



2022

RACE AND ETHNICITY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

BENCHMARK REPORT

REPORT NO. 3 | PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 2023

ABOUT THE REPORT

The [Diversity Action Alliance](#) (DAA) is rooted in ACTion (Adopt best practices—Champion the cause—Track Progress). The purpose of the third component, "Track Progress" is to benchmark and track diversity numbers to improve recruitment and retention within organizations. Those who sign the DAA commitment agree to "share key representation metrics with the DAA for benchmarking and for anonymized reporting of the aggregate progress within the communication profession."

This analysis is based data provided by 113 qualified organizations that are signatories of the DAA. This is a not a representative sample of the public relations profession, nor is it a representative sample of the signatories. This analysis focuses only on racial and ethnic diversity per the mission of the DAA. The categories of analysis are based on the guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The first section of this report is focused on racial/ethnic representation in organizations, segmented by position level and organization type. The second section of this report analyzes the racial/ethnic breakdown of those who were promoted between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022, segmented by position level and type of organization. Finally, the third section of this report includes demographics of the organizations that provided their data.

METHODOLOGY

The [Institute for Public Relations](#) manages the data collection process on behalf of the DAA. Signatories of the Diversity Action Alliance commitment provided their data confidentially in a secure data management platform for the breakdown of racial/ethnic diversity of their employees as well as the number who were promoted or advanced in the specific year. Data are aggregated so no individual companies can be identified. The data the DAA collects align with the EEOC except the DAA does not collect gender, and signatories identify the race/ethnicity of their top communicator/leader/agency CEO in a separate category. Please note this is not representative of the industry, or even the signatories, so the data should be used as a guide.

Academic departments within colleges and universities, PRSSA chapters and independent practitioners have been removed from the overall analysis. Academic departments within colleges and universities are published separately.



PART I: REPRESENTATION

OVERALL RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY

In 2022, 71% of all employees of the organizations that provided their data were white with 29% being racially diverse, indicating a 2 percentage points increase in diversity compared to 2021 across all organizations and position levels (N = 19,647). However, it should be noted that the number of organizations who reported their data in 2021 was half of the number of organizations who reported in 2022. Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%. Below is the overall industry breakdown:

| | 2022 (N = 19,647) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| White | 71% |
| Black or African American | 8% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8% |
| Asian | 7% |
| Two or more races | 4% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% |

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY BY POSITION LEVEL¹

Consistent with previous reports, organizations are less racially/ethnically diverse at the executive and top levels of leadership and become increasingly diverse moving into the mid-level, entry-level, and admin ranks.

In 2022, 83% of the top communication or agency leaders were white, a 2 percentage point increase since 2021. Twenty percent of executive and 25% of mid-level employees were racially/ethnically diverse in 2021. That percentage was even greater for entry-level (36% were racially ethnically diverse) and administrative (46% were racially/ethnically diverse) employees.

TOP LEADERS (CCOs, agency CEOs, executive directors, etc.)

| | 2022 (n = 125) | 2021 (n = 67) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 83% | 81% | +2.5% |
| Black or African American | 6% | 10% | -40% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6% | 1% | +500% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2% | 1% | +100% |
| Asian | 1% | 1% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 1% | 3% | -66.7% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1% | 1% | 0 |

EXECUTIVES

| | 2022 (n = 4,158) | 2021 (n = 1,396) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 80% | 82% | -2.4% |
| Black or African American | 6% | 7% | -14.3% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6% | 5% | +20% |
| Asian | 5% | 4% | +25% |
| Two or more races | 2% | 2% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

¹ Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%

MID-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

| | 2022 (n = 7,617) | 2021 (n = 2,496) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 75% | 75% | 0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 7% | 0 |
| Asian | 7% | 7% | 0 |
| Black or African American | 6% | 7% | -14.3% |
| Two or more races | 4% | 3% | +33.3% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

| | 2022 (n = 6,970) | 2021 (n = 1,877) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 64% | 66% | -3% |
| Black or African American | 10% | 10% | 0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 10% | 10% | 0 |
| Asian | 9% | 10% | -10% |
| Two or more races | 6% | 4% | +50% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

| | 2022 (n = 777) | 2021 (n = 283) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 54% | 58% | -6.9% |
| Black or African American | 16% | 14% | +14.3% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 13% | 14% | -7.1% |
| Asian | 9% | 9% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 4% | 4% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2% | <1% | +100% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1% | 1% | 0 |

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

The following is the breakdown of racial/ethnic diversity by organization type. College communication functions (n = 1), organizations who focus on products/services to the industry (n = 2), and one “other” (n = 1) have been excluded from the analysis due to low sample sizes. Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%.

ASSOCIATIONS AND NONPROFITS

| | 2022 (5 orgs, 202 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| White | 65% |
| Black or African American | 11% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 11% |
| Asian | 11% |
| Two or more races | 2% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 0% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |

*Due to low sample sizes in 2021, comparisons to the previous year could not be made.

CORPORATIONS

| | 2022 (26 orgs, 2,325 employees) | 2021 (10 orgs, 595 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 74% | 78% | -5.1% |
| Black or African American | 7% | 8% | -12.5% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 9% | -22.2% |
| Asian | 5% | 3% | +66.7% |
| Two or more races | 3% | 2% | +50% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 3% | <1% | +200% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1% | <1% | 0 |

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

| | 2022 (6 orgs, 207 employees) | 2021 (5 orgs, 212 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 75% | 82% | -8.5% |
| Black or African American | 8% | 5% | +60% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 7% | 0 |
| Asian | 6% | 4% | +50% |
| Two or more races | 2% | 2% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

BOUTIQUE AGENCY²

| | 2022 (20 orgs, 449 employees) | 2021 (14 orgs, 557 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 68% | 71% | -4.2% |
| Black or African American | 11% | 11% | 0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 9% | 8% | +12.5% |
| Asian | 7% | 8% | -12.5% |
| Two or more races | 1% | 2% | -50% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 3% | 1% | +200% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% | <1% | 0 |

² Less than \$9 million in annual revenue

SMALL AGENCY ³

| | 2022 (17 orgs, 1,559 employees) | 2021 (5 orgs, 746 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 69% | 72% | -4.2% |
| Black or African American | 10% | 10% | 0 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 10% | 8% | +25% |
| Asian | 6% | 7% | -14.3% |
| Two or more races | 2% | 2% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2% | <1% | +100% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

MIDSIZE AGENCY ⁴

| | 2022 (17 orgs, 2,358 employees) | 2021 (11 orgs, 1,580 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 73% | 71% | +2.8% |
| Black or African American | 8% | 9% | -11.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 7% | 0 |
| Asian | 7% | 9% | -22.2% |
| Two or more races | 5% | 4% | +25% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

LARGE AGENCY ⁵

| | 2022 (18 orgs, 12,496 employees) | 2021 (7 orgs, 2,336 employees) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 71% | 74% | -4.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8% | 7% | +14.3% |
| Asian | 8% | 8% | 0 |
| Black or African American | 7% | 7% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 5% | 4% | +25% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

³ \$9 million to \$19 million in annual revenue

⁴ \$20 million to \$50 million in annual revenue

⁵ More than \$50 million in annual revenue

PART II: PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT

The following section of the report explores the racial/ethnic diversity of employees who were promoted between January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. Please note that some of the sample sizes of promotion numbers were small. The overall sample size for each component is provided.

OVERALL RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF PROMOTED EMPLOYEES IN 2022

Regarding promotions across all organizations and job levels (n = 5,064), 26% of employees who were promoted were racially or ethnically diverse. Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%. Below is the overall industry breakdown:

| | 2022 (n = 5,064) | 2021 (n = 1,758) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 74% | 75% | -1.3% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8% | 7% | +14.3% |
| Asian | 8% | 7% | +14.3% |
| Black or African American | 6% | 6% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 3% | 4% | -25% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | 0% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF PROMOTED EMPLOYEES BY POSITION LEVEL

Similar to the overall composition of employees, promotions of employees are less racially/ethnically diverse at the executive and top levels of leadership and become increasingly diverse moving into the mid-level, entry-level, and admin ranks. However, the number of promoted employees is much smaller than the overall number of employees so percent changes should be considered cautiously. Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%. Below is the breakdown:

TOP LEADERS (CCOs, agency CEOs, executive directors, etc.)

| | 2022 (n = 8) ⁶ | 2021 (n = 5) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 88% | 40% | +120% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 13% | 20% | -35% |
| Black or African American | 0% | 20% | -100% |
| Asian | 0% | 0% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 0% | 0% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 0% | 20% | -100% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% | 0% | 0 |

EXECUTIVES

| | 2022 (n = 889) | 2021 (n = 270) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 81% | 78% | +3.8% |
| Asian | 7% | 6% | +16.7% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6% | 6% | 0 |
| Black or African American | 4% | 7% | -42.9% |
| Two or more races | 2% | 2% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | 0% | 0 |

⁶ Please note the low sample size in this category

MID-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

| | 2022 (n = 2,073) | 2021 (n = 800) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 76% | 80% | -5% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 6% | +16.7% |
| Black or African American | 6% | 4% | +50% |
| Asian | 6% | 6% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 4% | 4% | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | <1% | 0 |

ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEES

| | 2022 (n = 2,024) | 2021 (n = 638) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 68% | 69% | -1.4% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 10% | 9% | +11.1% |
| Asian | 9% | 10% | -10% |
| Black or African American | 8% | 8% | 0 |
| Two or more races | 4% | 5% | -20% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% | <1% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% | 0% | 0 |

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

| | 2022 (n = 70) | 2021 (n = 45) | Percent change from 2021 to 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 66% | 67% | -1.5% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 11% | 4% | +175% |
| Black or African American | 10% | 11% | -9.1% |
| Asian | 10% | 11% | -9.1% |
| Two or more races | 1% | 7% | -85.7% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <1% | 0% | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% | 0% | 0 |

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF PROMOTED EMPLOYEES BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

The following is the breakdown of the racial/ethnic diversity of employees who were promoted in 2022 by organization type. College communication functions (n = 1), organizations who focus on products/services to the industry (n = 2), and one “other” (n = 1) have been excluded from the analysis due to low sample sizes. 2021 numbers were excluded due to low sample sizes so YOY comparisons in promotions were not made. Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%. Below is the breakdown:

ASSOCIATIONS AND NONPROFITS

| | 2022 (5 orgs, 128 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| White | 63% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 14% |
| Asian | 11% |
| Black or African American | 8% |
| Two or more races | 3% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |

CORPORATIONS

| | 2022 (26 orgs, 491 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 78% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 9% |
| Black or African American | 5% |
| Asian | 4% |
| Two or more races | 2% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 1% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1% |

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

| | 2022 (6 orgs, 24 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White | 54% |
| Asian | 21% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 13% |
| Black or African American | 8% |
| Two or more races | 4% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 0% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |

BOUTIQUE AGENCY⁷

| | 2022 (20 orgs, 126 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 63% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 10% |
| Black or African American | 9% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 9% |
| Asian | 9% |
| Two or more races | 1% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |

⁷ Less than \$9 million in annual revenue

SMALL AGENCY⁸

| | 2022 (17 orgs, 381 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 66% |
| Black or African American | 13% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 10% |
| Asian | 6% |
| Two or more races | 3% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% |

MIDSIZE AGENCY⁹

| | 2022 (17 orgs, 689 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| White | 74% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 9% |
| Asian | 6% |
| Black or African American | 6% |
| Two or more races | 5% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 0% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0% |

LARGE AGENCY¹⁰

| | 2022 (18 orgs, 3,314 employees) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| White | 75% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 8% |
| Asian | 8% |
| Black or African American | 6% |
| Two or more races | 3% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <1% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | <1% |

⁸ \$9 million to \$19 million in annual revenue

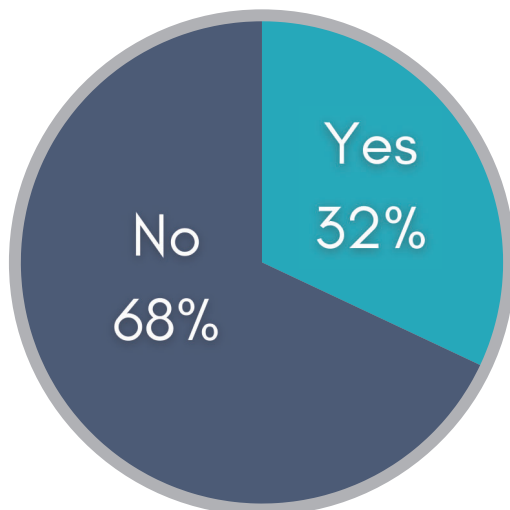
⁹ \$20 million to \$50 million in annual revenue

¹⁰ More than \$50 in annual revenue

PART III: DEMOGRAPHICS ¹¹

Nearly one-third (32%) of respondents reported having Chief Diversity Officer (CDOs) or executives who primarily lead diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Regarding the person most responsible for DE&I initiatives, next to CDOs, the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) or a HR executive was the second most noted leader (25%) followed by the President or CEO (23%). One noticeable jump was 20% of respondents said a DEI committee or council comprising multiple individuals led their DE&I efforts. In 2021, this percentage was 13% and in 2020, this was only 5% of respondents.

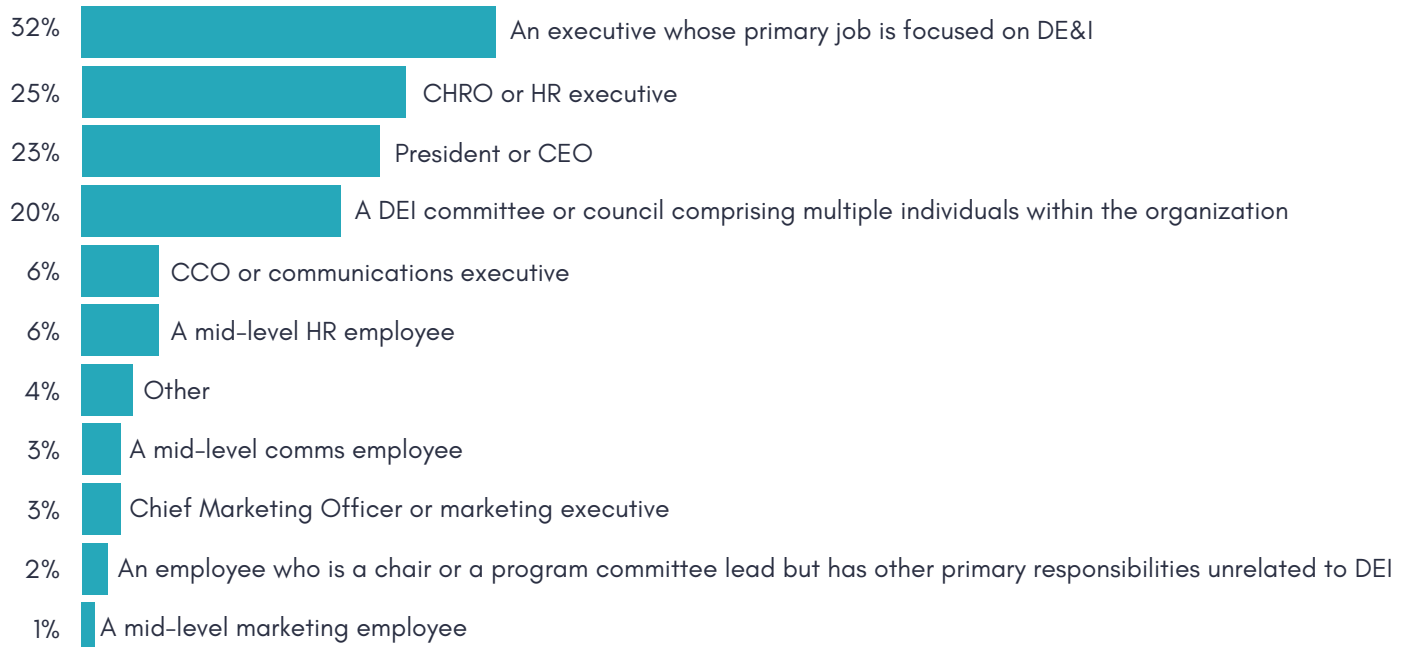
DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION HAVE A CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER?



*In 2021, 34% of respondent organizations had a CDO

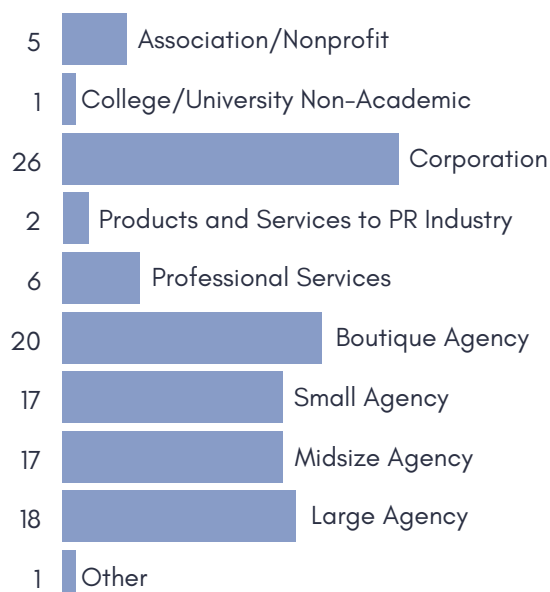
¹¹ Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%

WHO IS THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR LEADING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?¹²



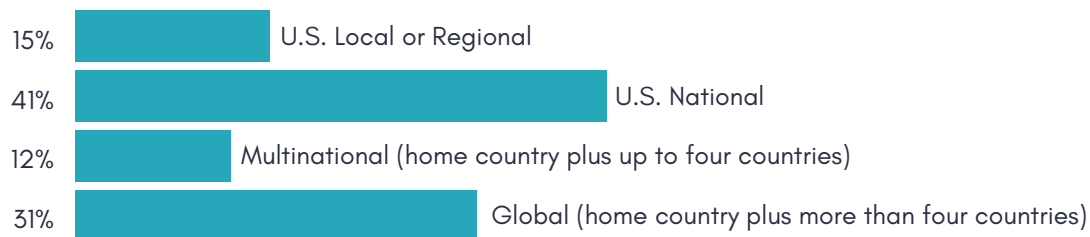
TYPE OF ORGANIZATION (IN FREQUENCIES)

N = 113

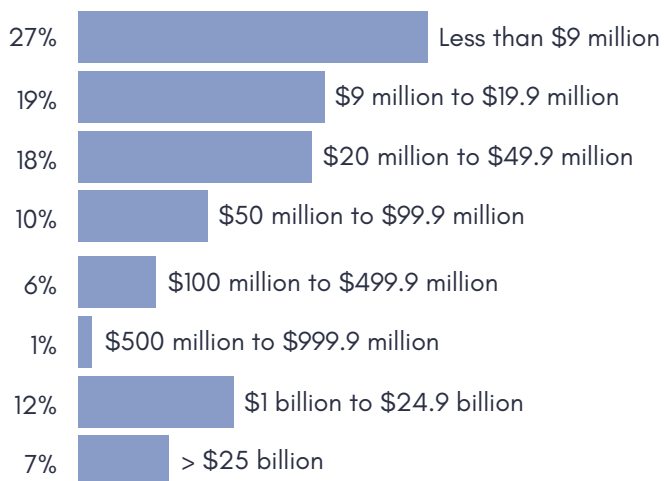


¹² More than one option could be selected so percentages will be greater than 100

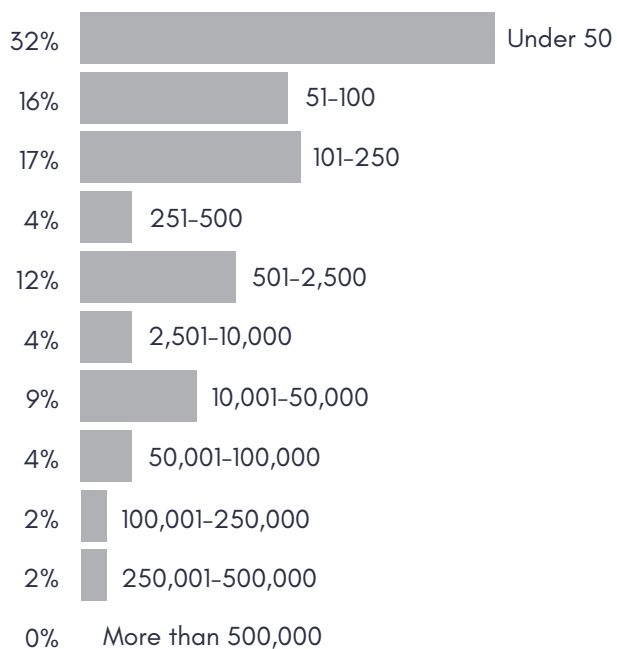
ORGANIZATION'S GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE ¹³



ANNUAL REVENUE



NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE OVERALL ORGANIZATION



¹³ Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%

ABOUT DIVERSITY ACTION ALLIANCE (DAA)

The Diversity Action Alliance (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 our profession. The DAA's goal is to achieve continuous improvement for professionals of color as measured by recruitment, retention, and representation at all levels. For more information about the Diversity Action Alliance, visit www.diversityactionalliance.org.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS (IPR)

The Institute for Public Relations is an independent, nonprofit research foundation dedicated to fostering greater use of research and research-based knowledge in corporate communication and the public relations practice. IPR is dedicated to *the science beneath the art of public relations*.™ IPR provides timely insights and applied intelligence that professionals can put to immediate use. All research, including a weekly research letter, is available for free at www.instituteforpr.org.

REPORT DATA ANALYST AND AUTHOR

Dr. Tina McCorkindale, APR
President and CEO
Institute for Public Relations
tina@instituteforpr.org

PRIMARY DATA REVIEWER

Anetra Henry
Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives
Institute for Public Relations

REPORT DATA COLLECTOR

Carmella Glover
President
Diversity Action Alliance

REPORT DESIGNER

Avery Ensing
Research Assistant
Institute for Public Relations

