

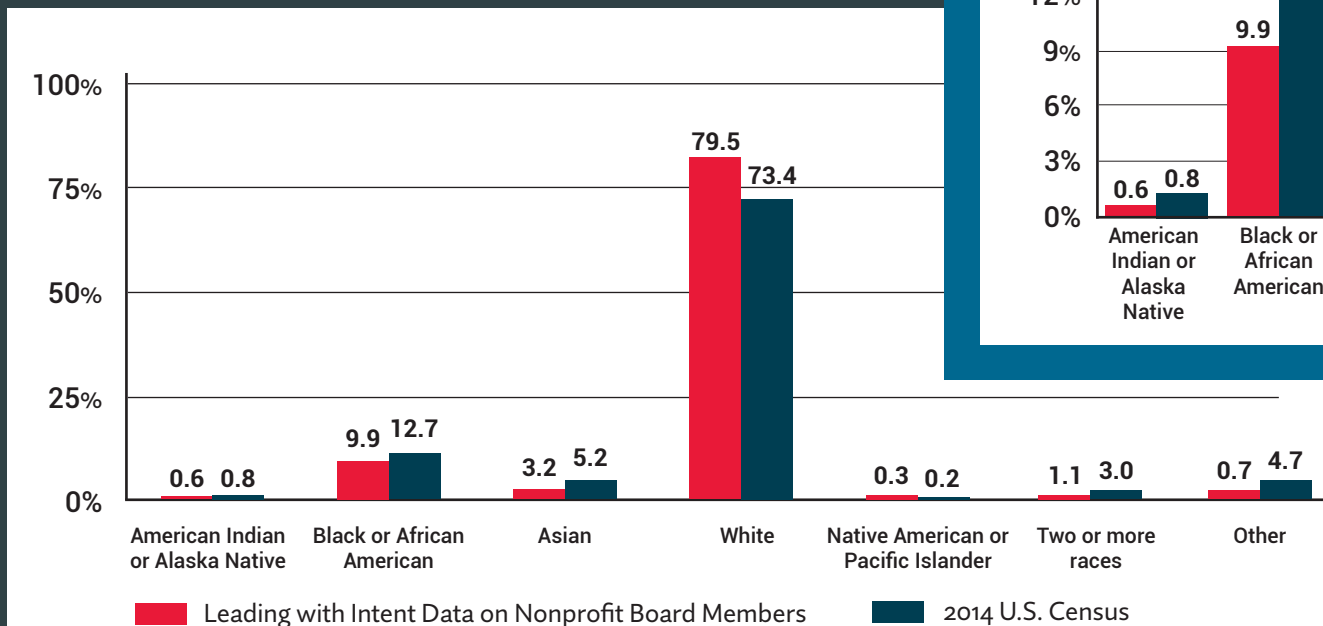
WHERE IS RACE ON YOUR BOARD'S RECRUITMENT AGENDA?

To succeed in an increasingly diverse world, nonprofit organizations need to remain relevant and connected to the communities they serve. Their leaders — board members and chief executives — need to represent diverse points of views. To what extent is this happening?

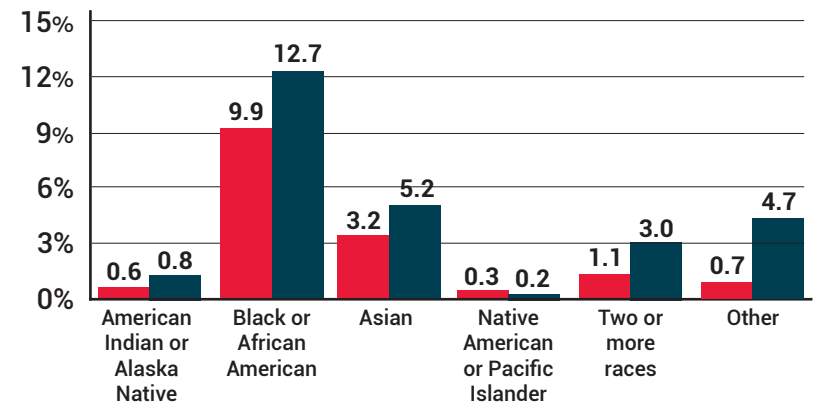
The charts below show the racial demographics of nonprofit boards (based on data from BoardSource's 2015 *Leading with Intent* survey) compared to figures for the U.S. population as a whole in the 2014 U.S. census. As the charts indicate, people of color remain underrepresented in nonprofit leadership, compared to their representation in society. CEOs report being the least satisfied with their board's racial/ethnic diversity, but also see it as most important to their organization's mission.

According to the 2014 U.S. census, 73% of Americans are White, compared with 80% of board members, according to *Leading with Intent* survey respondents. Similarly, the U.S. census reports that 12.7% of Americans are Black or African American. Only 9.9% of nonprofit board members, however, are Black or African American. Furthermore, 25% of all boards remain all White. While many boards discuss the importance of diversity, there may be a lack of concerted planning and follow through towards increasing minority representation. Only 56% of CEOs surveyed report that their board has reviewed and revised its recruiting efforts, and only 19% indicate that the board has developed an action plan to increase diversity specifically.

RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF NONPROFIT BOARD MEMBERS COMPARED TO U.S. CENSUS



RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF NONPROFIT BOARD MEMBERS COMPARED TO U.S. CENSUS (NOT INCLUDING WHITE)



See inset for detail of non-white demographics.

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As your nonprofit leadership considers increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of your board of directors, here are a few questions to think about.

Why do we want to diversify our board? How will a diverse board enhance our organization?

Recruiting more diverse board members requires a strong commitment on behalf of every member of the organization's leadership. While the nonprofit sector has seen modest progress in increasing diversity among board members (people of color on boards increased from 16% in 2010 to 20% in 2014), diversity is more than a quota or numbers game. It also requires inclusive policies, practices, and behaviors that nurture and value different perspectives and experiences when conducting board business and discussing strategy.

Most CEOs report that their boards have discussed the importance of expanding board diversity (74%) and actively recruited members from diverse backgrounds (80%). Yet only 56% report that the board has reviewed and revised its recruiting efforts, and only 19% indicate that the board has developed an action plan to increase diversity.

What population does your organization serve? Is that population represented on the board? A diverse board sends a message and sets a powerful example about the organization's values. Having board and staff leaders who reflect society and, more specifically, the organization's constituents, is important in understanding constituent needs, cultivating community connections, and establishing credibility.

What processes do we have in place to recruit diverse board members and to retain new members?

More work must be done to turn well-intentioned policies into more inclusive boards. To support greater engagement, boards should commit to inclusion by establishing written diversity policies, developing intentional plans to recruit diverse board members, providing equal access to board leadership opportunities, and paying careful attention to social inclusion practices. Your existing minority board members can be your greatest resource in terms of identifying the success factors that got them on your board, and the barriers they may have encountered on the way, which need to be removed.

How can we recruit diverse board members who will have a positive impact on our board?

Are there members of the community your organization serves who have an interest in serving on the board? Be sure your recruitment and orientation policies are established and have a measured record of success to ensure you can identify the right candidates – and the institutions or pathways that produced them – and provide them with the best information and materials to help them understand what board service involves and start off their board service on the right foot.

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