



FESTIVAL

treehouse

Elizabeth Stock (she/her)

Building Community in Tech



My Plan for Today

- A little about me
- Unearned privilege, defined
- What is PDXWIT and why are we here
- Data points
- Optical Allyship
- Three simple, but not so easy steps
- Questions and further discussion

Terms and Abbreviations



While I am sure many of you already are familiar with these terms and abbreviations, I want to highlight a few I will use throughout this presentation:

- BIPOC
- GNC
- EDI or D & I



I'm Elizabeth.

I'm white.

I'm cisgender.

I'm a mom to two boys.

I have two dads.

I'm able bodied.

I have a lot of unearned privilege.

A lot a lot.



Unearned Privilege, Defined:

The advantages people have simply because of the way they are born or the context or family they were born into.



Some examples of unearned privilege

- My first job at the age of two was likely a result of unearned privilege.



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More examples of my unearned privilege:

- My first job at the age of two was likely a result of unearned privilege.
- I can shop and not be followed or monitored closely by security or other customers.
- Portland specific: I can almost always expect whiteness to be the most represented race in any public space I find myself in.



The Mission of PDXWIT (PDX Women in Tech):

PDXWIT exists to empower women, non-binary and underrepresented people to join and stay in tech.





So, why do we need PDXWIT?

Like it or not, technology affects everyone.

Representation is essential.

AND

Inclusion and belonging are critical.

Let's look at some data.



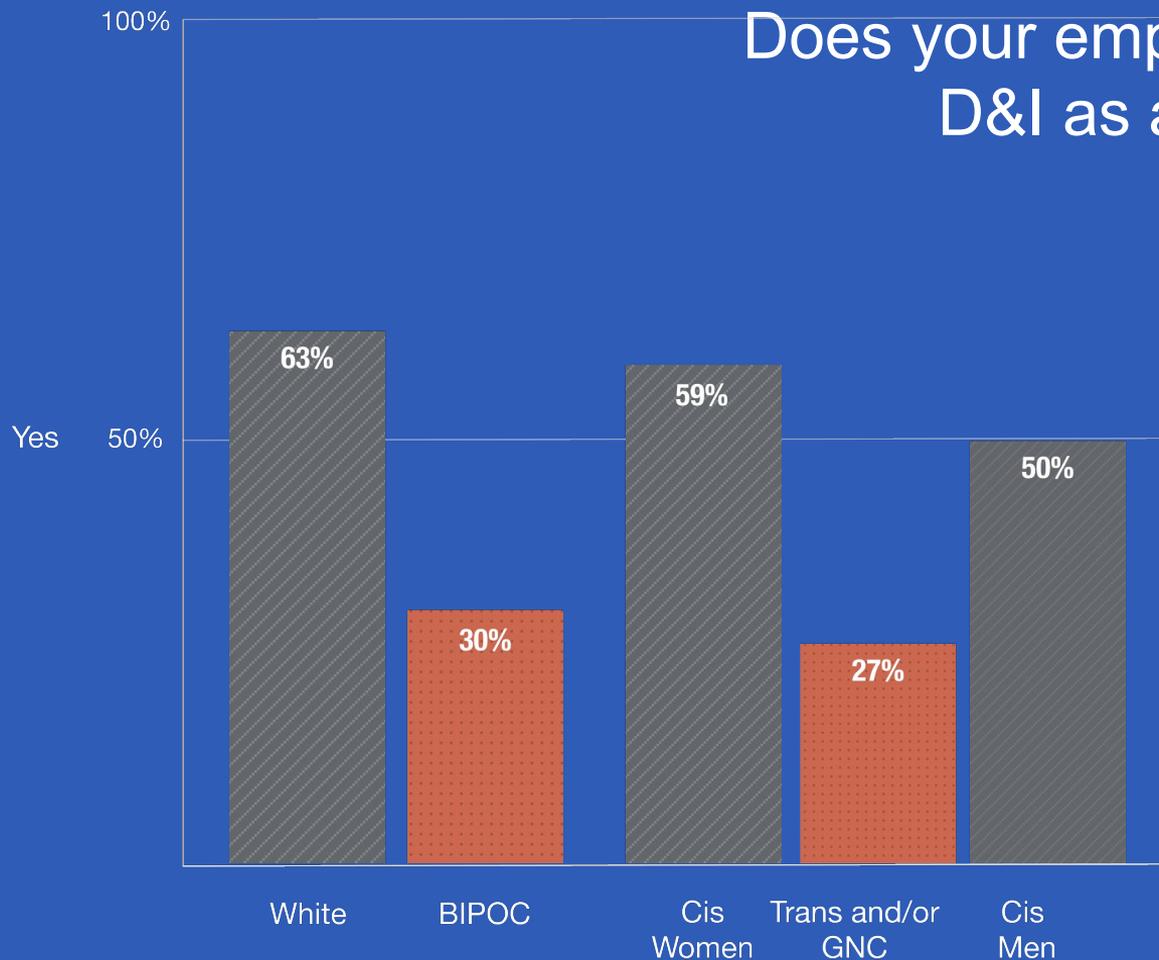
2019 PDXWIT State of the Community Survey

5000+ responses

Cut across race and gender lines

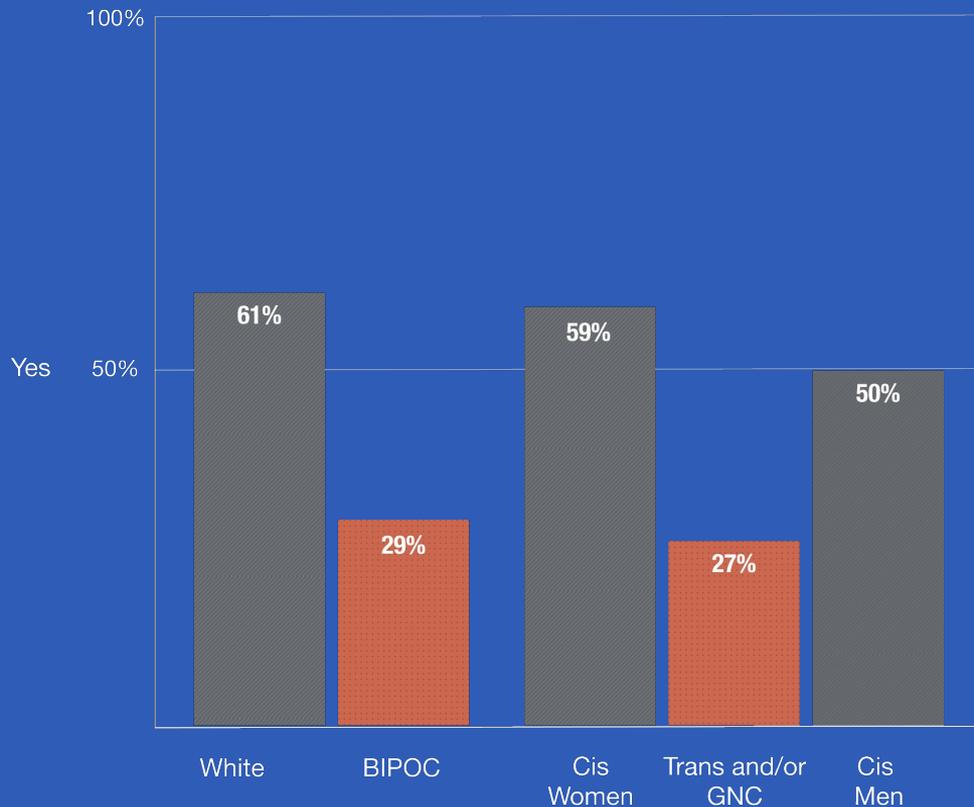


Does your employer **talk** about D&I as a priority?





Do you feel like your company is authentically taking steps to prioritize D&I?





What is the one thing
you wish would stop in
this industry?



“The sense that now that I'm here (queer Latina) our team as a whole is ‘diverse’ and our work there is done. I sometimes feel tokenized or like others are using me as a shield.”

- 2019 Survey Respondent



“I'm tired of being the only Black person
in the room.”

- 2019 Survey Respondent

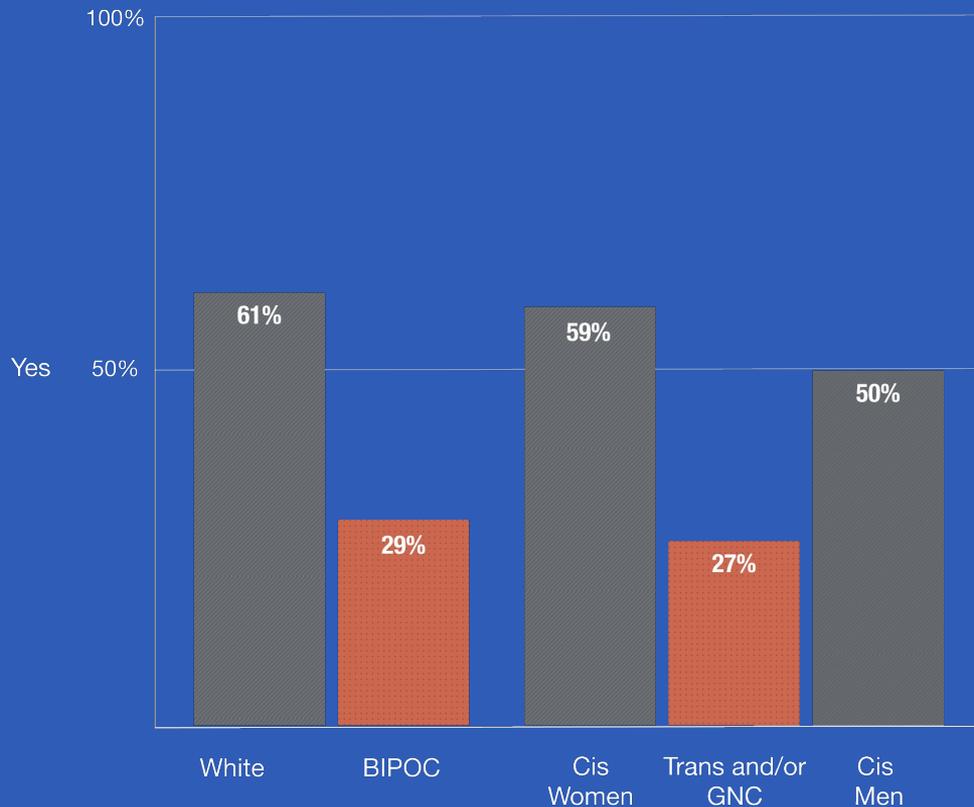


"[People need to stop] asking me where I'm *really* from."

- 2019 Survey Respondent



Do you feel like your company is authentically taking steps to prioritize D&I?





PDXWIT Provides Members* With

- Events to build community
- Skills training
- Connections between job seekers with companies who are hiring
- Slack community
- Scholarships for conferences, online learning, hardware, software
- Mentorship
 - Long term
 - Ad Hoc
- Speakers Bureau
- Job Board

**Membership is free and open to anyone who supports inclusion in tech*



PDXWIT Team and Leadership





Some lessons I have learned trying
build community and be a good human
in tech.

- When to show up / stand down
- There is no end point
- If it feels good to me I'm probably fucking it up



ATTENTION WHITE PEOPLE:
(or people with privilege to
leverage)



ALSO...

Performers can exit stage right.



Optical Allyship

Allyship that only serves at the surface level to platform the 'ally.' It makes a statement but doesn't go beneath the surface and is not aimed at breaking away from the systems of power that oppress.

-Latham Thomas, May 2020



Optical Allyship Alert:

BLACK

LIVES

MATTER

We at [Brand] are committed to fighting injustice by posting images to Twitter.

[BRAND][®]

You know the ones.[™]



Non-Optical Allyship/Being an Active Accomplice

1. Move aside
2. Practice humility
3. Create dedicated spaces



Moving aside: An example



Practicing Humility: An example



#INVESTINGINYOU
**SPRING 2020
SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**



Notice anything?



Creating Dedicated Spaces: An example

Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People



Kelsey Blackwell, The Arrow
May 2018

“We need spaces where we can simply be—where we can get off the treadmill of making white people comfortable and finally realize just how tired we are.”

“In integrated spaces, patterns of white dominance are inevitable.”

“The values of whiteness are the water in which we all swim. No one is immune. Those values dictate who speaks, how loud, when, the words we use, what we don’t say, what is ignored, who is validated and who is not.”

Kelsey Blackwell, *The Arrow*
May 2018



Creating Dedicated Spaces: An Example

Non-Optical Allyship/Being an Active Accomplice



1. Move aside
2. Practice humility
3. Create dedicated spaces



@PDXWIT
@elizishere



@PDXWiiT
@elizishere



PDXWIT.org/slack

pdxwit.org

Sources



Article: Ally or Accomplice? The Language of Activism

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/ally-or-accomplice-the-language-of-activism>

Diversity from the Inside Out

<http://www.epspros.com/news-resources/white-papers/2014-prior/diversity-from-inside-out.html>

PDXWIT State of the Community Survey Data

<https://stateofthecommunity.pdxwit.org/>

There is No Such Thing As a White Ally

<https://humanparts.medium.com/there-is-no-such-thing-as-a-white-ally-469bb82799f2>

Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People

<https://arrow-journal.org/why-people-of-color-need-spaces-without-white-people/>

Questions?