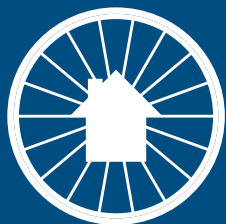


REIFY SOLUTIONS LLC:  
DE&I ESSENTIALS

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# BUILDING EQUITY: BENCHMARK REPORT

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**Bike & Build**

**2020-21**

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# Overview

2020-21 placed the world in a constant series of historical events. The double pandemic of COVID-19 and racial injustice disrupted America. After the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, individuals and organizations called for a long-overdue end of systematic racism and oppression. As we lived through COVID-19, people of color, older adults, and the poor suffered, and continue to suffer from the same inequalities. The calls for racial justice and the end of systematic oppression brought us to this journey, led by staff and the Board of Directors who collectively agreed that it was our responsibility to stand with Black Lives Matter in an ongoing effort for social change.

In August 2020, Bike & Build and Reify Solutions, LLC created a comprehensive partnership to enhance the strategic diversity, equity, and inclusion goals set by the Board of Directors and Staff. The following October, Reify Solutions launched a 360° survey, along with focus groups to capture how constituents, staff, and board members experienced the organization.

The survey and focus groups aimed to capture the current state of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) management, as well as attitudes and perceptions of DE&I practices that are occurring at Bike & Build. The online surveys were communicated publicly, and the survey remained open for three months. A total of 159 constituents participated. This report outlines the results and recommended solutions that riders, leaders, staff, and board members all were aligned with pursuing and achieving.

Bike & Build and Reify Solutions, LLC would thank all survey participants for contributing to the ongoing work that is aimed at improving DE&I nationwide.

# Purpose

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate how Bike & Build can progress in order to create a more equitable and inclusive organization, programming model and culture. The report is designed to explore the experiences of current constituents and find key priorities that ensure that the organization, programming and culture reaches its diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

Our approach utilized the working definitions of:

- **Diversity (D)** refers to what practices, policies, and procedures sustain the organization in a way that multiple identity groups (e.g. race, gender, socioeconomic class, etc.) are represented
- **Equity (E)** refers to practices, policies, and procedures that inform the larger work of the organization, which leads to the redistribution of resources to traditionally marginalized communities
- **Inclusion (I)** refers to the practices, policies, and procedures that make the organization accessible to all individuals, while valuing their unique identities and opinions.

In 2020, the Board of Directors and Bike & Build created a diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan that was designed to foster more socially just practices. Starting in September of 2020, the Board of Directors and Staff have been attending monthly educational sessions along with personalized coaching on how to best design and implement equitable practices throughout Bike & Build. The findings and recommendations of the report are informed by the definitions of

**Organization** refers to Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers and how they interact with constituents

**Program** refers to the affordable housing curriculum and programs produced by the organization

**Culture** refers to the behaviors, attitudes, and actions by the organization as experienced by its members

# Approach

This report primarily focuses on generating themes centered around Bike & Build's organization, programs, and culture with the central focus of providing systems, structures, and accountability metrics to achieve real goals. This report centers one central question:

## **How will Bike & Build create equitable practices, policies, and procedures within their organization, culture, and program by 2024?**

Quantitatively, we received 159 total responses to the survey. The use of likert-scaled questions gave us an opportunity to create three specific sections of perceptions: positive (agree/strongly agree), neutral, and negative (disagree/strongly disagree). There are two distinct reasons for positioning the questions in this way. The first was to give our research team the ability to see clear distinctions between participants. The second was to ensure recommendations can be directed into areas and behaviors that need to be maintained, enhanced, or eliminated.

Through the focus group, we were able to collect the experiences of approximately 12 participants connected to Bike & Build at the Board, Staff, and Alumni levels. This wide variety of stories gave us an opportunity to view the work of the organization across its recent history as well as the process informing its future growth. Our methodology focused on phenomenological<sup>1</sup> approaches<sup>2</sup> in the form of the following:

- Interviews
- Program reviews
- Document reviews
- Reviewing social media
- Virtual conversations in the form of monthly check-ins

In each section of the report (organization, program, and culture) we speak directly to the Board and Staff with recommendations. The following results pages are outlined in the following format:

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<sup>1</sup> Coined by Husserl (1913/1962, as cited by Qutoshi, 2018) - Qutoshi, S. B. (2018). Phenomenology: A philosophy and method of inquiry. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 5(1), 215-222.

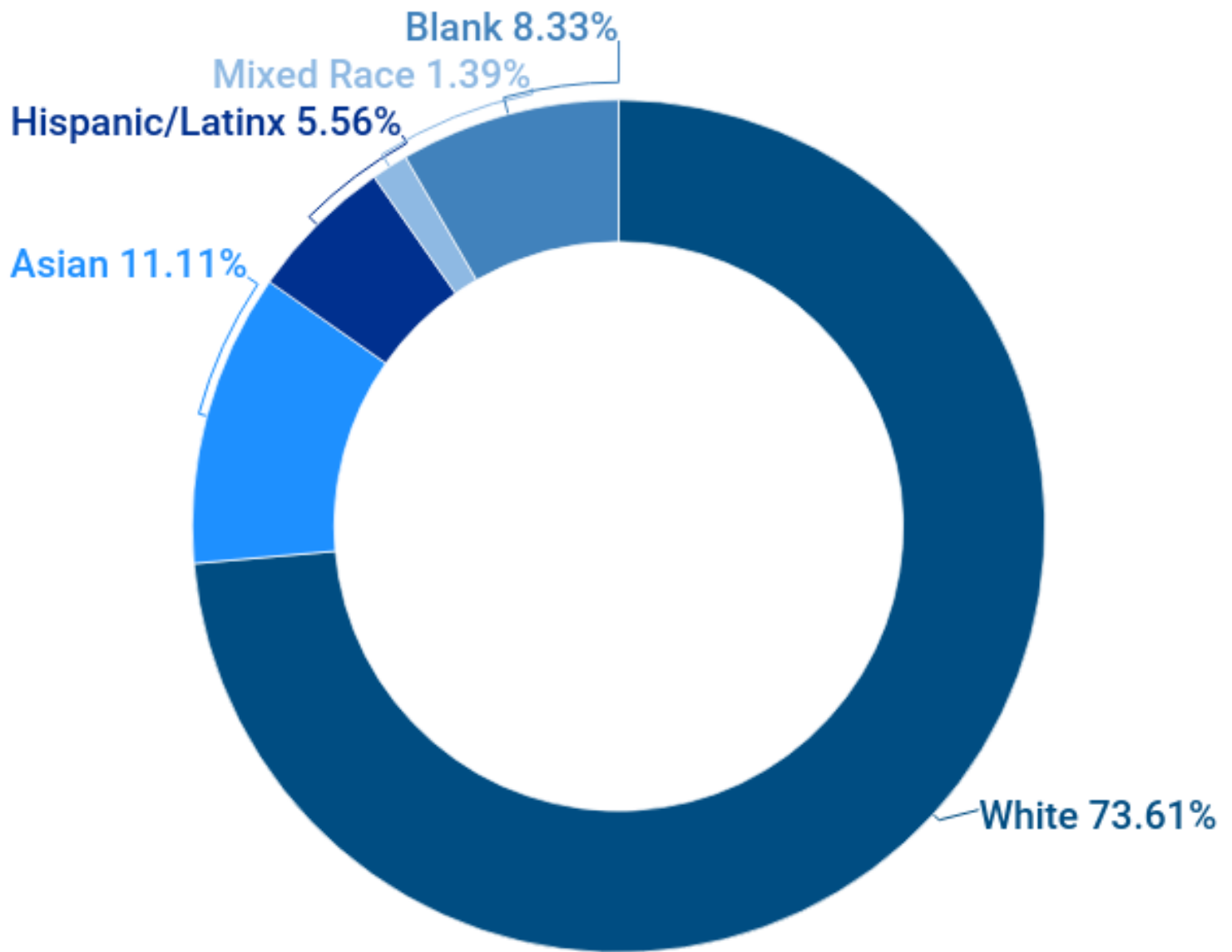
<sup>2</sup> The phenomenological approach allows for the natural progression of themes and unique experiences of Bike & Build to arise. We remember it as the "phenomenons" around us and how they make us feel. A perfect of this would be the following [video](#).

- Interpretation of findings
- Aggregated survey data (emphasis placed on questions that fuel practical action steps)
- Direct quotes from qualitative interviews
- Intentional recommendations that elevate future work

The following report relied on the form capabilities of the GSuite, Zoom for qualitative recordings, and Otter.ai for transcriptions. We collected demographic information following the request from staff and participants. The 72 respondents to the demographic data offer a sample that guides deeper DE&I discussions.

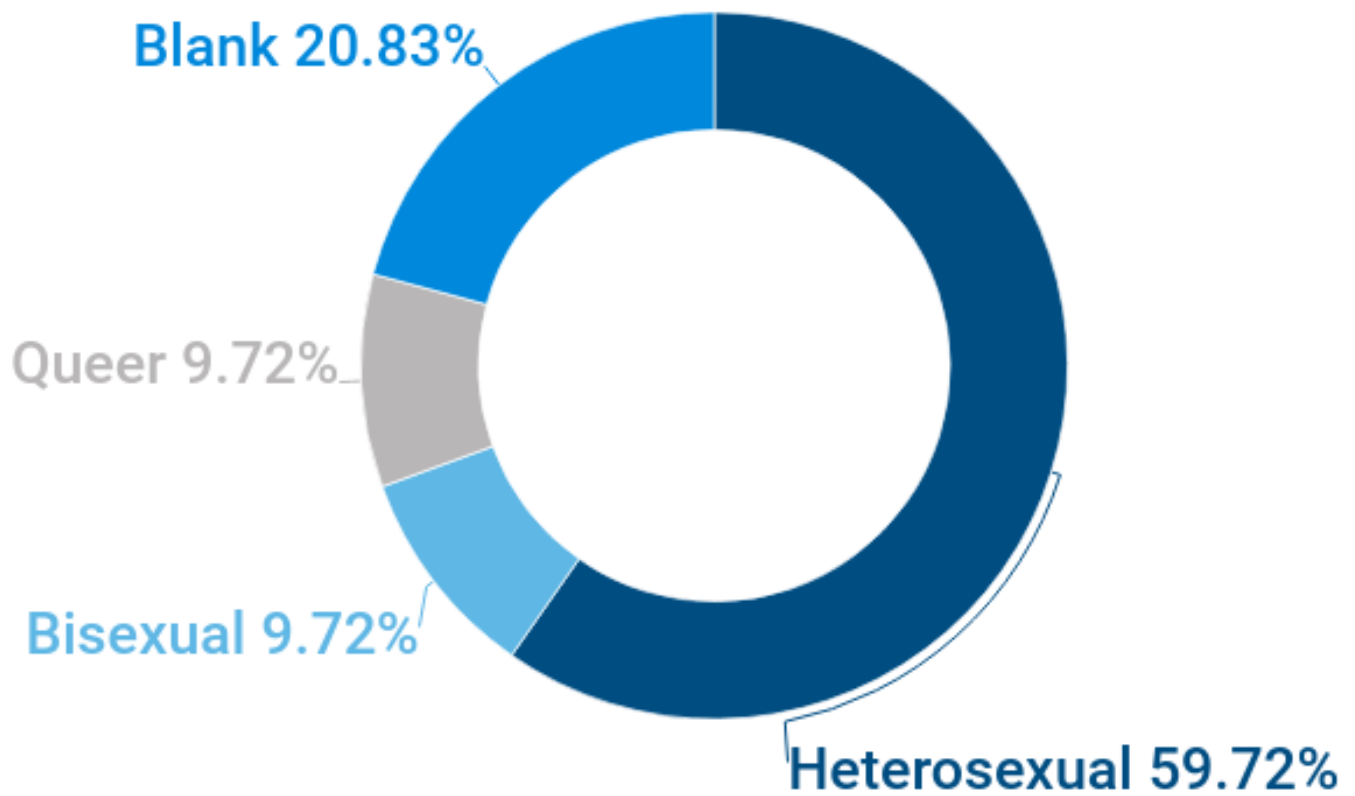
# DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

# Race

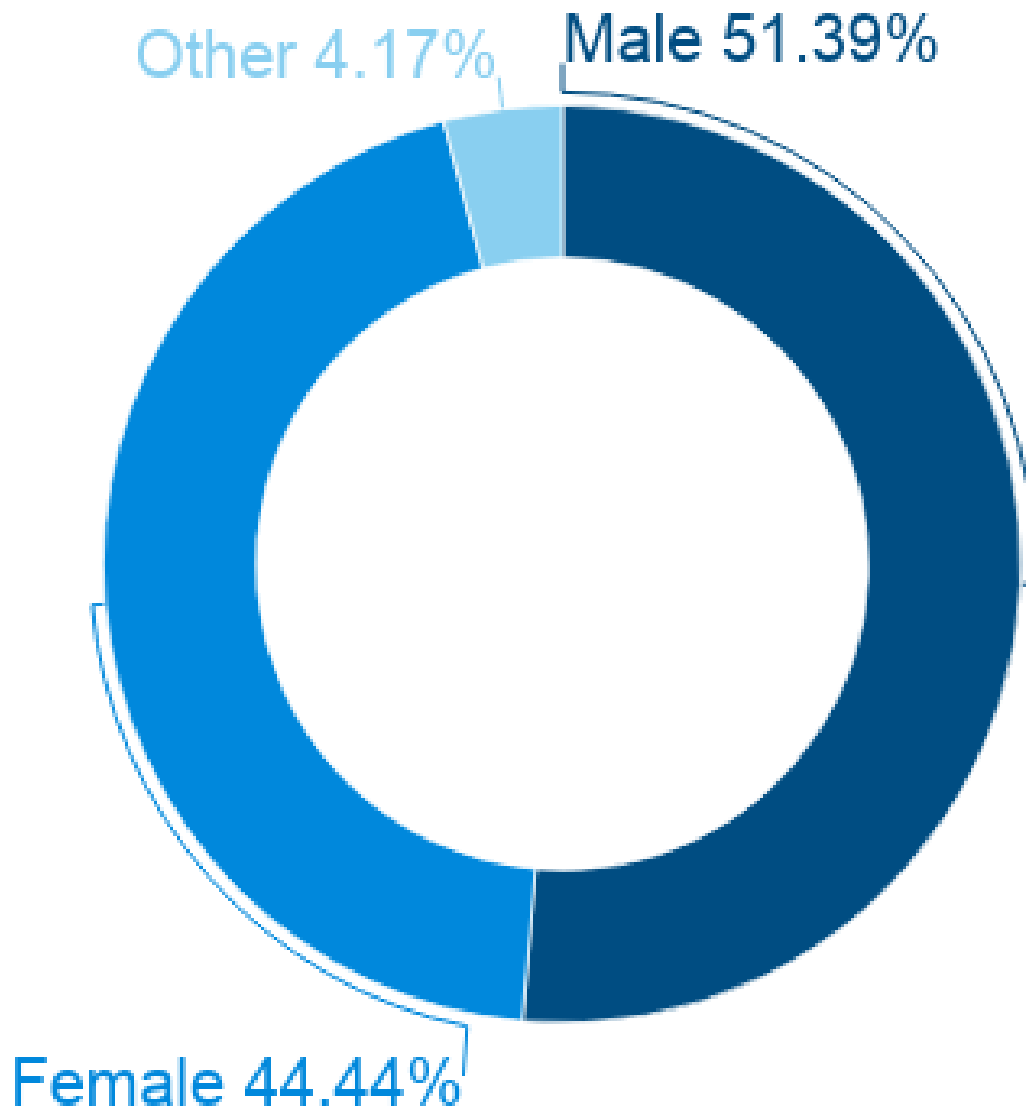




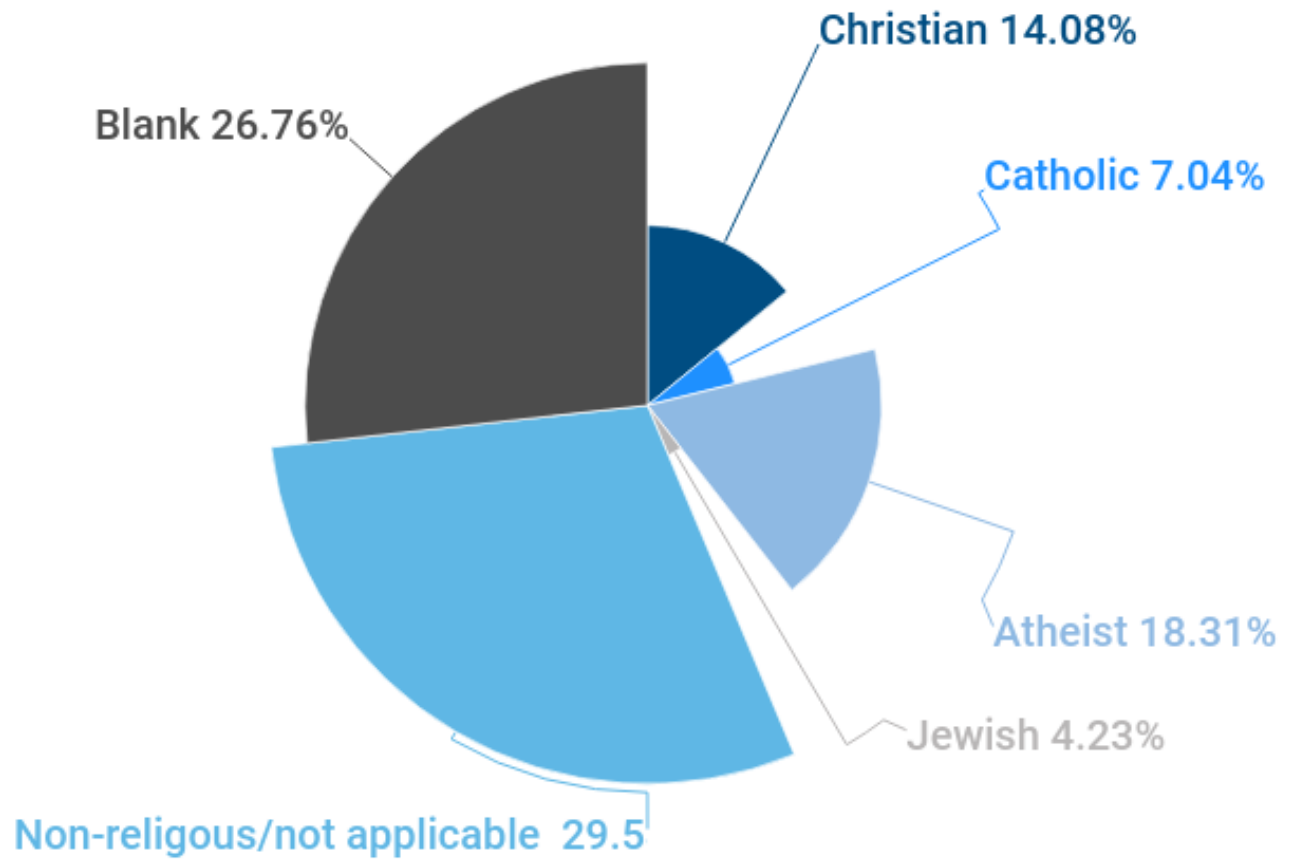
# Sexual Orientation



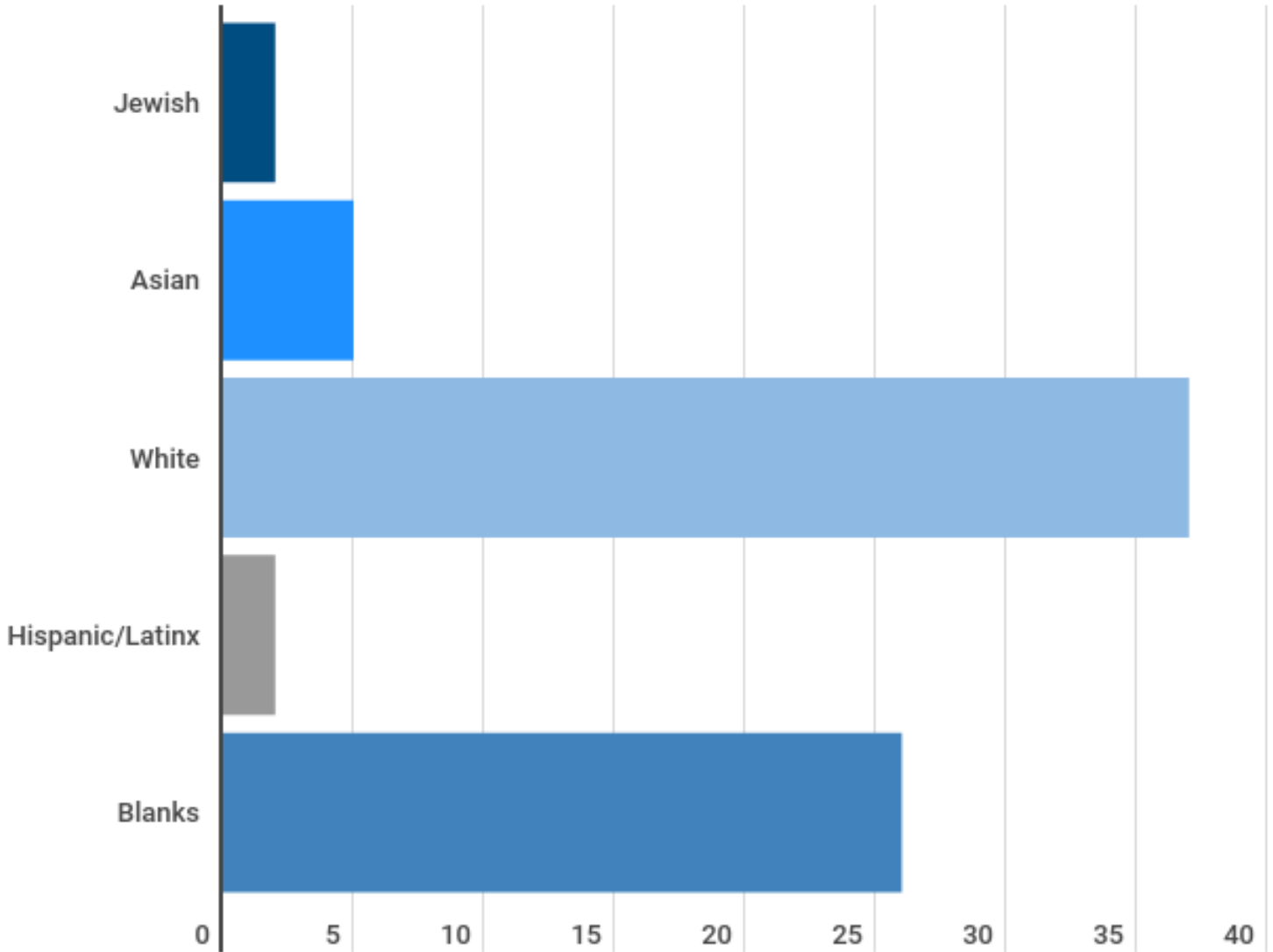
# Gender Identity



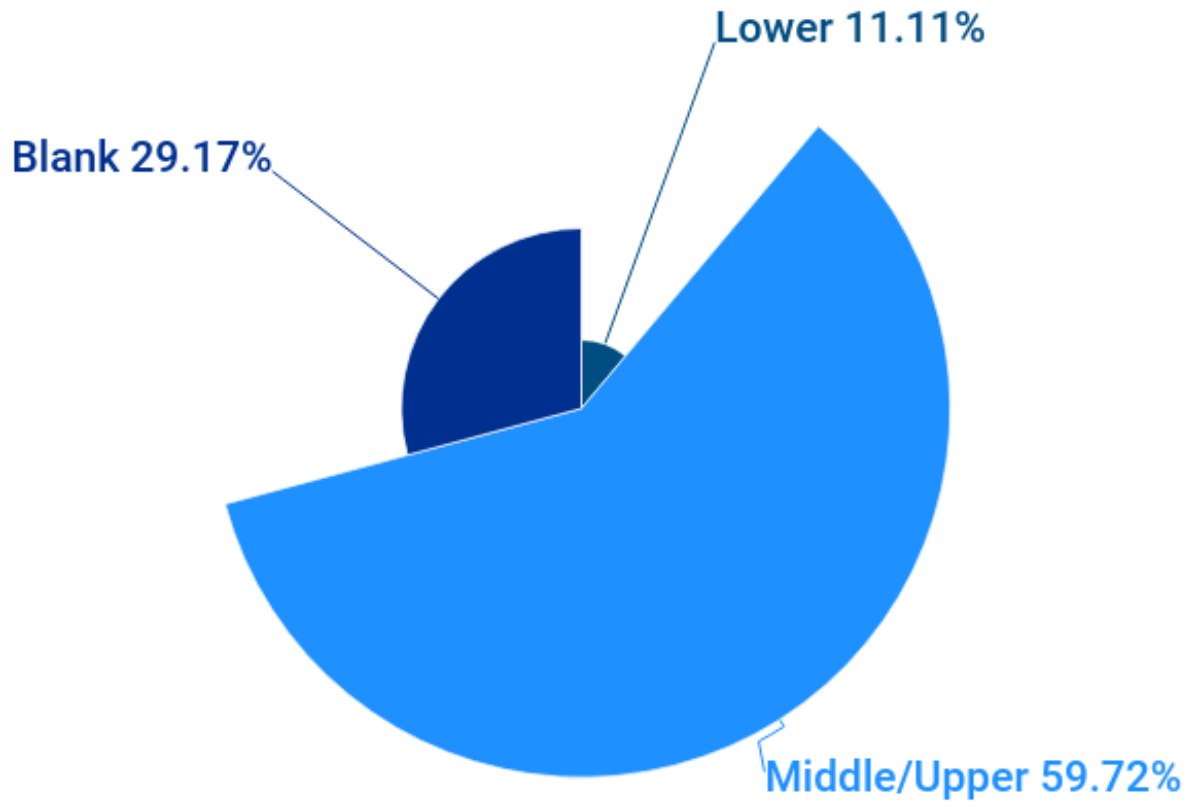
# Religion



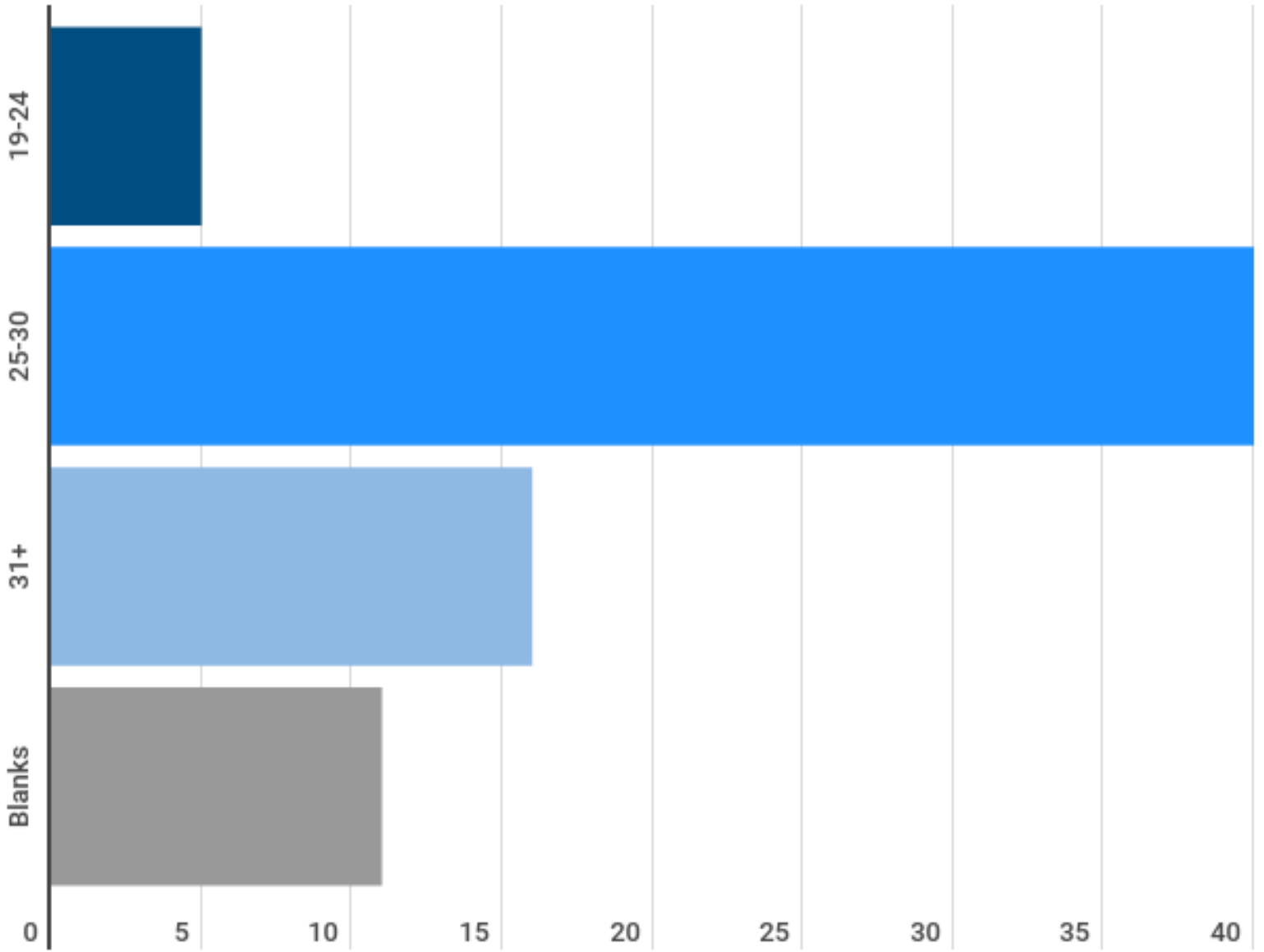
# Ethnicity



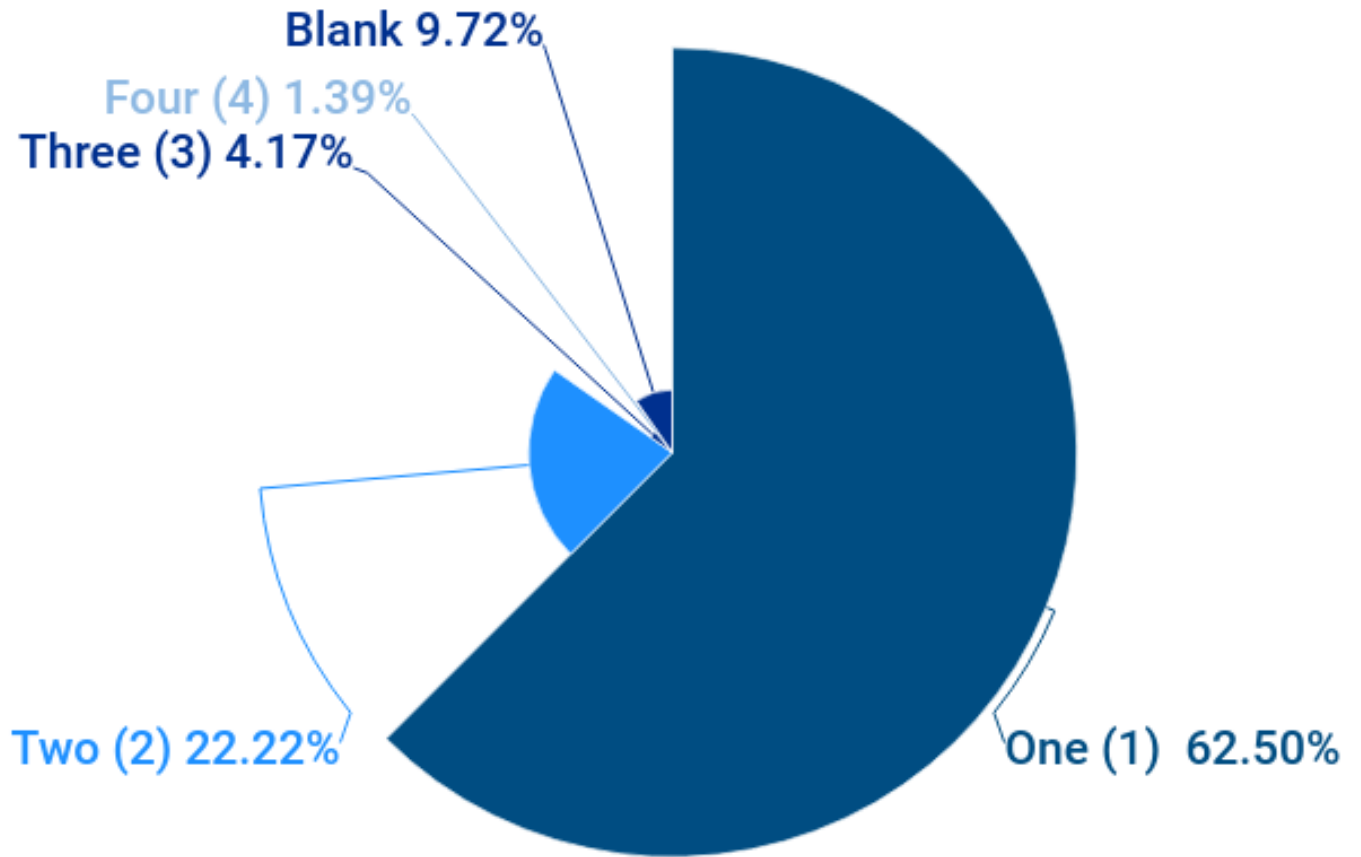
# Class



# Age



# No. of Trips



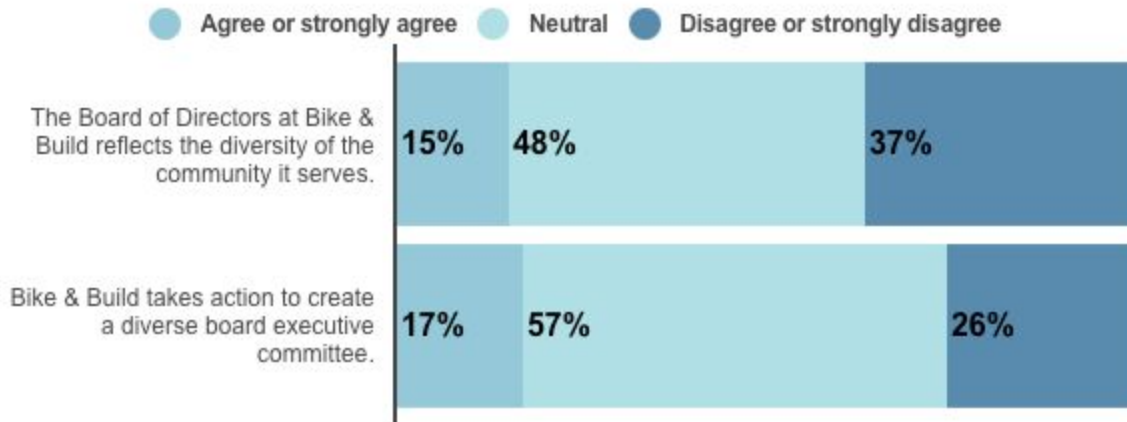
# ORGANIZATION

The objective of the survey and focus group questions about the Board of Directors were to determine the overall attitude constituents had towards the Board of Directors' DE&I priorities.



# Board of Directors, Staff & Volunteers

## Interpretation & Findings



Participants have recognized that the Bike & Build has a neutral or negative attitude toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. Their attitudes toward the board reflects that the Board of Directors are not representative of the communities it serves. Participants interviewed were personally committed to DE&I in their personal or professional lives, but found that the organization could be “doing more” in their efforts. Participants often felt the organization could bear more responsibility for DE&I given the mission.

## **Solution**

### ***Create An Advisory Board***

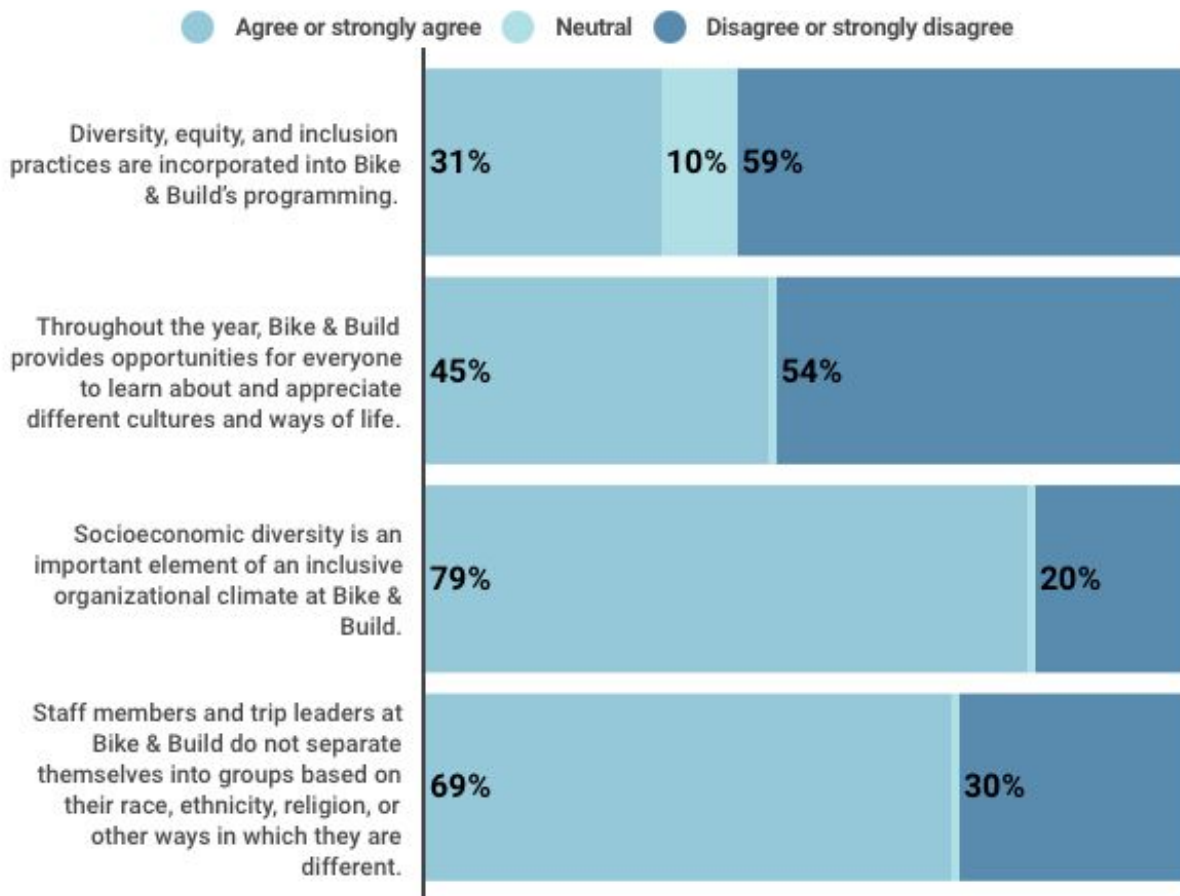
Based on the data and perception from participants, Bike & Build must reflect the communities that it serves. Bike & Build should create an Advisory Board that is reflective of the populations and leaders based on the mission. This board should be representative of communities, leaders, and partnerships that enhance the culture and build more pathways to the Board of Directors. This Advisory Board would be overseen by the Board of Directors and will be instrumental in pipelining diverse members into the organization.

# **PROGRAM**

**The objective of the questions from the survey and focus group discussions about programs was to discover how the constituents interact with rides, curriculum, scholarship, and leader development.**

# Rides, Curriculum, Scholarship & Leadership Development

## Interpretation & Findings



Bike & Build participants found that the organization's programs do not incorporate DE&I. Conversely, they shared that Bike & Build has a strong potential to include the multiple dimensions of DE&I. A key dimension of DE&I would be socioeconomic diversity. The scholarship program and financial aid for rides is an area where change can occur. These findings present the organization with a gap between the potential to reach more communities while presently missing opportunities. Fortunately for the Board and Staff, there are ways to align their practices with their potential.



## **Solution**

### **Utilize Intentional Curriculum Design**

Bike & Build has a powerful opportunity to serve as affordable housing educators. Partnering with a university's Geography and Information Systems (GIS) or Sociology department provides critical research systems and expertise. Local Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and city planning organizations across the country offer a variety of additional resources about context on specific cities. This creates greater depth to the organization's impact. Working collaboratively with these organizations offers numerous educational opportunities and continuing development for leaders, volunteers, and riders. The curriculum should incorporate speakers, courses, and organizations that can enhance the knowledge of program participants.

In 2022, host monthly seminars (or bi-weekly) on the many intersections of affordable housing. Offer an achievers/advocate program that allows individuals to build a rich foundation of knowledge. Use a special events calendar that offers consistent thought leadership opportunities on various topics. These seminars can build into a virtual conference that brings affordable housing advocates together. The conference also serves as a point of community for alumni worldwide.

### **Align the Scholarship Pipeline with Strategic Partnerships**

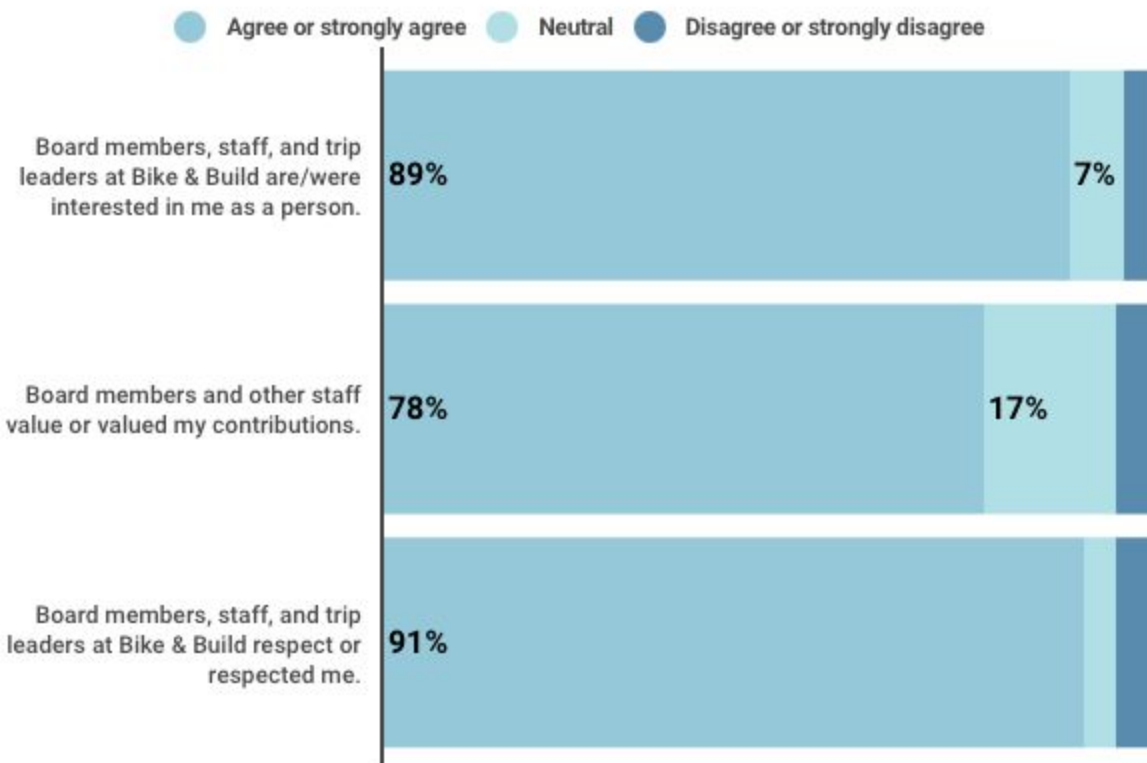
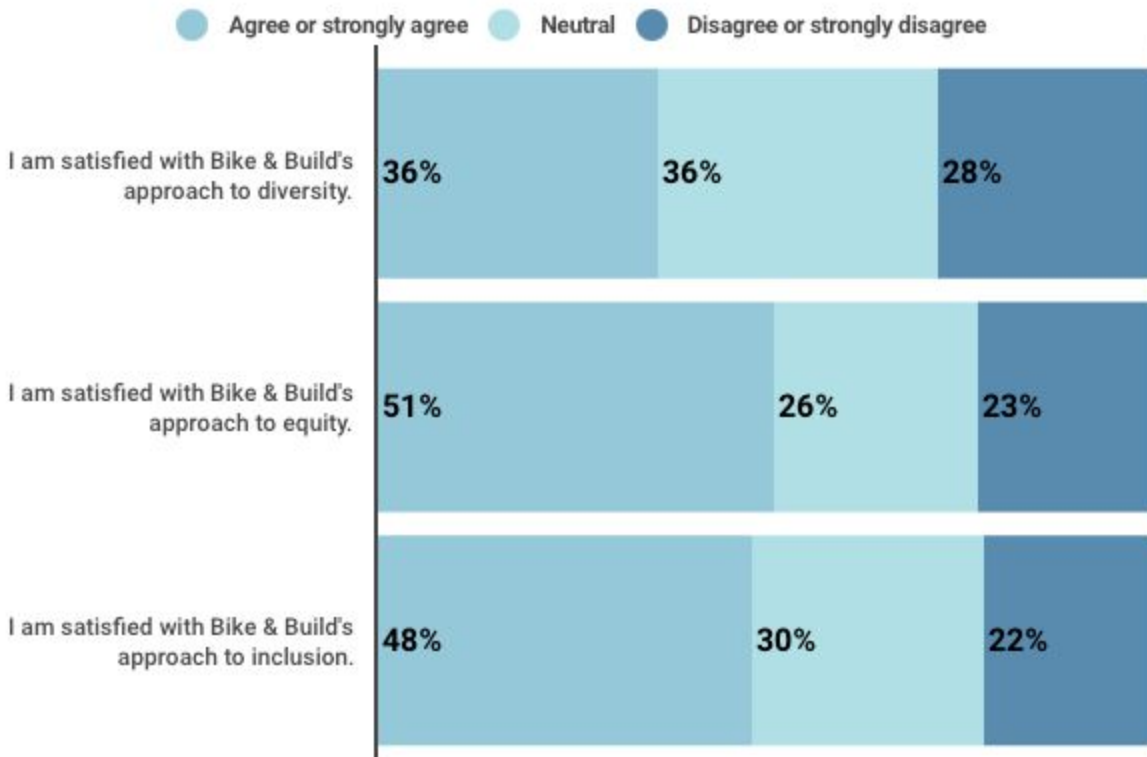
The scholarship program has been noted across conversations as an area for improvement. The recommendation is to reimagine the scholarship program via strategic partnerships with grassroots organizations. The goal is to inspire members from those local grassroots organizations in order to create mutually beneficial experiences for all participants. Previous scholarship recipients can work with staff on benchmarking that helps diversity within the participant pool. Often, local grassroots organizations have the diversity within their constituencies and the desire to reach new levels of impact. Structuring a model that merges scholarship funding with grassroots organizations can be mutually beneficial.

# CULTURE

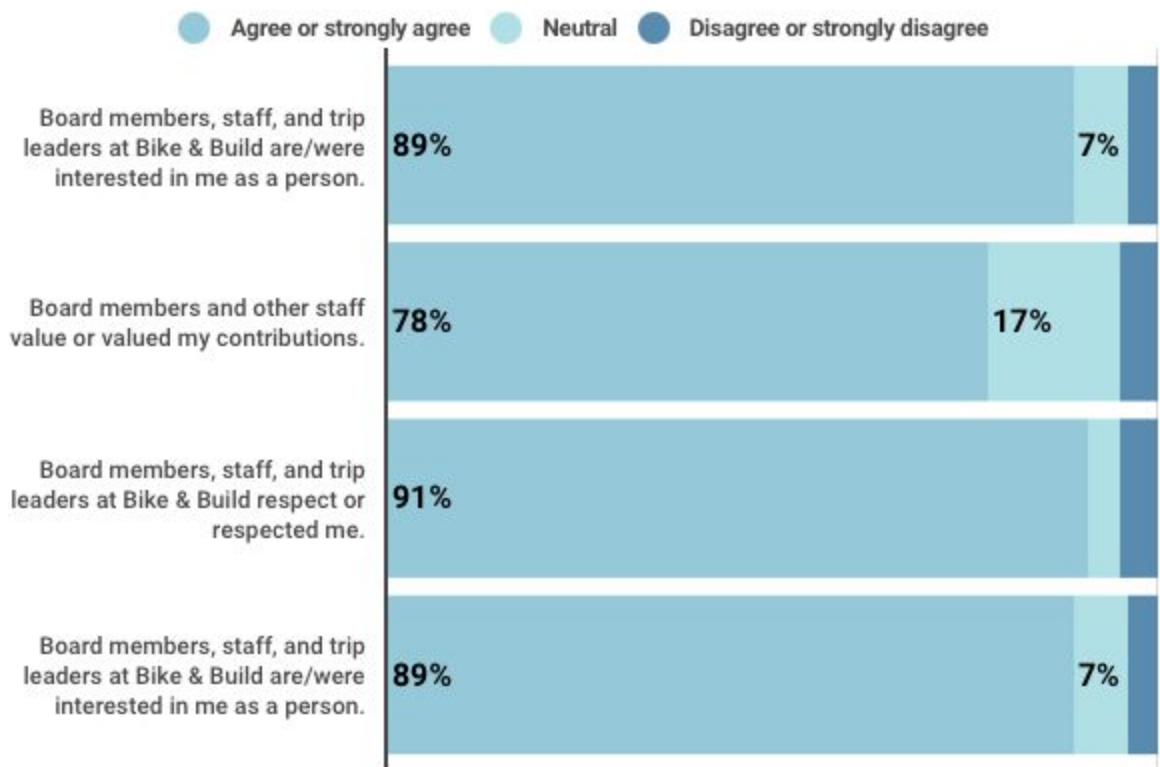
The objective of the survey and focus group questions were to explore the ways to capture constituents' interactions with Bike & Build culture. These tools measured their behaviors, attitudes, and actions.

# Behaviors, Attitudes & Actions

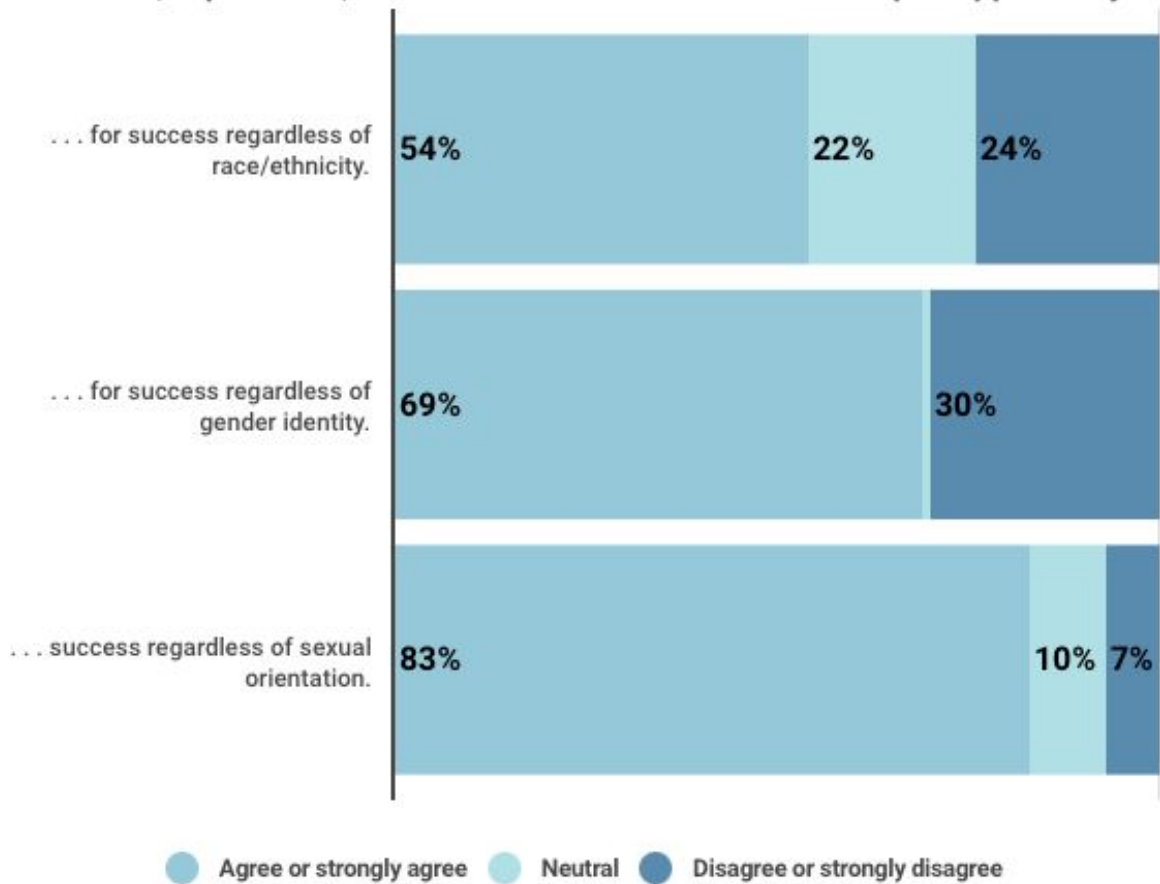
## Interpretation & Findings







**All staff, trip leaders, and riders at Bike & Build have an equal opportunity**



By revealing the invisible drivers of impact for the organization, we are able to pinpoint key areas where policy change may need to occur. Additionally, this provides a way to uncover any gaps in constituent experiences with a focus on DE&I.

**Participant Satisfaction:** The majority of survey participants believe that they are respected, included, and Bike & Build values them. 78% agree or agree strongly that both the Board and Staff value their contributions. 92% of participants believe that Board Members, Staff, and Trip Leaders ensure respect for everyone. 10 people had negative experiences and 46 people had no opinion whatsoever. The inverse of this data looks at the following: while your population seems satisfied with the experience of Bike & Build, this serves as a starting point for enhancing future trips with a DE&I focus. Participants are currently dissatisfied with Bike & Build's approach to diversity and do not agree that they have a role in promoting diversity within the organization.

Accepting, and ultimately working against white supremacy is a journey that participants noted as a long-term goal. By using the curriculum, ride experience, staff, and board, Bike & Build can achieve long-term growth as an equitable organization. The realizations below highlight that the current culture is well-meaning and working toward being more intentional in its promotion and how the work is done. These findings also highlight how stakeholders are viewing the current DE&I culture of Bike & Build.



## **Solution**

### **Increasing Representation**

Bike & Build should create a post-satisfaction survey after each trip to ensure that at least 92% of the participants feel they experienced an inclusive environment with leaders, sites, and core components of rides. Participants have multiple identities, which can create barriers of entry for complete satisfaction. In order to ensure that Bike and Build maintains this level of satisfaction with participants, they must ensure that all participants are educated on the exact experience that they will undergo. After significant education, leaders and members can learn they can contribute to an inclusive experience. We believe that pushing for intentional approaches to the Bike & Build experience will serve as a necessary growth catalyst. New participants will benefit from a more intentionally-designed experience that motivates them to share the larger community with their networks.

### **Conclusion**

The results of our survey and focus groups layout several dimensions for growth. As we assured the Board and Staff, fighting white supremacy and the racial wealth gap takes intentional action. Bike & Build has started the course-correction necessary to achieve their mission in a more equitable manner.

While capacity is a challenge in the middle of political unrest, a global pandemic, shifting financial landscapes, and looming unknown challenges, there is a light of hope. The staff has adapted to each of the above challenges with a growing intention. Board members have brought their vulnerabilities to conversations and course work.

### **The path forward is getting clearer as we grow together, pedal by pedal.**

We have truly appreciated talking on this report. Insights gained from the study have expanded our vantage point of DE&I in the larger nonprofit community. As we complete the engagement this year, and are hopeful to continue future engagements, we want the entire Bike & Build community to pour into our efforts. This impact grows with your support. Please reach out via email at [info@reifyphl.com](mailto:info@reifyphl.com) and make your voice heard.