A LOOK AT THE DIVERSITY OF NNIP

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NNIP

NATIONAL
NEIGHBORHOOD
INDICATORS
PARTNERSHIP

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Contents

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

Coordinated by the Urban Institute, the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) consists of independent organizations in 31 cities that share a mission to ensure that all communities have access to data and the skills necessary for using information to advance equity in neighborhoods. From the beginning, NNIP has been a peer-learning network of organizations dedicated to addressing inequities by democratizing data. The founding Partners helped organizations and residents in historically marginalized neighborhoods use data to advocate for change and generate ways to make progress on meeting residents' needs and improving the quality of life in their communities. These neighborhoods were often communities of color or neighborhoods with concentrations of residents who had limited financial means.

More than 20 years later, these values remain core to the mission of NNIP and its Partner organizations. But in the face of widening inequality, persistent poverty, and evidence of how structural racism has shaped neighborhoods and people's lives, we must do more to improve our practices to advance racial equity. At the Urban Institute, we have committed[1] to improving our institutional diversity, equity, and inclusion while engaging with the policy research field to confront structural racism[2] in *how* we do our work. As an additional step, Urban has prioritized exploring what it would take to overcome structural racism and advance bold solutions[3] in its next 50 years as an organization.

With NNIP, we also recognize that we need to be more thoughtful about how well we reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. A diverse staff and network will improve the relevance and quality of the services provided to communities and, ultimately, the influence we have on local and national policy. We organized a session at the fall 2018 meeting of NNIP Partners to encourage organizations to think about their recruiting practices for creating diverse staffs, boards, advisory boards and committees, and outreach networks. We recognize that diverse hiring is just a first step, before the focus turns to retention, promotion, and professional development for a diverse staff.

We also conducted a survey to document the diversity of staffs and boards or committees of NNIP Partner organizations. The goals of this analysis and resulting brief are to better understand the racial, gender, and age makeup of Partner organizations and establish a baseline to track

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[1] "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Urban," Urban Institute, accessed October 2, 2019, https://www.urban.org/aboutus/why-urban/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-urban.

[2] K. Steven Brown, Kilolo Kijakazi, Charmaine Runes, and Margery Austin Turner, "Confronting Structural Racism in Research and Policy Analysis," February 2019, https://www.urban.org/research/publication/confronting-structural-racism-research-and-policy-analysis.

[3] "Structural Racism," Urban Institute Next 50, accessed October 2, 2019, https://next50.urban.org/question/structural-racism#structural-racism-promising-solutions.

progress toward a more diverse network. In the sections below, we establish this baseline by describing the reported diversity in NNIP. Overall takeaways include the following:

- About three in five staff members in NNIP Partner organizations identified as white; that figure was almost four in five for the leadership of Partner organizations.
- About three in five staff members in NNIP Partner organizations identified as women, but women made up less than half of NNIP leadership.
- More than four in five staff members in NNIP Partner organizations were US-born. University research centers had the highest share of immigrant employees, compared with other organization types.
- About one-quarter of NNIP staff members were younger than 30 years old. University research centers, which often employ students, had a higher percentage of younger staff members.
- There was less diversity among the leaders of NNIP Partner organizations than in staffs overall. Leadership positions were less likely to be held by people of color, women, immigrants, or people younger than 30.
- Boards of directors and advisory committees tended to be older and include more men than Partner organization staffs overall.

This analysis is only the beginning of NNIP's work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Later in the brief, we outline additional steps that can be taken.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

In fall 2018, Urban-NNIP asked Partners to provide data on the demographic breakdowns of their staffs, as well as their project committees, advisory committees, and nonprofit governing boards. In our survey guidance, we recommended that instead of assigning identities to people, Partners allow staff members to self-identify or leave questions blank. Some Partners used the network request for information on diversity as an opportunity to survey their staff members, while others used existing information from human resource records. For this work, we defined "staff" as full- and part-time employees, faculty, essential consultants (those deemed crucial to work), and paid graduate or undergraduate student assistants. We also analyzed the diversity of staff members by their relationship to the Network. Each organization was asked to classify the members of their staff who perform services related to NNIP[4] as leadership, other staff, or

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[4] The following types of services were given as examples of those related to NNIP and local data intermediaries: assembling, transforming, and maintaining neighborhood-level data; disseminating data in both passive (e.g., through websites) and active ways (e.g., through presentations and one-on-one

administrative staff. Organizations self-defined leadership, but they likely included the directors of university centers and executive directors of nonprofits. "Other staff" are NNIP Partner staff members who perform NNIP-related services but are not in leadership roles. "Administrative staff" support Partner functions but are not directly involved in delivery of NNIP-related services such as data management, analysis, outreach, or technical assistance. We asked nonprofits whose missions are to provide local data intermediary services to report on all staff members; university centers to report on staff members for the whole center; and nonprofits, foundations, and government agencies to report on only their NNIP-related unit if the organization overall has an unrelated primary mission.

Thirty-one Partner organizations representing 30 cities completed data collection on staff and board and committee diversity. At the fall 2018 Partners meeting, we presented our preliminary analysis, along with information about how to create more equity-focused hiring practices.[5]

THE NNIP PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

NNIP Partners are housed in a variety of institutions.[6] The detailed breakdown by type of organization is as follows:

- applied university research centers (41 percent)
- nonprofit organizations (28 percent)
- partnerships of multiple organizations (16 percent)
- community/local foundations (9 percent)
- regional/local government agencies (3 percent)
- social enterprises (3 percent)

For analysis included in this brief, we consolidated Partners into three categories: nonprofits; university research centers; or "other" types of institutions, a category that includes community and local funders, regional or local governments, and social enterprises. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of NNIP staffs by organization size.

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meetings); conducting analyses, research, or evaluations that help stakeholders understand programs and specific policy issues that affect communities of color and/or the neighborhood context; working with nonprofit, government, or philanthropic stakeholders to use data to guide advocacy and decisionmaking in program planning and resource allocation; providing technical assistance and training related to data and applying data for impact; and doing communications, administration, technology, and fundraising work in support of the above services.
5 For materials from the session, see "Advancing Racial Diversity in Your Organization for Better Services," National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, October 2018.
6 To learn more about our Partners, visit "Partners," National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, accessed September 2019.

FIGURE 1
NNIP Partner Organizations by Staff Size
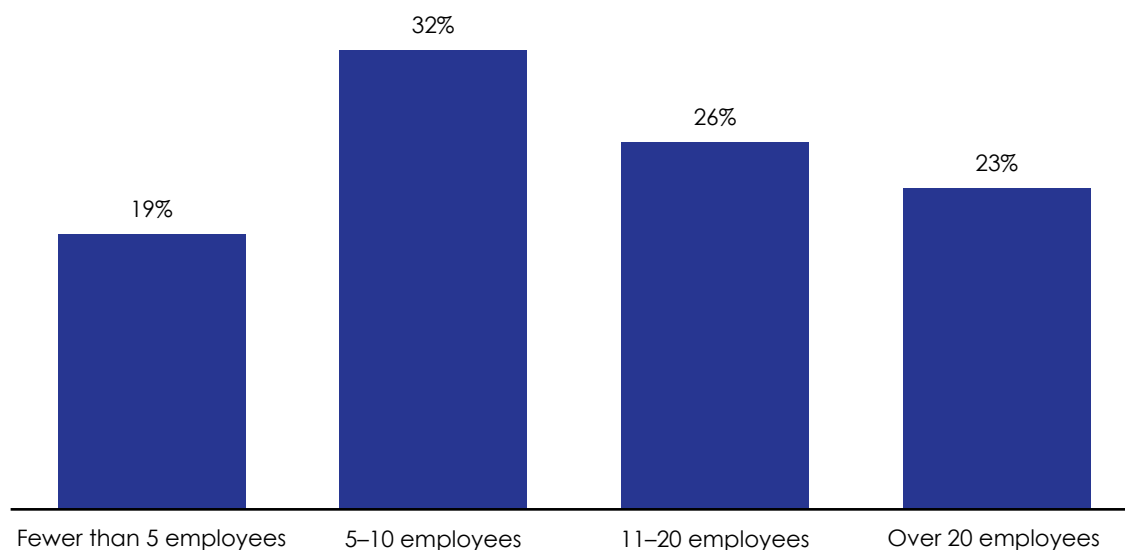
Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Note: Sample size is 31 organizations.

DIVERSITY OF STAFF IN NNIP

RACE/ETHNICITY

Overall, most staff members at NNIP Partner organizations identified as white (figure 2). The survey's categories for race or ethnicity were black (13 percent), Asian (12 percent), white (63 percent), Hispanic (8 percent), indigenous (0 percent), Pacific Islander (0 percent), multiracial (2 percent), other (0 percent), and not-identified (1 percent).[7] Most staff members identified as white regardless of the size or type of institution, but the largest organizations were more diverse than the smallest organizations: 78 percent of staff members at organizations with fewer than five employees were white, compared with 63 percent for organizations with over 20 employees.

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[7] We recognize that people may have multiple racial and ethnic identities and may have chosen to identify with one more strongly than others or to select multiracial. These percentages represent the share of staff members who identified as a specific race or ethnicity out of the total number of staff members at all partner organizations.

FIGURE 2

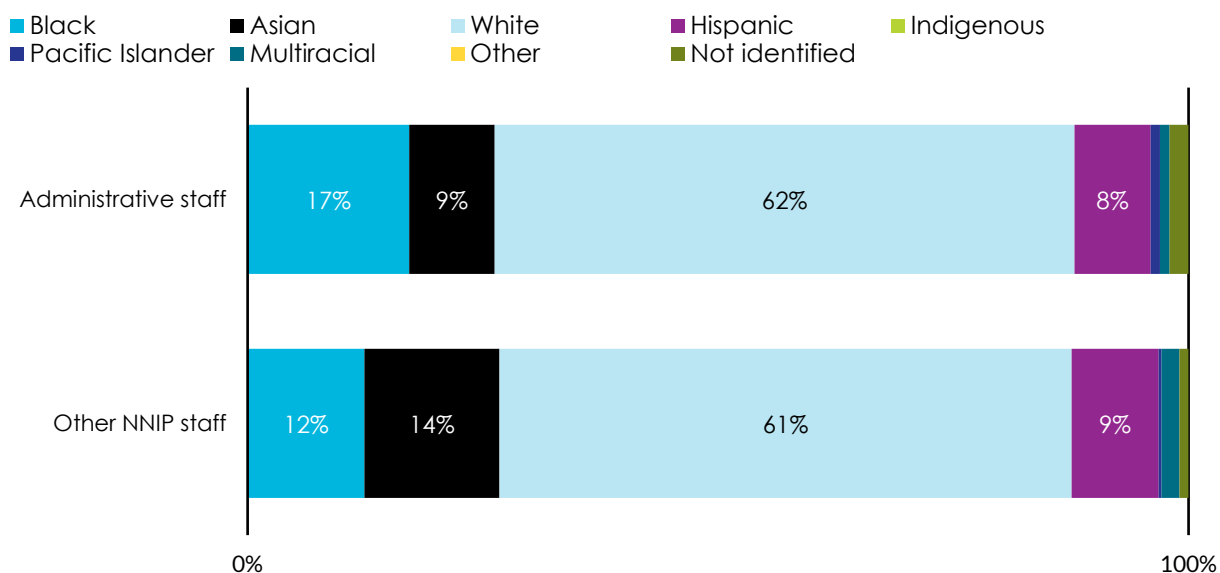**NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Race or Ethnicity**

Black ■ Asian ■ White ■ Hispanic ■ Indigenous
Pacific Islander ■ Multiracial ■ Other ■ Not identified
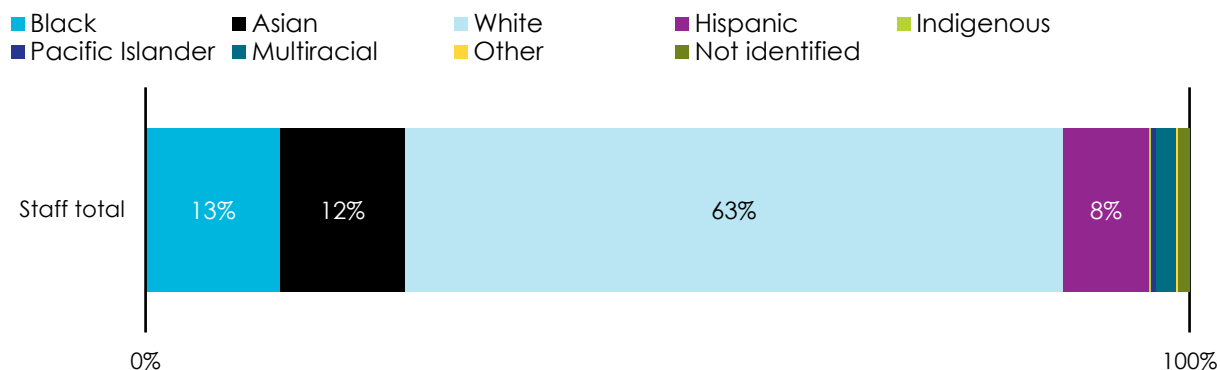
Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Note: Sample size is 470 staff members.

We also broke down the racial and ethnic makeup of staff members by the role they played at each organization (figure 3); we found that the racial and ethnic makeup of administrative staff members and other staff members who support NNIP-related services mirrored that of NNIP overall (roughly 60 percent white). However, the leadership at NNIP Partner organizations was more likely to identify as white (78 percent). Because of the smaller number of staff members in NNIP leadership positions, some of the race and ethnicity categories were combined into "other" to minimize identification (figure 4). Eight percent of leadership at NNIP Partners identified as black, while only 14 percent identified as Asian, Hispanic, indigenous, Pacific Islander, multiracial, other, or chose not to identify.

FIGURE 3

NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Race or Ethnicity and by Staff Role

Black ■ Asian ■ White ■ Hispanic ■ Indigenous
Pacific Islander ■ Multiracial ■ Other ■ Not identified

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Note: Sample size is 470 staff members.

FIGURE 4
NNIP Partner Organization Leadership by Race or Ethnicity

■ Black ■ White ■ Other

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 58 staff members. "Other" includes people who identified as Asian, Hispanic, indigenous, Pacific Islander, multiracial, other, or chose not to identify.

GENDER

In our survey, we asked NNIP Partner organization staff members to provide their gender identity and included the options of "male," "female," and "nonbinary." We have since learned that giving the options of "man" and "woman" while allowing people to specify other gender identities would have better represented gender identity, as the terms we used describe sex. In this document, we use "female" and "women" and "male" and "men" interchangeably. NNIP is predominantly made up of women, with 61 percent of staff members at Partner organizations identifying as women (figure 5). Organizations of all sizes were majority women, although the share of women employees at the largest organizations was higher (63 percent at organizations with over 20 employees versus 52 percent at organizations with fewer than five employees). The gender breakdown was similar across different types of organizations.

FIGURE 5
NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Gender Identity

■ Female ■ Male ■ Nonbinary

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 464 staff members.

The percentage of employees who identified as women was similar in two of the three staff categories that we examined (61 percent for "other" staff and 65 percent for "administrative" staff). However, a lower share of NNIP leadership (47 percent) identified as women (figure 6).
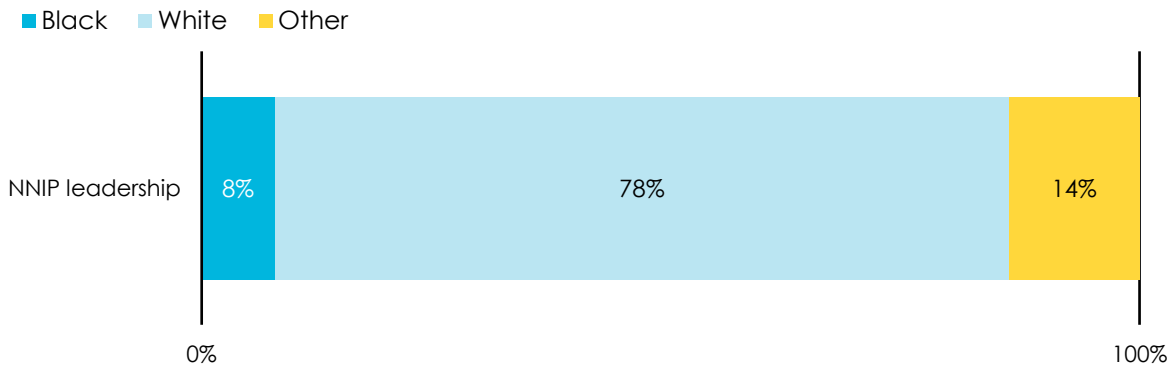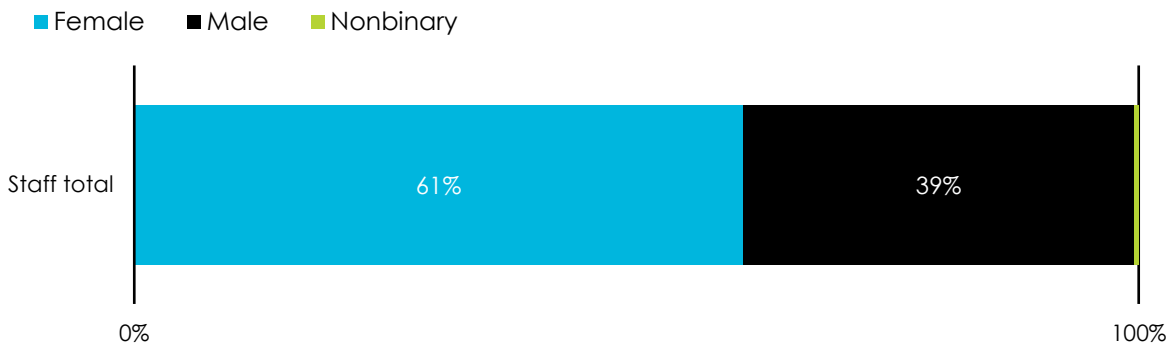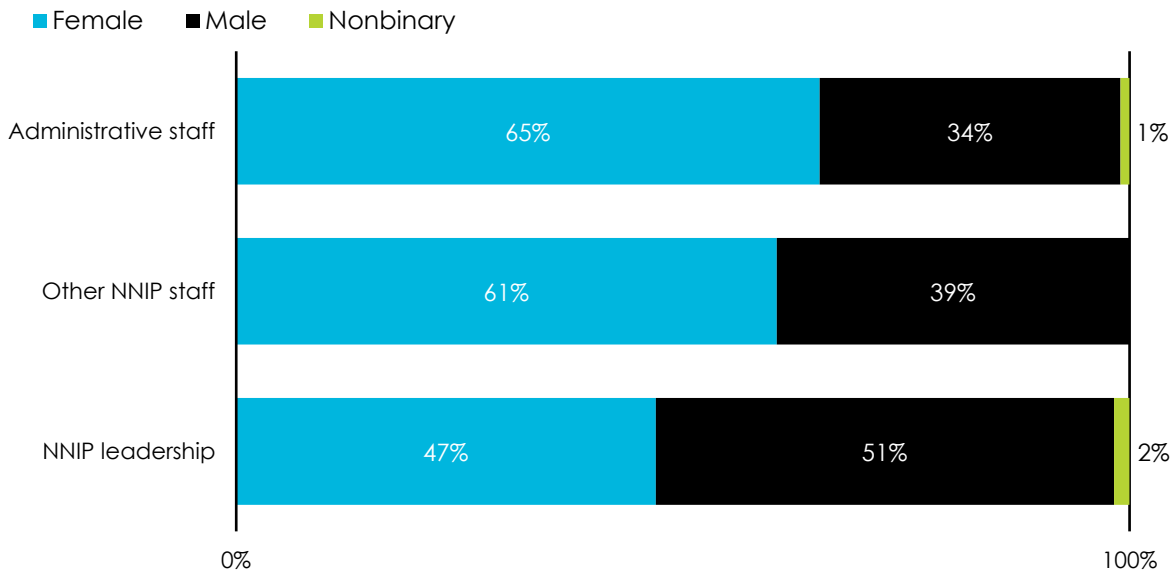
**NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Gender Identity and by Staff Role**

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 464 staff members.

COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Most staff members in NNIP organizations (83 percent) were US-born (figure 7). Among the different types of organizations, university research centers had a higher share of immigrant staff members (19 percent) than nonprofits (4 percent), other organization types (12 percent), and the network overall (12 percent). The distribution was similar across organizations of varying sizes.

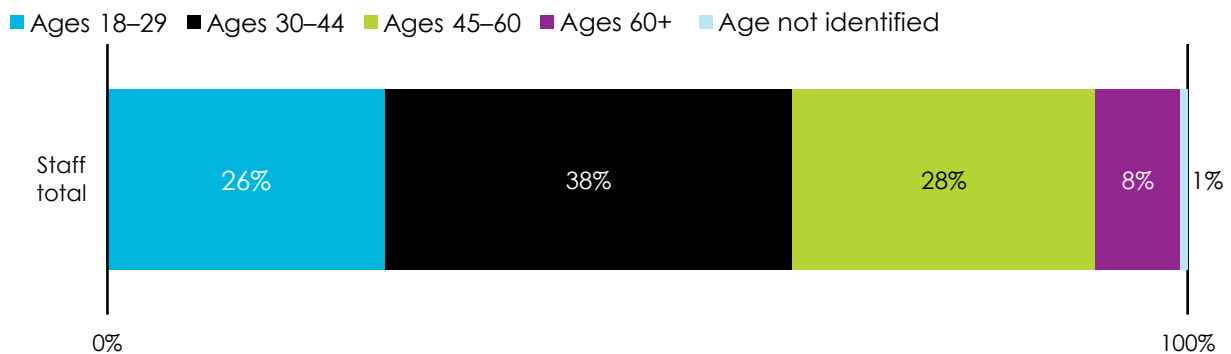**NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Country of Birth**
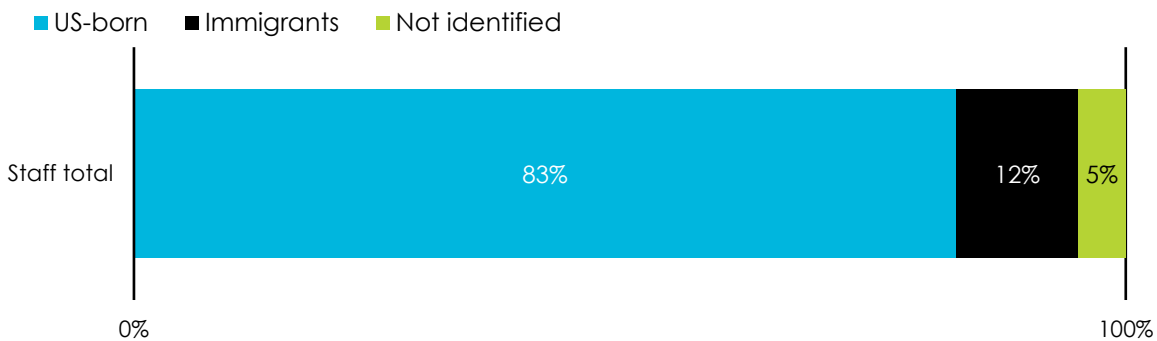
Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 440 staff members.

The breakdown across staff roles was consistent with the overall share of US-born and immigrant employees. Roughly 80 percent of staff members were born in the US across all categories, except for NNIP leadership (92 percent identified as US-born).

AGE

Overall, the staff members in NNIP represent a diverse spread of ages. The largest share of employees was between 30 and 44 years old (figure 8). About a quarter of employees were younger than 30, and another quarter were between 45 and 60 years old. The smallest organizations (fewer than five employees) had younger employees than larger organizations did: 83 percent of staff members listed their ages as younger than 45. Not surprisingly, university research centers had a relatively high percentage of staff members younger than 30.

FIGURE 8
NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Age

■ Ages 18–29 ■ Ages 30–44 ■ Ages 45–60 ■ Ages 60+ ■ Age not identified

| Staff total | 26% | 38% | 28% | 8% | 1% |

0% 100%

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Note: Sample size is 435 staff members.

The age distributions by staff role, however, show that most staff members in leadership positions were older than 30 (96 percent). Although staff members who were older than 60 made up only 8 percent of NNIP, they occupied a slightly higher share (12 percent) of leadership positions (figure 9). Younger staff members tended to be in support roles (administrative and "other").

FIGURE 9
NNIP Partner Organization Staff Members by Age and by Staff Role

■ Ages 18–29 ■ Ages 30–44 ■ Ages 45–60 ■ Ages 60+ ■ Age not identified

Administrative staff	27%	40%	24%	8%
Other NNIP staff	33%	38%	22%	5%
NNIP leadership	3%	42%	42%	12%

0%   100%
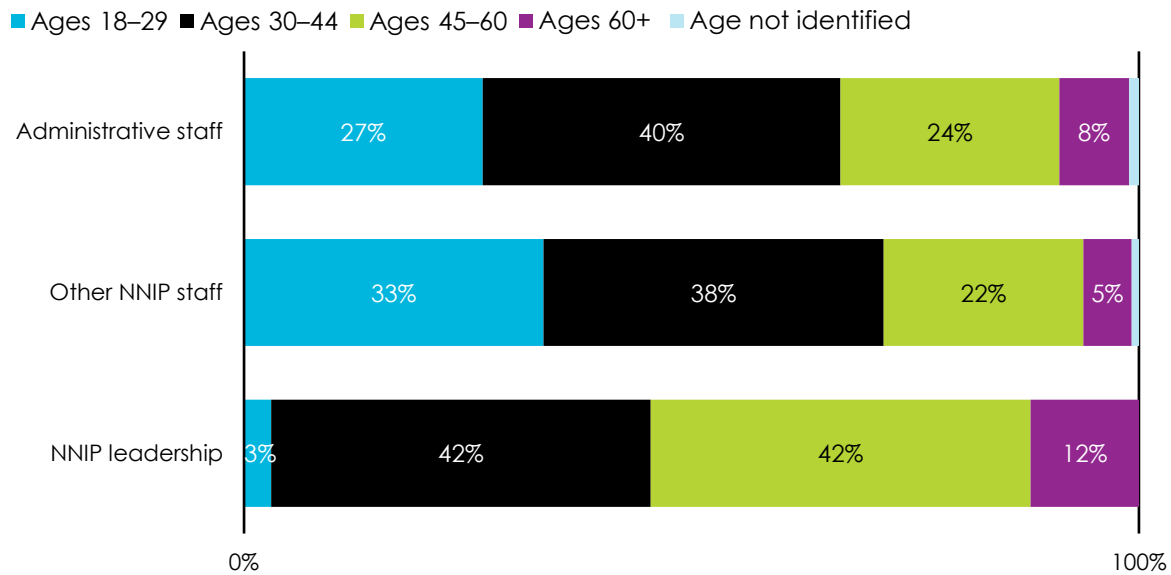
Source: NNIP diversity survey 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 435 staff members.

# DIVERSITY OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES IN NNIP

In addition to staff diversity, it is important that NNIP Partner organizations have advisory or project committees and boards of directors that represent the communities they serve. Diversifying organization boards or project committees can broaden the perspectives from which input is provided. This strategy may be implemented faster than diversifying staff, particularly for smaller organizations or those with low staff turnover. We asked Partner organizations to describe the diversity of their boards and committees, specifically:

- nonprofit boards of directors
- advisory boards/committees for an organization, unit, or university center
- project-specific advisory boards/committees (one recent or typical example)

In total, 25 organizations reported on board and committee composition: boards of directors (12), advisory committees (8), and project committees (5). The racial and ethnic breakdown of board and committee representatives was similar to that of NNIP staff members overall (figure 10). Across the categories, the boards and committees in NNIP were majority white, with boards of directors having slightly higher representation of people of color than project or advisory committees. Overall in NNIP, boards of directors had higher shares of representatives who identified as male and were older than NNIP staff overall.

FIGURE 10
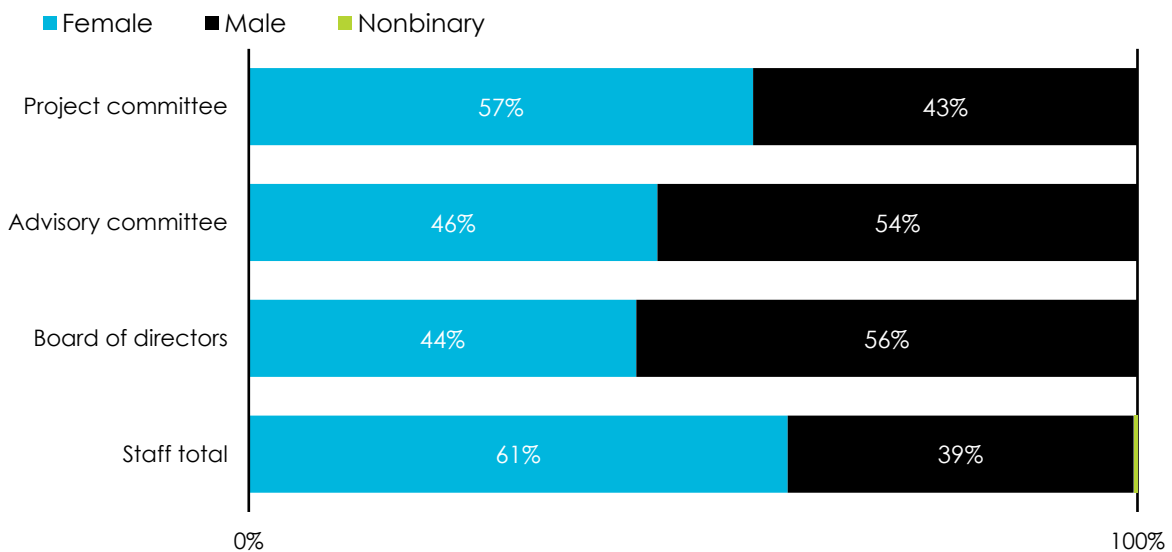## NNIP Board and Committee Members Versus Staff, by Race or Ethnicity
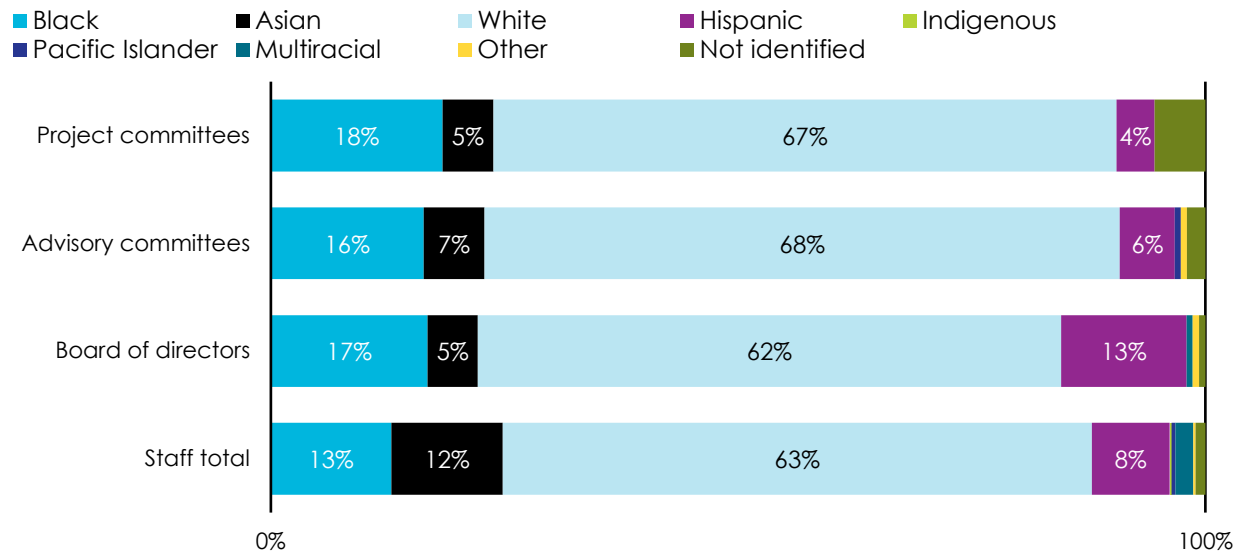
Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 449 board members from 12 organizations with boards of directors, 8 with advisory committees, and 5 with project committees and 470 NNIP staff members.

As figure 11 shows, project committees had higher shares of female representatives (57 percent) compared with advisory committees (46 percent) and boards of directors (44 percent), although the percentage was lower than that of staff members in NNIP who identified as female (61 percent).

FIGURE 11
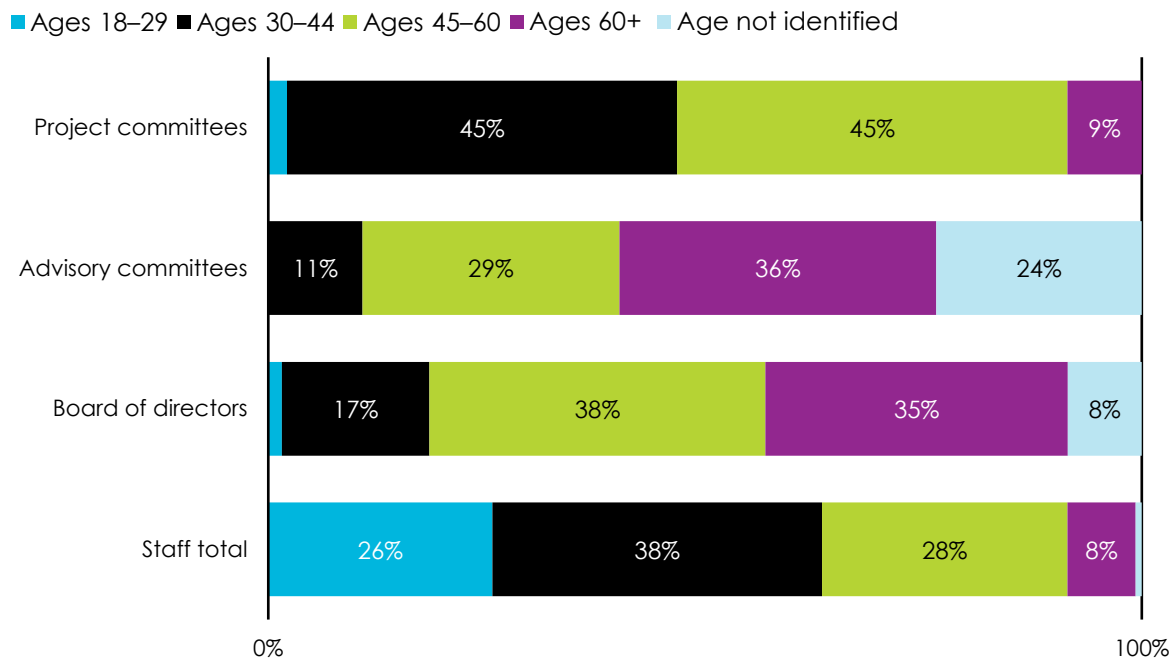## NNIP Board and Committee Members Versus Staff by Gender Identity

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 340 board members from 12 organizations with boards of directors, 8 with advisory committees, and 5 with project committees and 464 NNIP staff members.

As with NNIP organization staff members, most members of boards of directors and advisory committees were US-born. The country of birth was not specified for most project committee members. Finally, the age distribution of NNIP organizations' board and committee members varied. Ninety percent of project committee members were between the ages of 30 and 60 (figure 12). Advisory committees had the highest share of members older than 60, followed by boards of directors.

NNIP Board and Committee Members Versus Staff by Age

■ Ages 18–29 ■ Ages 30–44 ■ Ages 45–60 ■ Ages 60+ □ Age not identified

	Ages 18–29	Ages 30–44	Ages 45–60	Ages 60+	Age not identified
Project committees		45%	45%	9%	
Advisory committees		11%	29%	36%	24%
Board of directors		17%	38%	35%	8%
Staff total	26%	38%	28%	8%	

0%   100%

Source: NNIP diversity survey, 2018.
Notes: Sample size is 279 board members from 12 organizations with boards of directors, 8 with advisory committees, and 5 with project committees and 435 NNIP staff members.

MOVING FORWARD

As we think holistically about how NNIP can advance equity in neighborhoods, we need to not only improve on staff, board, and committee diversity and inclusion but also develop plans for making progress in other domains. This could include assessing the issues that our network and individual organizations take on and continuing to support practices that will reframe how data can be used to take on structural and systemic challenges. To this end, we have identified short-term and long-term activities for the network.

In the short term, NNIP can do the following:

- organize the NNIP website resources on how to improve staff diversity and inclusion and how to communicate with data to advance equity
- update language on the NNIP website to reflect our partnership's long-standing commitment to equity
- promote resources and publications related to advancing equity within the network and to our external audiences
- seek input from Partners on how NNIP can support their efforts to advance equity and address internal practices
- plan content for future NNIP Partner meetings on topics related to advancing equity, such as supporting advocates and ensuring equitable development

In the long term, we would like to do the following:

- develop guidance documents that provide examples of good practices for communicating with data to advance racial equity
- fund coaching and technical assistance for Partner organizations to improve internal practices
- develop cross-site projects that advance the state of the field in policy areas crucial to addressing inequities
- center racial equity in the strategic planning of network activities

NNIP leadership is committed to more explicitly supporting our organizations in the diversification of staffs and networks, the creation of a culture of inclusion, and the use of a racial-equity lens in the services they provide. This analysis and brief can serve as a baseline for future growth as we continue to push NNIP toward being more diverse and inclusive.

NNIP is a collaboration between the Urban Institute and partner organizations in more than 30 American cities. NNIP partners democratize data: they make it accessible and easy to understand and then help local stakeholders apply it to solve problems in their communities.

NATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS PARTNERSHIP

NNIP