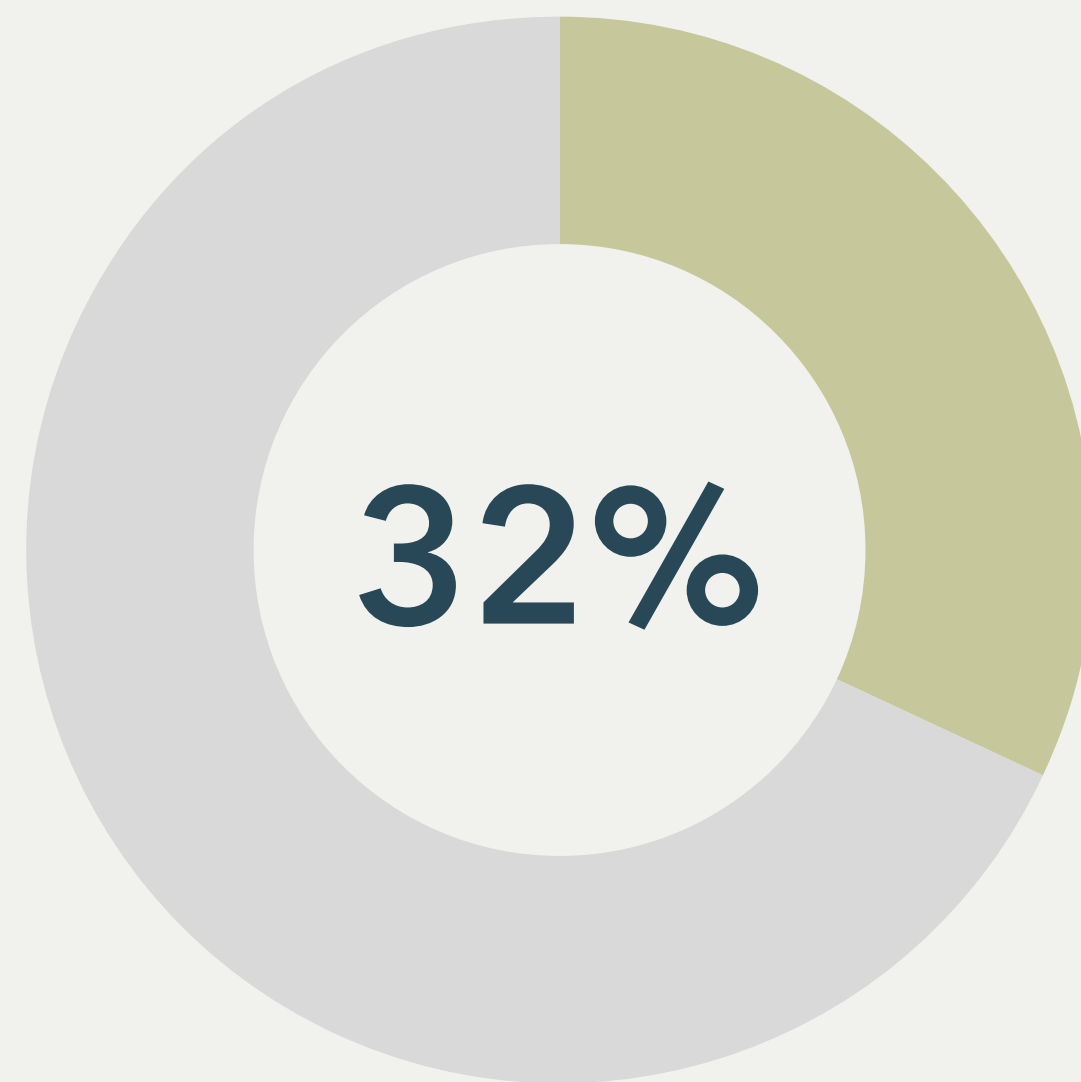


Women Men Non-binary

Expanding our Data

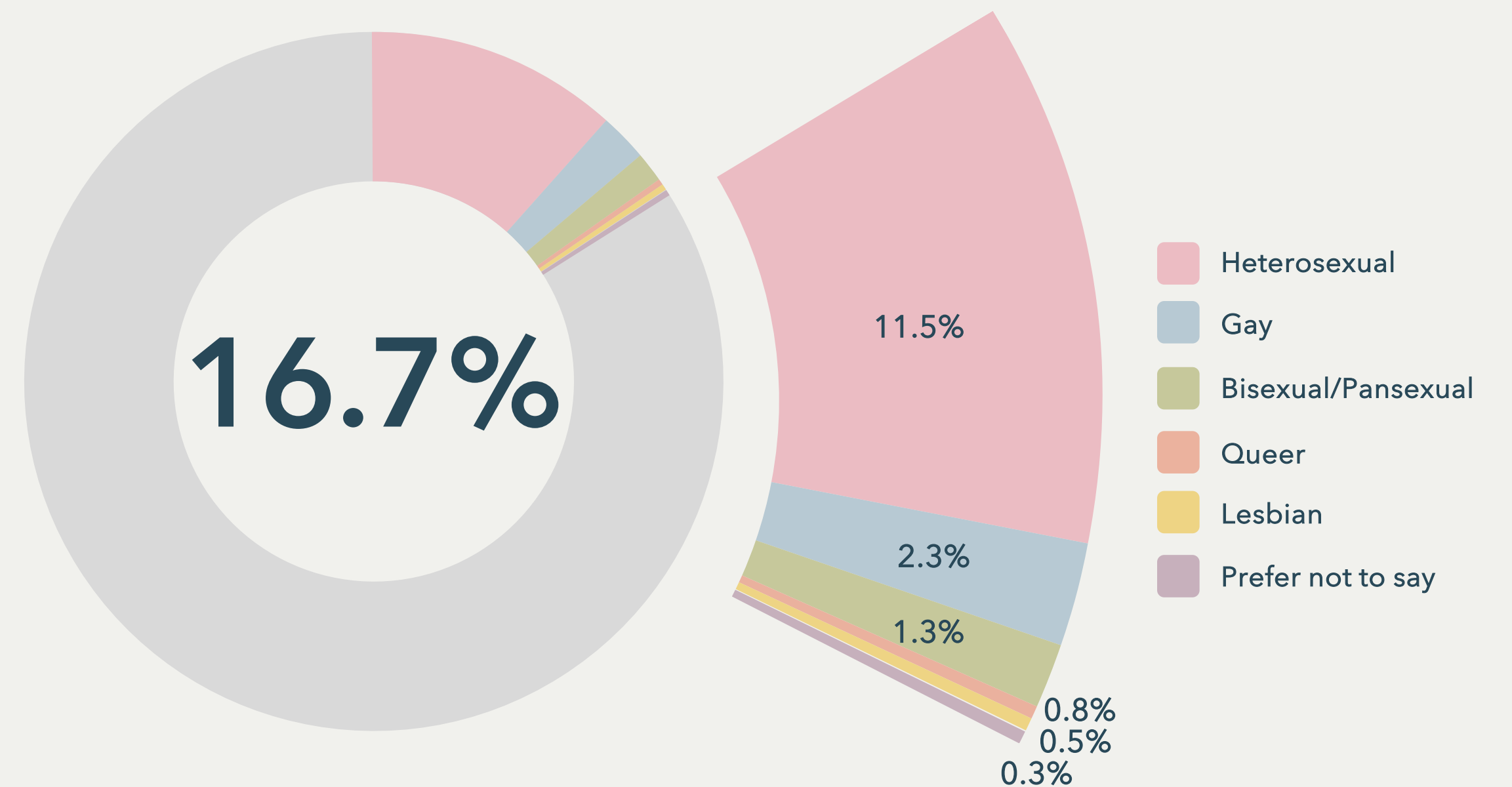
This year, we tried to broaden the ways we are measuring the diversity of our workforce to include measures of gender identity and sexual orientation. To do this, we worked alongside our vendor to revamp our internal talent management system (Via) to give employees the option to voluntarily share a fuller picture of their identity. This new system rolled out mid-year and to date, over 30% of our North America employees have opted in to share their pronouns and nearly 20% of employees opted in to share their sexual orientation.

Percentage of NA who opted to share their pronouns



Including your pronouns in your display name and email signature can create an open and inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ colleagues. 32.3% of NA opted in to share their pronouns so far.

Percentage of NA who opted to share their sexual orientation (so far)



16.7% of North America colleagues opted in to share their sexual orientation and 4.9% of those individuals identify as LGBTQ+.



Accelerating Our People

Accelerating Our People Overview

From recruitment, retention, development and beyond, we are cultivating a workplace culture that upholds our company values of boldness, curiosity, empathy and inclusivity.

Here are a few ways we accelerate our people:

- Build diverse recruitment pipelines to source the best talent across colleges, universities, and professional organizations.
- Embrace inclusive hiring practices such as behavioral interviewing methods to mitigate bias and focus on closing disparities in the interview process, piloting anonymous recruitment, ensuring we have a 50% diverse interviewing slate and creating a diverse interviewing panel.
- Foster the development and growth of our people through relevant and accessible learning and development trainings, succession planning, mentorship and an expansive HR system.
- Competitively compensate our people while cultivating an environment where continuous growth and advancement opportunities are

prioritized in the employee experience.

- Empower and resourcing our eight employee resource groups (ERGs) to be culture drivers that create safe spaces to form connections, share professional and educational tools and resources, enable network opportunities, enhance employee engagement and inform policies.
- Embed DEI principles throughout the employee journey to create a workplace that fosters belonging, where our employees can feel engaged and encouraged.

Accelerating Our People

Key Takeaways

Top 2023 Accomplishments

- Increased representation of POC at the mid-level by 3.6%, up to 43.4% from 39.8% in 2022.
- Increased representation of women at early, mid- and senior levels.
- Continued to create a pipeline for diverse leadership through equitably promoting diverse candidates, including women, when compared against all North America promotions.
- Maintained strong gender pay equity scores of 101% overall, 102% early-career, 103% mid-level, 98% senior level, as defined by comparing the average salary for women and men at each level.
- Built an inclusive talent management system (Via) that integrates features that respect and acknowledge diverse gender identities and pronouns.
- Updated leadership KPIs to reflect DEI goals for directors through to executive director levels to hold leaders accountable.
- Created a dedicated employee resource group (ERG) timecode and invested in ERG chair time allocations to strengthen the infrastructure of these essential groups.

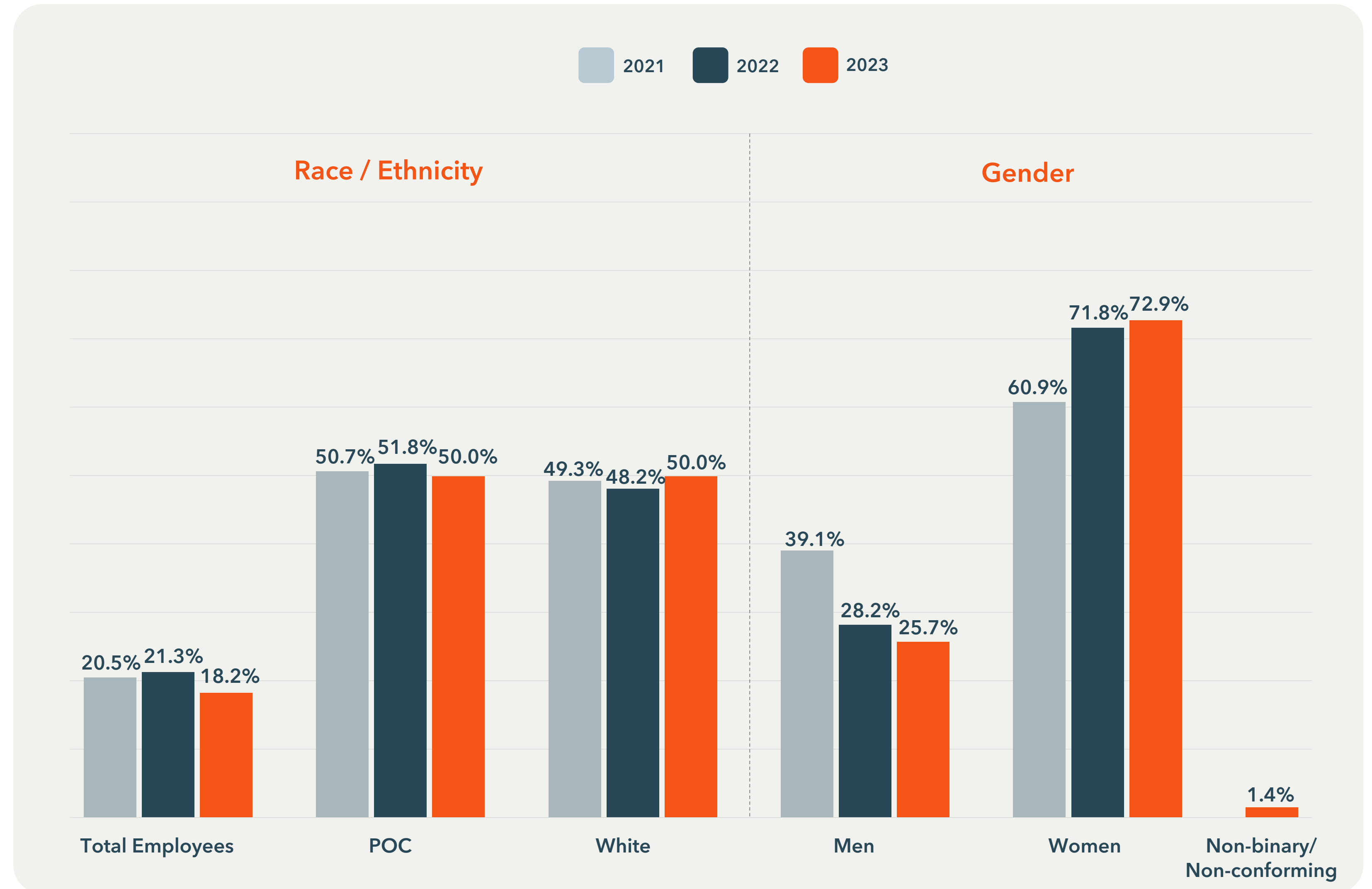
Opportunities to Drive More Progress

- Increase the awareness and understanding of self-identification tools, such as pronoun preferences and sexual orientation, to improve data collection.
- Take a more expansive view of where we have leadership opportunities as a business, such as how we staff accounts and who serves on account leadership teams, and benchmark where we stand today.
- Deepen our intentional recruiting efforts to fill gaps in representation and ensure we have a robust candidate pipeline across levels.

APCO North America Employee Demographics by Level

Early Career Level Employees

At APCO, we define the early career as Project Assistants, Project Consultants, and Associate Consultants.



Industry Benchmark Data from Diversity Action Alliance

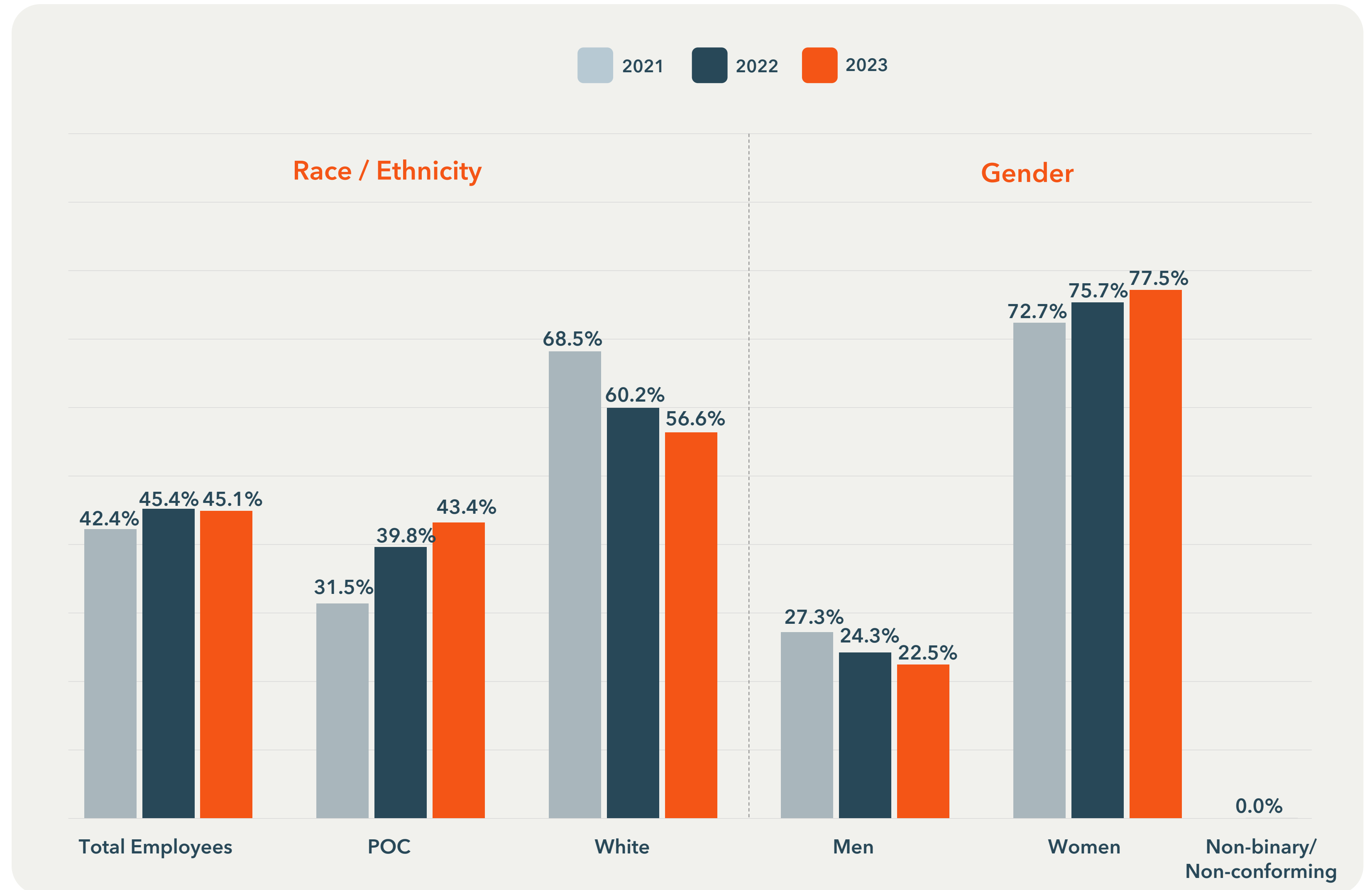
36%
POC

64%
White

APCO North America Employee Demographics by Level

Mid-Level Employees

At APCO, we define the mid-level as Consultants, Senior Consultants, Associate Directors, and Senior Associate Directors.



Industry Benchmark Data from Diversity Action Alliance

25%
POC

75%
White

APCO North America Employee Demographics by Level

Senior Level Employees

At APCO, we define the senior level as Directors, Senior Directors, and Executive Directors.



Industry Benchmark Data from Diversity Action Alliance

20%
POC

80%
White

APCO North America Employee Demographics by Level

Leadership Level Employees

At APCO, we define the leadership team as the group of regional leaders responsible for overseeing local offices and managing national practices. This includes Managing Directors, Deputy Managing Directors, and Practice Leads.

- The inclusion of diverse perspectives in leadership roles is crucial for innovation and strategic development. As APCO grows, especially in North America, the influence of the NA Management Team becomes more pronounced. These leaders are instrumental in setting the course, managing teams, and maintaining client relations, which are all key to long-term success.
- This year marks the inaugural reporting on the demographic composition of the leadership level, providing valuable insights into our commitment to inclusivity.

Industry Benchmark Data from Diversity Action Alliance

17%
POC

83%
White



Recruitment

We're building a diverse recruitment pipeline to source the best talent across a vast network.

College Partnerships

While we are always recruiting diverse candidates at campuses across the country, we have also made intentional connections with job boards at universities and colleges that allow us to reach a community of diverse students. Stand out connections include:

- California State University (Northridge & Fullerton)
- University of Illinois (Chicago)
- Hampton University
- Howard University
- North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State (NC A&T)
- NC Central University

Reaching Caregivers in the Workforce

In 2023, we continued the APCO Encore program that was launched for people who have taken time out of the workforce to be caregivers in 2022. Through this program, caregivers can re-enter the workforce on a flexible basis, while receiving ongoing mentorship and training for success. Twelve people have successfully completed the year-long program. This program is a prime example of how we look to reach untapped networks to deepen our diversity of thought and experience.

The S.T.A.R. Method

We tackle bias by using behavioral interviewing practices like the "STAR" method (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) in which we focus on people's behavioral actions rather than their direct leadership experience or how they would behave in a hypothetical future scenario. By standardizing the interview process with a structured set of questions, it allows us to evaluate candidates equitably. More information about this can be found in our guide [here](#).

Anonymized Recruitment

In 2022, we launched a pilot program for an anonymized recruiting process for the fall intern class. As part of this process, the initial resume review was replaced by a robust written application designed to identify high-potential interns based on both direct and transferable skills and competencies while reducing resume items that can lead to bias, such as a candidate's name and educational background. In 2023, we continued our research on best practices for blind recruitment to prepare for a second round of blind recruitment in the future.

Retention & Development

Integral to our ability to build diverse, inclusive teams are our efforts to retain and develop our talent. You'll see in the following section that we approach talent retention through fostering career development, creating pathways towards opportunities to learn and lead, and ensuring fair promotion and pay equity.

Building Technology For Career Development

This year, we launched a new career management platform, VIA. VIA is an integrated system that provides autonomy, transparency and learning opportunities for employees to build their career at APCO. It provides a personalized and seamless approach to human resource management and aligns with our career development framework that allows employees to master competencies while acquiring new knowledge and skills.

APCO Plus

This program is an 18-month training pathway for early career colleagues that provides exposure to all APCO service offerings and dedicated training opportunities designed to level the playing field for all candidates entering the workforce at the earliest stages of their careers. We have committed to ensure a candidate pool which is at least 50% diverse. This program has enabled us to train up and retain colleagues with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

APCO Align

APCO Align is a global initiative designed to upskill employees who started at APCO between January 1, 2020, and January 31, 2023, in order to fill gaps in learning and development spurred by the global pandemic, with a focus on communities where we saw an outsized impact. This program is not just about aligning on shared ways of working, but connecting the dots and helping people understand the business, client strategy, and integrated services and offerings.



Retention & Development

Key Client Initiative (KCI)

Since its creation in 2018, KCI has served as a leadership, mentorship and learning ecosystem for client leaders across some of APCO's largest accounts. The program provides participants with an executive-level learning and development curriculum, customized trainings focused on leading large accounts, and a client engagement track designed to develop emerging leaders into client strategists and advisors. The program evolved in 2023 to improve the diversity of clients and client leaders to help chart APCO's future business opportunities.

Mentorship Program

At the start of 2023 we piloted a mentorship program in two of our North America offices. This initiative was born out of employees' desire for additional leadership guidance. The program offers the opportunity to build professional relationships outside of daily account teams, receive advice/coaching and expand their APCO network. With a 31% participation rate, this program will expand to all North American offices in 2024.



Promotions & Compensation

In 2023, nearly 25% of our employees were promoted during our two annual promotion cycles.

Ensuring equitable opportunities for advancement is a key indicator of an inclusive workplace with accessible pathways to leadership.

This marks our first year sharing promotion data across our North America teams. As we look at this data across race and gender, we do not see statistically meaningful differences in our rates of promotion given our demographics data.

	% Promoted
POC	22.7%
White	25.9%
Men	18.3%
Women	27.6%
Non-Binary	100%

Level	% Promoted
Early Career	30.0%
Mid-level	35.9%
Senior Level	6.1%

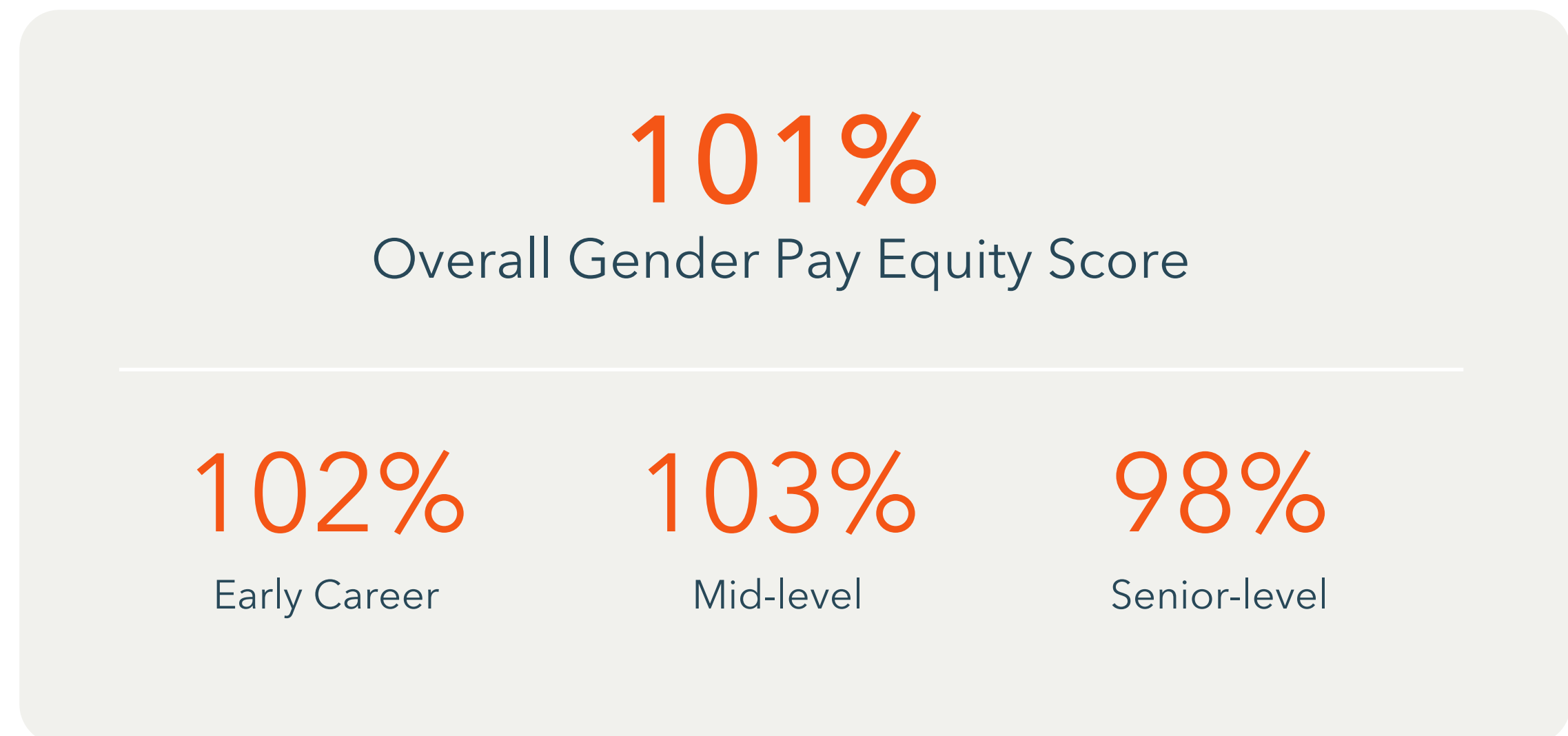
*Please note that those promoted were captured in their current role/level and not at their new promoted title.

Competitive Pay:

We conduct annual external benchmarking of compensation in the markets where we compete. Across practices, offices and operations teams, we hold talent calibration meetings to ensure there are checks and balances for fair and equitable compensation practices and decisions. In addition, we are regularly evaluating and addressing potential disparities that may naturally arise in a highly competitive and rapidly changing labor market due to emerging new services, in-demand skills, geographical differences, etc.

Gender Pay Equity:

We conduct a global gender pay equity analysis annually, calculating a pay equity “score” by comparing the average salary for women with the average salary for men in each level. In 2023, our gender pay equity scores in North America are as follows:



Employee Resource Groups

We acknowledge and understand the importance of uplifting the many backgrounds and identities that make our people who they are. In the workplace, providing people with a space in which they can feel valued and embraced is necessary to advance equity and inclusion and to create an overall sense of belonging. Over 60% of our employees are members of an employee resource group (ERG) and in 2023, APCO invested \$20,000 in supporting the programming of ERGs while our employees spent over 2,000 hours leading and engaging in ERG activities.

Our eight ERGs are open to all employees and provide community, connection and support. ERGs are employee-led alongside executive sponsors and funded through support from the Accelerate What's Right team.

In 2023, ERGs made an impact through the following efforts:

- The Asian, Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander (ANHPI) ERG hosted a mini-retreat where members attended a series of panels and community building events.
- Black and African Ancestry Movement (BAAM) led a series of engaging activations that centered on Black stories, communities and culture. One activation included celebrating the 2023 Black History Month theme of 'Black Resistance' and spotlighting BAAM members.



When I think of Black resistance, I think of showing up at work and in my community as my full self. I can be 100% authentically me, in all my intersectional identities and shades, even in the face of judgement or criticism.

Tyler Blackburn (2023 BAAM Co-Chair)

ERGs By the Numbers

2,174

hours spent on leading and attending ERG activations

\$20K

spent on ERG work in 2023

61%

of NA Employees belong to an ERG (7% increase from 2022)

141
members

Women's Leadership Group (WLG)

72
members

Parents Group

51
members

Black & African Ancestry Movement (BAAM)

42
members

Asian, Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander Group (ANHPI)

38
members

Proud@APCO

33
members

LatinAPCO

30
members

APCOAccess

22
members

NeuroAccess

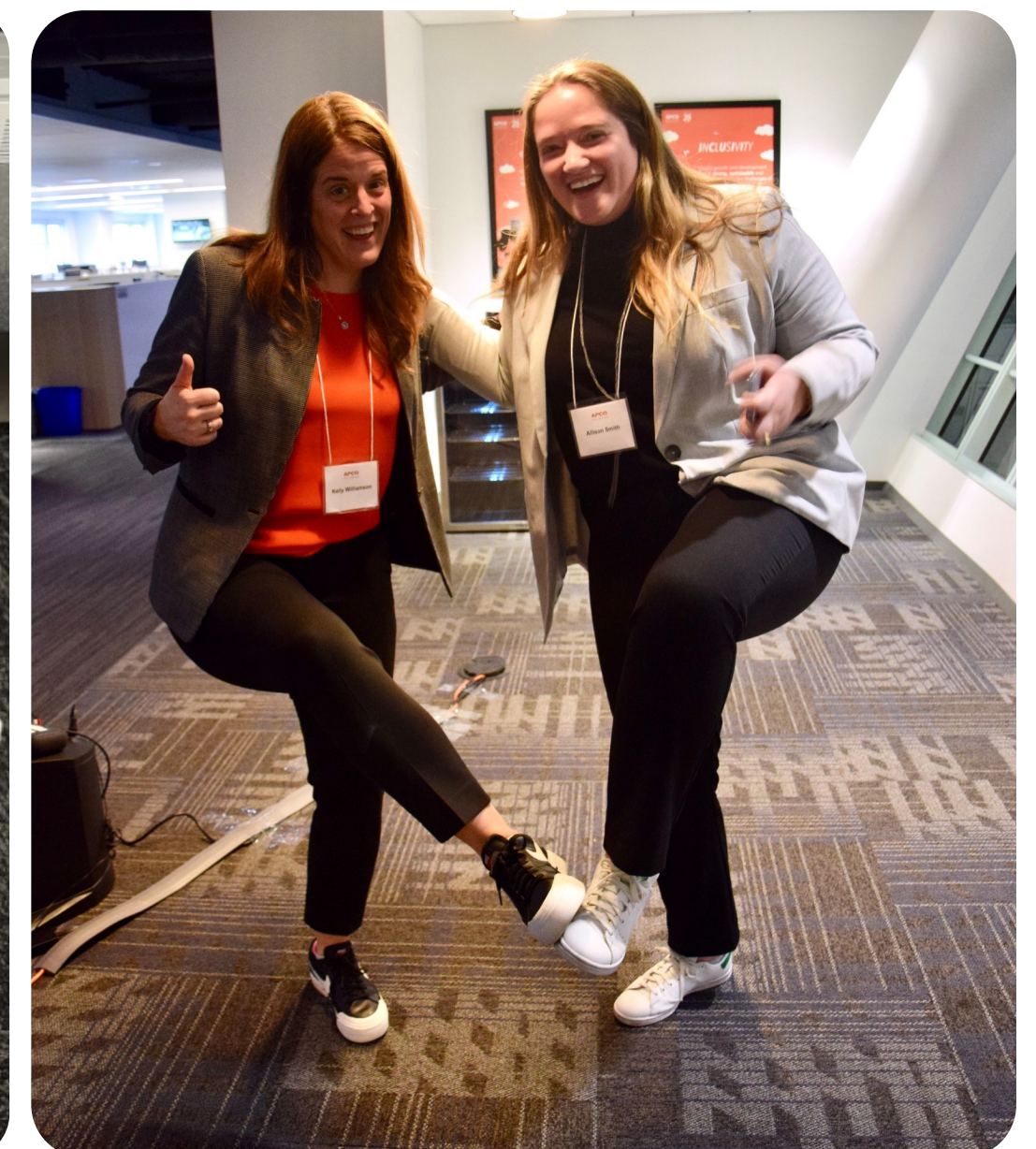
Employee Resource Groups

- **APCO Access** focused on creating community through open dialogue within the ERG on issues critical to ensuring equitable experiences for employees with differing abilities.
- **Proud@APCO** engaged colleagues under the theme of “TRANScending”, which aimed to support the transgender and nonbinary community through activations like a fireside chat with an LA-based LGBTQ+ youth health educator and Gender 101 teach-ins.
- **LatinAPCO** created a best practice guide for Hispanic Heritage Month and co-created a Spotify playlist for employees to enjoy during the month.
- **Parents Group** launched a back-to-school initiative, partnering with local non-profits to contribute books and clothes for students for the new school year.
- **The Women’s Leadership Group (WLG)** created programming to uplift women in the workplace and facilitated conversations on topics like racial identity, representation, empowerment and self-confidence. In the following quote, WLG Co-chair Melissa Petito reflects on the experience of being a woman in the workplace.



To me, being a woman in the workplace comes with great responsibility; it is about more than just succeeding as an individual, but also advocating for other women, my colleagues. Everyone has something to teach, and I personally find it a privilege to mentor the next generation of women at work.

Melissa Petito (2023 WLG Co-Chair)





Accelerating Our Cultural Competency

Accelerating Our Cultural Competency: Overview

We believe that we have a unique opportunity to prioritize and deepen the cultural competency of our teams.

As culturally competent communicators, our ability to communicate across aisles – with intersectional communities and with vast networks – fuels our ability to see each other, issues and moments through a lens of curiosity, inclusivity, empathy and boldness – APCO's core values. And, cultural competency aids in the personal growth of our people.

Here are a few ways we build cultural competency:

- Learn, engage and collaborate with key partners including Paradigm for Parity, the Diversity Action Alliance and We Are All Human.
- Host Courageous Conversations where we cultivate respectful but challenging dialogue in hopes of building awareness and understanding around diversity and cultural sensitivities.
- Combat microaggressions through education and intervention via the Trained Ally program.
- Engage with external experts to provide trainings, workshops and facilitated discussions on issues important to our people.
- Provide self-paced trainings and resources for our people to educate themselves and increase their cultural competency around unconscious bias.
- Provide colleagues with resources to report microaggression, harassment and discrimination incidents through multiple channels including the anonymous STOPit app.

Accelerating Our Cultural Competency

Key Takeaways

Top 2023 Accomplishments

- Rolled out Inclusive Leadership Training for directors and above on psychological safety to help leaders develop self-awareness, empathy and inclusivity in a diverse team environment. By incorporating sessions on psychological safety, leaders can understand the importance of mental well-being in the workplace and how this intersects with lived experiences.
- Engaged with diverse-owned businesses to enhance our training initiatives.
- Deepened our infrastructure supporting ERGs and their impact by activating our Learning & Development team to co-create a series of learning sessions for colleagues.
- Continued to achieve a 100% signature rate of APCO's Inclusivity Accord, a powerful tool that allows us to ensure employees understand the role they play in creating an inclusive environment.

Opportunities to Drive More Progress

- Begin collecting participation insights for live trainings and courageous conversations to create benchmark data.
- Consistently communicate the importance and value of the DEI trainings and self-paced learning modules available in our Learning & Development platform to increase completion rates.
- Increase the awareness of the Trained Ally program to ensure that it serves as a valuable resource for maintaining inclusive environments.
- Tap into the resources of our DEI learning partners for more always-on resources and industry collaboration that can improve the cultural competency of our team.
- Recognize the impact of managers on creating spaces of belonging by equipping them with specialized training and resources and ensuring diversity among our people managers.

Building Cultural Competency Through Learning & Development

We prioritize creating both formal and informal learning opportunities that cater to different learning and engagement styles. These learning opportunities are both aligned to moments – like joining APCO or becoming a leader within the business – and issues that are important to our people.

DEI Orientation

All new hires complete DEI onboarding to understand our strategy and how they fit into our larger efforts. Creating an inclusive work environment requires commitment from all APCO employees. For that reason, all new hires are asked to read, understand and commit to APCO's Inclusivity Accord and complete unconscious bias training.

Inclusive Leadership Training

Culturally aware and inclusive leadership can change the course of an individual's experience in the workplace. We brought in a training curriculum to ensure that our leaders are equipped with tools and resources to practice intentional and inclusive leadership. These training courses cover topics like psychological safety, mental health awareness, providing effective feedback and more.

Skill Builders

These interactive and informative 30-minute sessions create accessible and impactful learning moments for all employees. In 2023, the L&D team partnered with ERGs to create a series of skill builder sessions focused on advancing cultural competency, building confidence as diverse emerging client leaders and embracing intersectionality as a superpower.

Trained Ally Network

To combat and address microaggressions in the workplace, APCO partnered with [Boundless Awareness](#) to create a formalized program of trained colleagues to offer support to people who have witnessed or endured a microaggression in the workspace. Their role is to provide a safe space to listen and be a sounding board for next steps. Trained Allies are located across all offices, departments and levels to reinforce a safe environment for all employees to thrive in.

26 Trained Allies across all North America offices, departments and levels

Courageous Conversations

Our Courageous Conversations series brings powerful external experts to speak about issues that impact a wide range of communities. The series fosters respectful but challenging dialogue designed to build awareness and understanding of emerging opportunities.



Jer Adrienne Lelliott: A youth and health educator for the LA County Department of Public Health, PhD candidate researching prenatal care and co-chair of fundraising at the LGBTQ+ Victory Fund, spoke to APCO about the importance of uplifting trans and gender non-conforming people to support *all* marginalized people.

Dr. Robert Livingston, PhD: Faculty Chair for the Program on Racial Equity at Harvard University and a leading social psychologist, took us through the heart of his new book, "The Conversation: How Seeking and Speaking the Truth About Racism Can Radically Transform Individuals and Organizations," to discuss the necessities of speaking about race and privilege in the workplace.



A woman with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a dark patterned jacket and a colorful scarf, is speaking and gesturing with her hands. She is standing in a room with other people seated around a table. The background is slightly blurred, showing a meeting environment with water bottles on the table and a sign with the number '1'.

Accelerating Our Clients & Community

Accelerating Our Clients & Community

Overview

We actively seek opportunities to Accelerate What's Right through our work with clients and how we engage with the communities surrounding our offices and where our employees live.

Here are a few ways we accelerate our clients and communities:

- Meaningfully contribute to the communities around us through leveraging the talent of our team and scale of our business.
- Build a team of diverse and passionate leaders to guide our clients' efforts to engage diverse audiences and move the needle on issues critical to diverse communities.
- Harness our expertise to provide timely, accessible and balanced insight into some of the most pressing issues from affirmative action to abortion rights.
- Invite our clients to join us to engage with diverse leaders and learn through our Accelerate What's Right speaker series.

Accelerating Our Clients & Community

Key Takeaways

Top 2023 Accomplishments

- Increased access to our services by contributing over \$700,000 via pro bono and reduced rate work for organizations working to address systemic barriers to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Volunteered approximately 200 hours of time to local community efforts through the APCO Gives Back employee volunteerism program.
- Hosted four Accelerate What's Right convenings that brought together influential figures from various sectors, including politics, the arts and non-profit advocacy.
- Through the leadership of APCO ERGs, provided contributions to meaningful organizations like Moms Rising, Dress for Success, National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI), Horton's Kids and Everybody Wins DC (EWDC).

Opportunities to Drive More Progress

- Make it easier to leverage our economic impact to Accelerate What's Right by building an internal database of preferred diverse vendors.
- Increase awareness of the APCO Gives Back volunteerism and the donation-matching program to increase the utilization of these benefits.
- Create more structure and definition around our pro bono efforts to enable more colleagues to get involved in this impactful work and to ensure an equitable approach to selecting pro bono and reduced rate clients.

Supporting Clients in Accelerating What's Right

APCO Impact's Equity & Justice practice works hand-in-hand with clients working to dismantle systemic barriers, create products and services that reflect diverse audience needs, navigate complex internal and external environments on issues deeply impacting diverse employees and stakeholders, build partnerships with leading issue and advocacy organizations, and shift or protect narratives around pressing issues. For leaders across all sectors, racial justice, human rights, gender equity, LGBTQ+ equality, disability rights, indigenous rights and inclusion for all marginalized individuals are top of mind. We help organizations push beyond traditional approaches – centering equity and justice and identifying opportunities for structural and systemic change.

Global Tech Company A

APCO closely partnered with a global technology company to map its enterprise-wide DEI work and develop an integrated internal and external narrative supporting the future of its business. This narrative synthesizes the viewpoints of 100+ employees working on DEI, a comprehensive analysis of multiple competitor data sets and robust consumer research to develop a unique, differentiated and impactful narrative that will permeate and focus the company's DEI efforts in the future.

Advocacy Organization

APCO worked alongside our client to break through a crowded media landscape to elevate national discussion on issues relevant to Black voters, communities and elected officials. Our media relations efforts resulted in 2.4 billion unique monthly views, 197 unique pieces of media coverage, 50+ interview inquiries and over 110 online articles. Key events and media placements were highlighted in Forbes, Essence, Axios, The Shade Room, Variety, GMA, MSNBC, the Washingtonian, the Hill and more.

Global Tech Company B

APCO partnered with a global technology company to uncover opportunities to integrate localized, hyper-relevant cultural understanding into the company's internal and external DEI objectives at both the corporate and societal level. Drawing on a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources, APCO conducted an equality and equity analysis across 12 markets in the EMEA region. APCO's analysis and findings highlighted layers of inequities within communities in each market and the need to understand the nuances of these unique circumstances to help drive effective DEI outcomes.

LGBTQ+ Foundation

Since 2021, APCO has partnered with a foundation focused on empowering LGBTQ+ women and girls. APCO spearheaded the creation of the foundation, whose mission centers on enhancing the lives of LGBTQ+ women and girls and dedicating their efforts to racial, social and gender justice in hopes of creating a more equitable world. The Foundation's advocacy efforts focus on strategically amplifying the LGBTQ+ community and championing equality and gender justice. Since its inception they have forged a coordinated fight for economic equality, health and representation, and seen significant impact through partnerships and collaborations with major brands, advancing their objective to amplify national visibility for LGBTQ+ issues.

Convening Opportunities for Learning & Inspiration

We invite our clients and peers to join us in educational exchanges with high-profile industry experts on relevant and impactful topics.

Speaker Highlights

- **Dionna Smith**, the Chief Diversity and Public Affairs Officer for GoGuardian, one of the largest technology providers of education software in our nation's K-12 public schools, opened and moderated a conversation with Kathy Lopes of Newton public schools in Massachusetts to discuss the necessity of DEI in education.
- **Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings**, Founder, President and CEO of Global Policy Solutions, spoke about her career, the state of racial justice and the life and legacy of her late husband, the Honorable U.S. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings
- **Dionne Warwick**, American singer, actress and activist spoke about her transition into activism and how she became a prominent figure in the education and awareness of the AIDS epidemic.



Dionna Smith



Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings



Dionne Warwick

Community Activities

Reinvesting in our Communities through APCO Gives Back

This program empowers employees to make meaningful contributions to our communities through volunteerism, fundraising and financial contributions that lead to the development of resilient communities. Through the program, APCO matches donations to nonprofits up to \$50 and encourages employees to dedicate eight hours to volunteering with local nonprofit organizations. In 2023, APCO colleagues volunteered nearly 200 hours of time.

Supplier Diversity

Through Accelerate What's Right, APCO has intentionally expanded its economic impact to include more diverse suppliers. We have created more opportunities for diverse suppliers to secure business with APCO and in 2024 are working to build a database of preferred, diverse vendors across the areas we most commonly engage outside vendors.

Partnerships

To continue to multiply our impact and share best practices, APCO engages with national and global organizations and working groups. Some of our partnerships include Paradigm for Parity, Diversity Action Alliance, Hispanic Promise and We Are All Human.



Working with these organizations ensures we are driving towards our DEI goals by giving us tools to benchmark our data and providing resources to continuously improve our DEI program. Partnerships with organization such as Hispanic Promise and We Are All Human foundation were made to intentionally learn more about the Latinx community and diversify our recruitment pool.

A blurred photograph of several people walking in a modern, brightly lit hallway. The walls are a vibrant yellow, and the floor is a light-colored tile. The image has a motion blur effect, suggesting a fast-paced environment. The text 'Accelerating Forward' is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Accelerating Forward

Charting Our Path Forward

Each year, we identify a series of measurable goals that will help us close gaps, deepen our impact or harness emerging opportunities to build a culture where diverse colleagues can thrive. As we look at 2024, we see clear steps we can take to continue to ensure our journey is marked by forward progress towards our objective to be the most diverse, inclusive global advisory firm. Let's take a look at our 2024 Accelerate What's Right Goals:

Accelerate Our **PEOPLE**

- Close gaps in representation of people of color (POC) among senior leadership and close gaps in Hispanic/Latinx representation across the broader workforce.
- Build on progress made to integrate AWR into our leadership teams and systems (i.e. North America Leadership Team (NLT) and Key Client Initiative (KCI)) and begin to measure representation within client teams, account leadership and people management roles to create a more detailed view of equity at the firm.
- Continue to prioritize our annual market competitiveness review against peer companies that reflect our size, performance, scale and talent needs.

Accelerate Our **CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

- Pilot and launch the Accelerate What's Right Ambassador Program in our offices and regions.
- In acknowledgement of the role managers play in creating environments of belonging, launch a cultural competency program for all managers.
- Recognize unique barriers to belonging and career development for diverse employees and integrate culturally aware coaching sessions for ERGs.
- Improve participation tracking of Inclusive Leadership Training and increase the percentage of leaders completing this training by 10%.

Accelerate Our **CLIENTS & COMMUNITIES**

- Harness our economic impact to Accelerate What's Right within our communities by establishing a database of preferred, diverse vendors across our most used services and developing policies to ensure diverse vendors are considered for opportunities.
- Continue to invest in our communities and focus on the issues that our people are passionate about; build dedicated infrastructure to increase impact resulting from pro bono, low bono and in-kind work.



Investing in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is a collective effort that requires the dedication of everyone involved, from APCO leaders to Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), trained allies and our teams who contribute daily to learning and growing. Your collective efforts are the backbone of our initiative to Accelerate What's Right and live our value of inclusivity. Let's continue to work together to build even more momentum.

Thank You!

Previous Reports



2021
DEI Outlook
[\[View\]](#)



2022
DEI Outlook
[\[View\]](#)



2022
CSR Report
[\[View\]](#)