



# DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX

A tool to measure progress toward increasing  
African American and Latinx representation  
across design disciplines

Produced with the support of The George Gund Foundation

KENT STATE  
UNIVERSITY

College of  
Architecture and  
Environmental Design



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This project would not be possible without the data and insights from leadership at design professional organizations in Ohio and across the country, including the American Institute of Architects (AIA), AIGA, American Planning Association (APA), American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), and The Commercial Interior Design Association (IIDA).

We also want to thank the many individuals at academic institutions in Ohio for their willingness to provide student demographic data. In particular, we appreciate the help of staff at Bowling Green State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, University of Akron, University of Toledo, and Youngstown State University.

In addition, we are grateful to visiting lecturers Mabel O. Wilson and Sara Zewde for the valuable conversations during the project.

Lastly, many thanks to Dr. Augustus Anderson, Statistician Analyst at the U.S. Census Bureau for explaining the current labor data available in Ohio and future plans for collecting data.





# CONTENTS

## 1.0 FOREWORD

Dana Lawless-Andric .....	1
Associate Vice-President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Kent State University	

## 2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 What is Design Diversity Index? .....	3
2.2 Initial Findings .....	6

## 3.0 DESIGN DIVERSITY

3.1 History of Design Diversity .....	11
3.2 Design Diversity's Mission .....	12
3.3 Design Journey Framework .....	14

## 4.0 DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX

4.1 Project Scope .....	17
4.2 Work Plan .....	19
4.3 Outcomes.....	20

## 5.0 NEXT STEPS

5.1 Future of Design Diversity Index .....	51
5.2 Actions We Can Take Now .....	52
5.3 Design Diversity Index Template .....	53







# 1.0 FOREWORD

*By using data, we are able to gain a more complete picture of the need to diversify academic programs and professional careers in architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, and related design disciplines in Ohio.*

Kent State University's Division of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion is a proud partner for the Design Diversity initiative. The vision and work to create the Design Diversity Index aligns with national best practices to meaningfully diversify academic programs and university communities. By using data, we are able to gain a more complete picture of the need to diversify academic programs and professional careers in architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, and related design disciplines in Ohio. More importantly, efforts such as the Design Diversity Index will move the design professions forward to better serve the beautifully diverse communities that these fields and professionals impact.

As an institution that houses some of the nation's premier academic programs in these areas, Kent State is well-positioned to serve as a leader and key partner in advancing the

work and efforts led by Kent State's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative and Jacinda Walker. Their leadership and creative vision has been instrumental in forging together community stakeholders to bring the Design Diversity Index to reality and build sustainable pipelines to diversify the fields. We have witnessed firsthand the success of our Kent State graduates of color who have gone onto successful careers in architecture and related fields in the greater Cleveland area. We are thankful to the work of Design Diversity in supporting their futures and creating the vision to bring real change to Cleveland and the greater Ohio community.

**Dana Lawless-Andric**  
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## 2.0 SUMMARY

*Design Diversity Index is a tool for measuring progress toward achieving diversity goals across multiple design fields.*

### **2.1 WHAT IS DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX?**

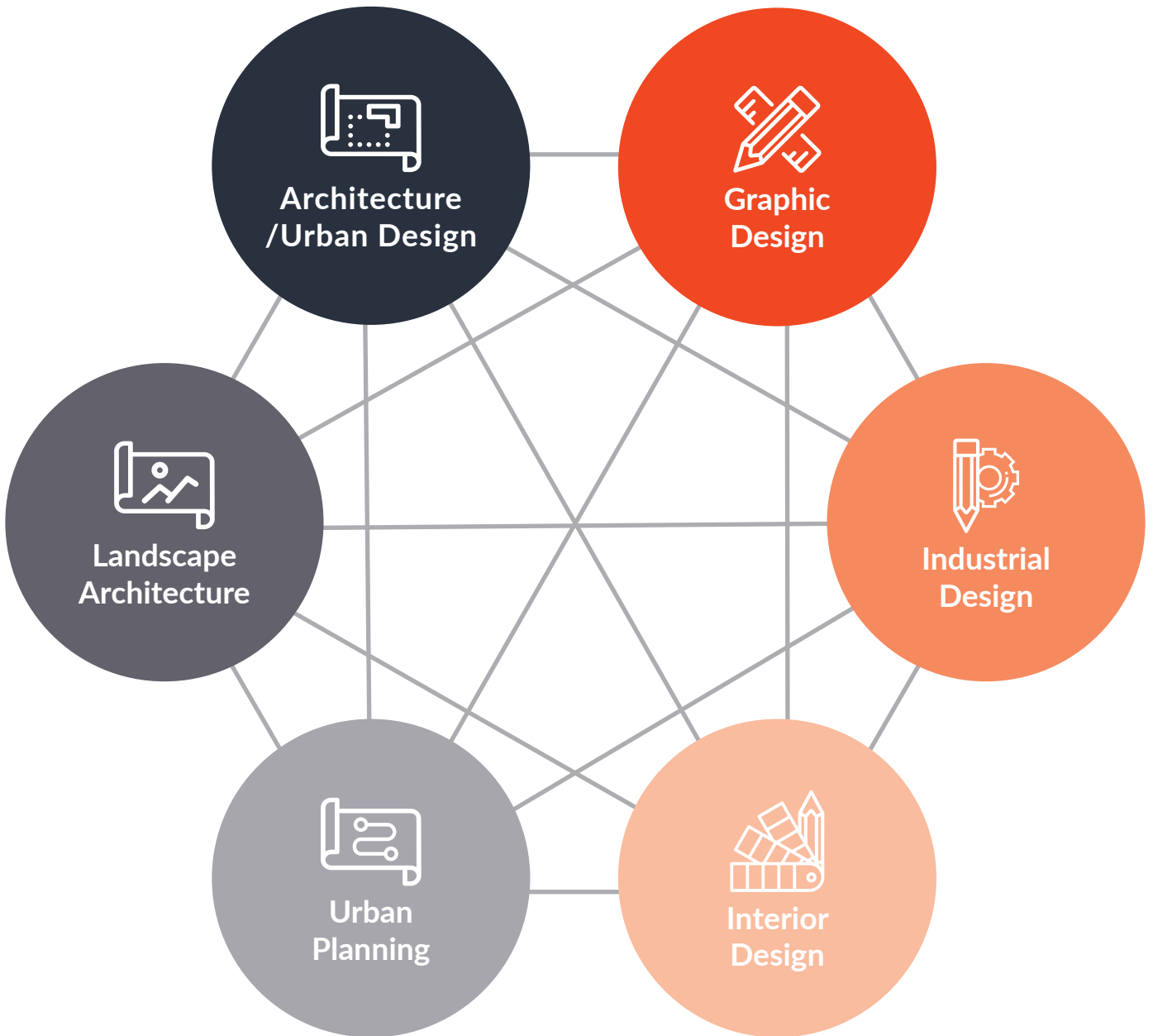
The Design Diversity Index project began with a question: How can the design community know which actions are working best to increase diversity in our fields? In order to answer this question, data must be available on the number of people of color in design schools and professions. Strategies to increase African American and Latinx representation should be evaluated on their results. How else can one know if intentions actually work?

The Design Diversity Index is a tool for gauging the numbers and percentages of people of color in architecture, landscape architecture, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, and urban planning in Ohio's universities and professional organizations. The Index focuses on representation of African American and Latinx communities. Using available data, the Index establishes current baseline conditions and will track annual progress toward expanding racial diversity in the design professions.

Rather than compare data from a single design discipline across numerous geographic regions, the Index compares multiple design disciplines within a single geographic area. By focusing on a single state, Ohio, the project aims to identify locally-relevant strategies to increase diversity. This approach is intended to complement other valuable diversity studies focused on a single discipline. In other words, the Index serves as a cross-cutting tool to share insights across disciplines, while maintaining a shared local context.

Design Diversity Index shares data through a printed publication and an online website publicly accessible at:

[www.designdiversity.org/index](http://www.designdiversity.org/index)



Above: The six design disciplines integrated in the Design Diversity Index.

Anticipated to grow over time, the current Design Diversity Index includes visualizations of demographic data from 15 academic design programs in Northern Ohio and three design professions across the entire state. Design Diversity Index provides a framework to add more data and user functionality through succeeding versions. The initial development version of the project is made possible by support from The George Gund Foundation.

In order to advance beyond this first phase, the project intends to solicit feedback and generate action. Feedback on the Index structure is welcome in order to refine and improve the tool. Design Diversity Index is meant to provide a one-stop shop to easily find diversity data on multiple design disciplines. Therefore, several improvements will be necessary to ensure reliable comparisons across all six disciplines. Ideally, the Design Diversity Index started in Ohio will serve as a model that can be adopted in other communities across the United States. Enabling individuals in other states to track demographics in their geographic area may raise awareness of the local need for racial equity, encourage dialogue across disciplinary boundaries, and reveal the actions most effective to produce change in that community.

## 2.2 INITIAL FINDINGS

Before Design Diversity Index began, the project team was familiar with a few sources for demographic data on design professionals, primarily for the architecture and graphic design fields. But these data sources are difficult for average users to find, not structured for comparisons between design disciplines, and rarely include the local scale. In response to these needs, Design Diversity Index is created for users from multiple design disciplines to track demographic changes in the local design community.

The current version of Design Diversity Index serves as a pilot project in order to evaluate demographic data sources, visual presentation format, and user functionality. Initial findings from the pilot project include lessons for improving the Index's structure and insights from the data collected. Feedback on the current project findings will help the project team improve Design Diversity Index prior to full deployment at the state-scale.

Based on the project team's awareness of a few data sources for architecture and graphic design, expectations for data availability were relatively high. The project team anticipated to find ample data on the number of African Americans and Latinx people for all the academic programs and professional associations we targeted. But one of the first—and most important—findings of the project was the need for more data collection.

### **Increase demographic surveys from professional organizations**

The report contains more detailed demographic data from academic programs than professional organizations. Although academic programs may not always want to

share the raw numbers, preferring to simply provide percentages, demographic data is often collected. In contrast, demographic data for specific design professions is less available. Few professional associations collect demographic data on their members, creating a challenge for measuring progress towards achieving racial equity goals. Sending membership surveys to collect demographic and location data, then sharing the anonymized data publically, would encourage innovative diversity strategies to spread.

### **Add more design occupations to labor data**

Demographic data on designers is not commonly collected by professional associations. So, Design Diversity Index used data from The U.S. Census - Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to estimate the demographic representation of design professionals. Although this data covers the entire state of Ohio, the demographic data only includes three design occupations: Architects (OCCP code: 1300), Urban and Regional Planners (OCCP code: 1840), and Designers (OCCP code: 2630). The third category, Designers, is a broad term, which likely includes graphic designers, industrial designers, and possibly other design professionals defined by the Design Diversity Index. Based on communications with Census bureau representatives, data available in late 2018 will include additional design occupations. Future versions of the project will greatly benefit from a closer alignment of BLS data with the six disciplines used by the Design Diversity Index.

### **Carefully delineate disciplinary categories**

Another key finding of the project is that the design fields are not consistently defined across sources for academic and professional data. The lack of clear boundaries between

fields may be a desirable condition for creating new ideas, but also creates a challenge for comparing data. Design Diversity Index's central hypothesis is that innovative actions to increase representation may be accelerated by comparing demographic changes across disciplines. If the disciplinary categories are not defined consistently, combining data sets might create misleading conclusions.

Academic data also presents a challenge for consistent categorization. For example, some schools offer interdisciplinary degrees, which include coursework from more than one design discipline. Should students in this type of program count towards each discipline? Neither discipline? Or a separate category? Although the data in this initial version of the Design Diversity Index were organized to clarify the few situations when this occurs, future versions of the Index, with expanded data sources, will likely face additional challenges.

### **Standardize demographic data questions**

Among the six public universities included in the study, the most specific demographic categories came from Kent State University. The demographic data at KSU breaks out the following ten options:

- African American
- Hispanic
- Multiple (African American, Hispanic, Native American)
- Asian
- International
- Multiple (Not African American, Hispanic, Native American)
- White
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Native American/Alaskan Native
- Not Reported

Since not all academic programs collect data with the same number of options, data combining all programs must use the lowest number of options used by a school. In order to standardize demographic data questions across academic data sources, the project team recommends broad adoption of the ten options used by KSU.

### **Plan for more multi-ethnic individuals**

Most schools only provided recent data for fall semester 2017. One school provided data from all five years between 2013 - 2017. An initial review of this school's multiyear data revealed some evidence for a growing number of students reporting multiple ethnicities. Students in this category claim both African American and Hispanic ethnicities or some other combination of ethnicities. This possible trend creates opportunities for cross-promoting design disciplines to underrepresented communities. In addition, data analysis must carefully present these categories in such a way to avoid misinterpretation. A single student may count toward both African American and Latinx categories, requiring careful attention to the total number of students represented in the data.

Furthermore, data provided from some schools did not specify which ethnicities comprised the multiple ethnicities category. So, the data is unclear about the exact number of African American and Latinx students at these schools. For the purpose of the Design Diversity Index, data in the Multiple category was shown as its own category when possible and included in the Other category when necessary.

### **Investigate outlier programs**

The current scope of the project did not include exhaustive statistical analysis of the data or research on the causes for the demographic variation shown. But a few programs did stand out because of their relatively high or low numbers. These outlier programs may appear anomalous for only the year data was provided and not represent a longer trend. But these programs may also signal the presence of deeper insights to extract. For example, the percentage of African American students in the graphic design program at Cleveland State University is 3% higher than overall percentage of African American students at the university. This higher percentage of students in a design program compared to the total student population is unusual for the universities in the study. Other outlier programs are identified in the Outcomes section of the report.

### **Extract lessons from graphic design**

Compared to the other design disciplines included in the study, graphic design programs and professions tend to have the highest percentages of both African American and Latinx people. Multiple factors may contribute to this result, including awareness of visual design programs in high school, university program affordability, student recruitment strategies, employment prospects, cultural relevance of the profession, familiarity with other design professionals, level of educational requirements to find employment or other unique conditions. Not all reasons for the higher number of graphic designers of color will easily transfer to other disciplines. But continued exploration in graphic design contexts for transferable strategies to increase diversity appears worthwhile.

### **Focus on graduate school pipeline**

The Design Diversity Index tracks data within two of the four passages in the Design Journey framework: (2) Proficiency and (3) Workforce. The Proficiency passage comprises internships, undergraduate, and graduate education. The Workforce passage begins after college graduation and extends to a designer's mid-career. As the Design Journey framework predicts, people of color are less represented as the Proficiency passage advances from undergraduate to graduate programs. Currently, Design Diversity Index tracks data for five graduate programs: two in architecture, one in graphic design, one in landscape architecture, and one in urban planning. The architecture and graphic design schools have undergraduate programs in the same disciplines. Most show lower percentages of African American and Latinx students in the graduate program compared to the undergraduate programs. Exceptions include the percentages of Latinx architecture students and African American graphic design students at KSU. Generally, a notable drop-off in diversity occurs between undergraduate and graduate education, which sets the stage for greater disparities later in the Professional Workforce passage of the Design Journey.



### **Future of Design Diversity Index**

Updates to DDI will include the remaining design programs in Northern Ohio and expand to universities in Central Ohio. Professional data will increase due to recent changes in the occupational categories used by the American Community Survey, accessible in late 2018. In addition, a few professional associations expressed their interest in collecting demographic data on their members. These anticipated developments in the near future will significantly increase the comprehensiveness of the DDI data sources and the value of the tool throughout Ohio.





## 3.0 DESIGN DIVERSITY

*Our goal is to foster learning, influence growth, and promote people of color in the design professions in Northeast Ohio.*

### **3.1 HISTORY OF DESIGN DIVERSITY**

Design Diversity started as an idea in late 2013 by a small group of Cleveland architects, urban designers, and graphic designers with an intention to grow the Cleveland community of African American and Latinx designers. The group was convened by staff at Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC). Recognizing the lack of diversity on its own staff, CUDC invited professional partners from allied design fields to contribute to the conversation.

Many design fields, including architecture, graphic design, landscape architecture, urban design, and industrial design, are comprised of educational and professional environments where people of color are significantly underrepresented. This lack of diversity limits the creative responses available to address the growing needs in our communities.

The name "Design Diversity" refers not only to the necessity to increase the number of underrepresented designers, but also connotes a directive; we must design diversity. The systemic change required to increase diversity representation is itself a design problem, one which requires as much creativity, exploration, and discovery as any other challenge a designer faces.

Through self-initiated projects and in collaboration with existing organizations, our goal is to foster learning, influence growth, and promote people of color in the Design Professions in Northeast Ohio.

### 3.2 DESIGN DIVERSITY'S MISSION

Design Diversity's mission is to foster learning, influence growth, and promote people of color in the design professions in Northeast Ohio.

Design Diversity:

- Fosters learning through educational and hands-on programming
- Influences growth by sharing effective strategies to increase diversity
- Promotes people of color in the design professions through social events

Although the word "diversity" connotes a broad range of ethnic, gender, and racial identities, the focus of Design Diversity's work is African American and Latinx communities.

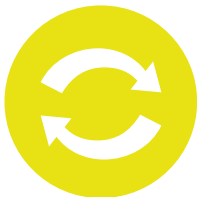
At the start of the Design Diversity initiative, the Advisory Committee made the decision to

focus on African American and Latinx diversity, recognizing that those two categories are not the extent of the groups that should be better represented in the design professions. The clear lack of correspondence between the racial composition of Cleveland's residents and its design professionals prompted the convening of the committee. Cleveland has a majority Black or African American population of 53.3%. The Latinx population is approximately 10% and growing in some neighborhoods. Based on anecdotal experience of the committee members, the percentage of design professionals in architecture and related design fields significantly underrepresented the communities they serve in Cleveland. Committee members felt it was important to target these two communities with the work of Design Diversity at first, then reassess the addition of other groups in the future.



#### EDUCATE

local communities, specifically youth, about the range of design careers available. Programs include the Making Our Own Space youth build workshops, engagement with John Hay Architecture High School, and service on the local board of ACE Mentors.



#### CONNECT

professionals across design disciplines to grow a thriving local community by hosting public talks featuring designers of color and professional networking events.



#### CELEBRATE

the accomplishments of people of color in the design professions and share their success stories through exhibitions, social media, and newsletters.

## DESIGN DIVERSITY

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- **James Cowan**, ThenDesign Architecture
- **Michele Crawford**, Cuyahoga Community College
- **David Jurca**, Kent State CUDC
- **Jud Kline**, CIVITAD Services
- **Dana Lawless-Andric**, Kent State University
- **Diane Davis-Sikora**, Kent State University
- **Erick Rodriguez**, Burten Bell Carr Development
- **Terry Schwarz**, Kent State CUDC
- **Arlene Watson**, FRONT Triennial

### 3.3 DESIGN JOURNEY FRAMEWORK

Design Diversity Index closely aligns with the Design Journey developed by researcher Jacinda Walker. The Design Journey Map is a simple navigational tool that can be used to better inform students, parents, professionals, and organizations about which strategic ideas are needed and where to place them along the career path to increase diversity in design disciplines.

The Design Journey Map framework documents the process of becoming a designer and provides four principles for closing the diversity gap in the design fields. The principles address the lack of diversity in design by identifying a strategic solution to help close the diversity gap in design. The principles are comprehensive, collaborative, local, and scholastic. The principles help to ensure long-term success for programs and initiatives that expose African American and Latinx youth to design-related careers.

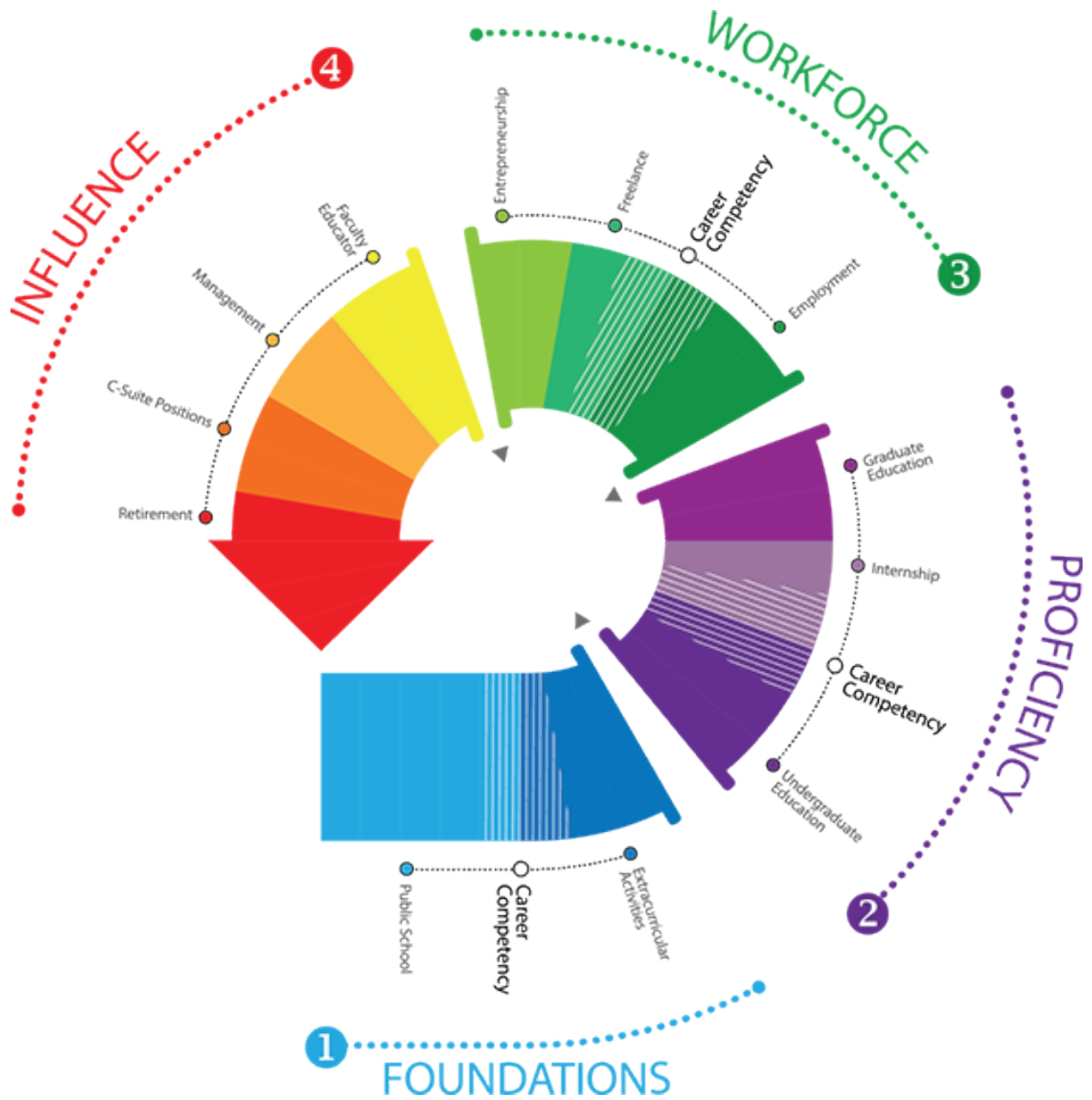
Closing the diversity gap in design is complex due to underlying problems at both ends of the career path. Problems at the beginning of a career path relate to access and exposure, which impacts course offerings and instruction for African American and Latinx youth in their local schools. The problems during the later years of a career relate to a lack of opportunities for professionals of color, due to systemic prejudices, especially among those who monitor the distribution and application of funding for education.

*In Designing for Diversity: Implications for Architectural Education in the Twenty-First Century* (2002), Dr. Kathryn H. Anthony, Distinguished Professor at the University of

Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, suggests that in order to guarantee long-lasting and continuous improvement, schools and organizations must develop more diversity-building initiatives. Diversity-building initiatives will improve industry experiences for novice African American and Latinx designers, so they are able to achieve greater career success and create more opportunities along the pipeline.

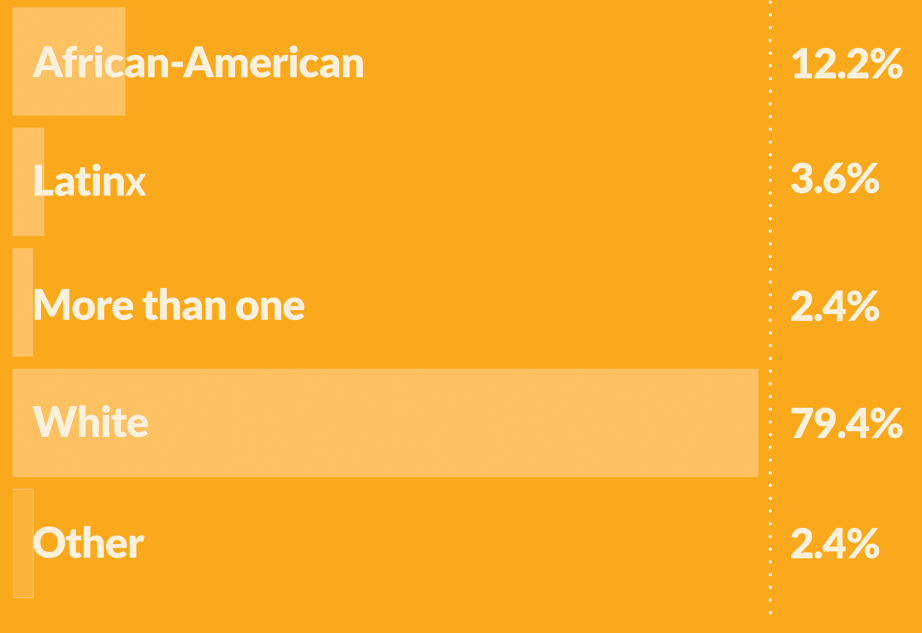
The Design Diversity Index addresses two important passages in the Design Journey Map framework: (2) Proficiency and (3) Workforce. The (2) Proficiency passage includes Undergraduate and Graduate education, as well as internships. The (3) Workforce passage includes early employment, entrepreneurship, and freelance professional experiences. The Design Diversity Index offers students, parents, and organizations access to aggregated state-based data from regional educational institutions and reminds other stakeholders about the importance of increasing diversity in design disciplines.

Addressing the lack of diversity in design is not a simple problem. Many well-intentioned people are trying to solve a single problem when multiple problems persist on both ends of the journey. The challenge many African American and Latinx youth face in the beginning of the journey is they simply do not know what to look for. In addition, parents of these creative youth also do not have adequate information to make informed decisions. Lastly, organizations can benefit by having such information centralized. This challenge continues to be recognized as a complex problem, but it still exists because there is a lack of access to the information available to solve it.



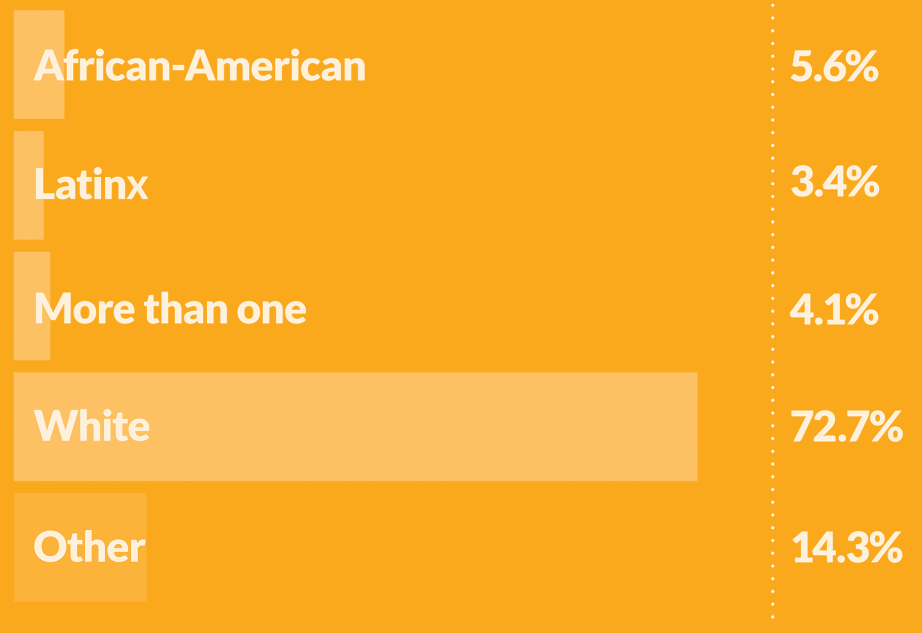
The Design Journey Map, in conjunction with the Design Diversity Index may help address the multiple problems along the journey. The Design Diversity Index provides aggregated data about academic programs and design professions to give students, parents, and organizations more information about design-related careers. To learn more about Design Journey Framework, visit: [www.designexplorr.com/research](http://www.designexplorr.com/research)

## Ethnicity of Population in Ohio



## Ethnicity of Undergraduate Students in Architecture

(Kent State University & Bowling Green State University)







## 4.0 DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX

*Design Diversity Index is a multidisciplinary tool for measuring progress toward achieving diversity goals. The online and printed resource will collect, maintain, and visualize data on the number of African American and Latinx people from design schools, programs, and professions in Ohio.*

### 4.1 PROJECT SCOPE

Kent State Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) led a 16-month-long process to develop a pilot Design Diversity Index. The Index is a tool for guiding short and long term actions toward more diverse and culturally relevant design practices. By tracking the actual number of African American and Latinx people in academic design programs and design professions year to year, effective strategies for increasing diversity become measurable.

The Design Diversity Index gauges the numbers and percentages of people of color studying and working in architecture, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, landscape architecture, and urban planning in Ohio. It integrates available data to visualize current baseline conditions and annual

progress toward expanding racial diversity in the design professions. Changes in diversity are measured, leading to investigation of the causes, and potentially the spread of successful strategies across disciplines. This cross-cutting approach, linking traditionally separate design fields, creates the opportunity to identify and spread effective strategies for increasing diversity within a geographic region.

Strategies that work in one part of the country may not be transferable to other parts of the country due to unique industry standards, historic immigration patterns, or state policies. For example, Washington D.C. has a relatively high percentage of African Americans in the architecture profession, attributed to the significant number of federal government agencies in the city, a unique condition not easily replicable in other cities.

The lack of diversity is one of the most pressing problems in the design fields. This problem is especially pronounced in architecture, where people of color represent fewer than 10% of the registered architects in the U.S. (Inclusion in Architecture Report, 2015). Strikingly, Ohio has 2,650 licensed architects, but only 63 are African American. The city of Cleveland has fewer than 20 African American licensed architects. The fact that design professionals do not reflect the communities they serve may limit the creativity and relevance of design projects for those communities. Academic institutions, private design firms, and non-profit cultural organizations would all benefit from greater diversity in the design professions.

Collecting relevant baseline data is a critical first step toward effecting change. Although some professional associations maintain data on the diversity of their members, this data often stays within the association's discipline. The Design Diversity Index is a cross-cutting tool which collects and tracks data from multiple design professions that maintain a state-level or national registry or certification. These professional associations include architecture (American Institute of Architects), landscape architecture (American Society of Landscape Architects), urban planning (American Planning Association), and graphic design (AIGA). Although the primary interest of the current project is in Northern Ohio, Design Diversity Index is structured to gather data at the state level, comparing differences for regions across Ohio.

Through the Design Diversity Index report and website, the public is invited to discover the facts about ethnic representation in design schools and professions in their state. Seeing the numbers may immediately inspire action

by joining an advocacy organization or provoke curiosity to learn more about the local context. Over the next several years, new data will be added to the Design Diversity Index, revealing new insights and annual trends. Connecting these demographic changes to specific actions may reveal which strategies are most effective and worthy of support. Identifying which strategies actually work to increase diversity is an important goal, for several reasons.

As Jacinda Walker, a researcher and project consultant who studies this issue, has noted:

- Increasing the diversity in design is a business strategy that will drive innovation.
- In this knowledge-based, tech-driven, global world, exclusion is no longer sustainable.
- Design can create opportunities for underrepresented populations in academia, employment, and entrepreneurship.
- More African-American and Latinx designers in the industry will provide role models for youth in underrepresented communities.

Initially focused on Ohio, the Design Diversity Index is intended to serve as a model that can inspire other communities across the United States to track their local diversity data. Employing similar data sources and visualization templates, other project leaders may share demographic numbers for their state's design schools and professions. Awareness building activities started at the local level can link to established national efforts to promote diversity in design. Comparing data from allied design disciplines is a strategy to increase the exchange of ideas and accelerate actions across the broader design community.

## 4.2 WORK PLAN

The Design Diversity Index involved three phases of work:

**Investigate:** study existing data

**Visualize:** design the study's insights

**Disseminate:** circulate the project findings

The **Investigation Phase** included a study of existing educational, research, and professional efforts to increase African American and Latinx representation within the design fields. Its key tasks were:

- Select criteria for creating school groupings
- Select professional associations relevant to each design discipline
- Create map of academic programs and timeline for the researching the school data
- Inventory and compile all currently available data

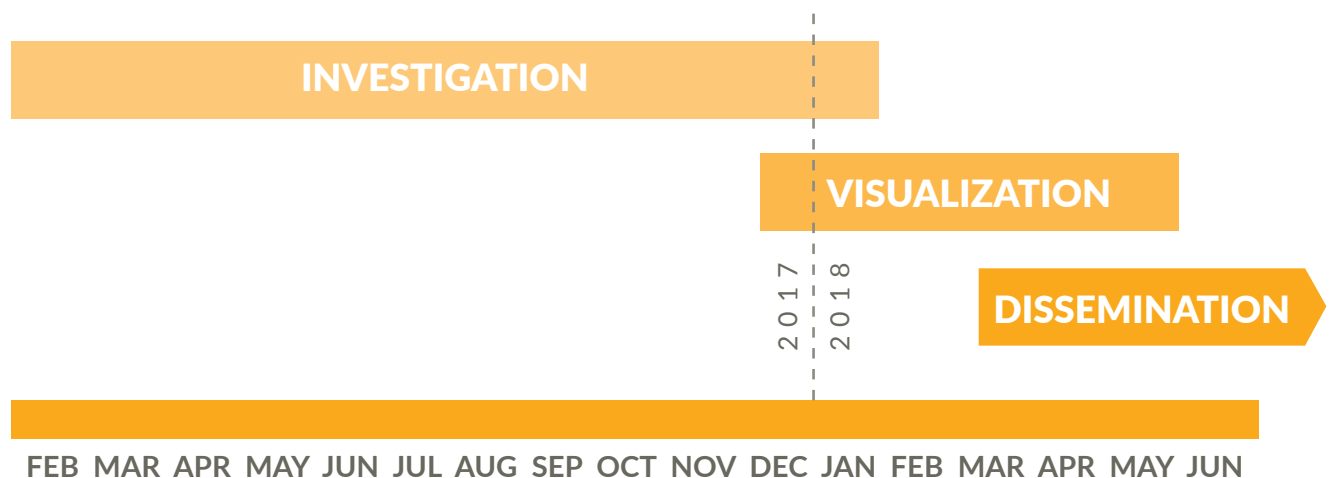
The **Visualization Phase** focused on designing the study's insights as a visually compelling report and online Design Diversity Index. The objectives of this phase were:

- Hire information designer to create Design Diversity Index dashboard visuals
- Create draft layout of report document
- Share draft of Design Diversity Index report with partners for usability feedback
- Upload report document to online platform and print hard copies

The **Dissemination Phase** circulated the project's findings and generated an Index template for other communities to replicate.

This phase included:

- Collect remaining data components
- Work with project partners to determine audience, select promotion schedule, and create presentation for webinar
- Present copies of the printed report document to partner organizations
- Share Design Diversity Index website, track usage, and update as needed
- Continue fundraising efforts to expand Design Diversity Index pilot project to include school and professional data for the entire state of Ohio



### 4.3 OUTCOMES

The Design Diversity Index (DDI) is intended to grow over time, becoming a useful tool to track changes in the number of African American and Latinx designers in Ohio. The current version of the DDI only includes available data from public universities in Northern Ohio and limited data on professionals in the state connected to six design disciplines: architecture, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, landscape architecture, and urban planning.

Due to the large number of private and public academic institutions in Ohio, the current project's scope limited the geographic focus for academic design programs to six public universities in the northern third of Ohio. Demographic data on design professionals in Ohio is sparse, because state labor data only includes three design-related occupational categories and not all design professional associations collect demographic data on their members. In future versions, the DDI will integrate data from additional academic design programs and more design professionals in each discipline.

The additional academic institutions include private universities and community colleges with design programs in Northern Ohio and remaining academic programs in Central and Southern Ohio. Available professional data will increase due to recent changes in the occupational categories used by the American Community Survey, accessible in 2019. In addition, a few professional associations contacted during the project expressed their interest in collecting demographic data on their members. These anticipated developments in the near future will significantly increase the comprehensiveness of the DDI data sources.

Although the current version only includes a portion of the data expected in the future, it does provide a useful structure for the data currently available. The current version of the DDI establishes a framework for multidisciplinary comparison, identifies which demographic data is currently unavailable, and reveals several insights to guide future actions. Determining the underlying reasons for the differences between demographics at various schools is beyond the scope of this project. The intended outcomes for the project include the initial steps to develop a tool for identifying the demographic differences and presenting the data in a format accessible to a wide range of users. Perhaps, DDI will inspire its users to ask more questions and pursue new actions to increase the demographic numbers in the data.

The outcomes from the project are organized in two categories: **Academic Programs** and **Professional Workforce**. These categories include data collected from undergraduate and graduate design programs, as well as professional data from Ohio's Bureau of Labor Statistics and design professional associations. Each category also includes initial findings derived from the data, which offer opportunities for further investigation. In order to make the data more accessible and user-friendly, data visualizations are included in the report and the project website: [www.designdiversity.org/index](http://www.designdiversity.org/index)

Through annual updates, the DDI is expected to reveal changing demographics in academic and professional design communities in Ohio. By comparing the numbers of design disciplines side-by-side, users may become more aware of the diversity status of allied professions and learn from them. In order to achieve success, the tool must encourage ideas to cross the

boundaries of design disciplines. The project team welcomes feedback on the framework, method, and vision of the DDI. Input received on the current version will be used to improve future iterations. Hopefully, the DDI tool will encourage a range of individuals, from students and parents to employees and senior management, to investigate which actions are most effective to improve racial and ethnic representation in design.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The Design Diversity Index (DDI) is structured to track data that corresponds to the Design Journey framework. The Design Journey framework, previously described in the report, includes four sequential passages. The current version of the DDI only targets data from the two middle passages: (2) *Proficiency* and (3) *Workforce*. The *Proficiency* passage comprises internships, undergraduate, and graduate education. The *Workforce* passage begins after college graduation and extends to a designer's mid-career. Future versions of the DDI may expand to track data for the earlier *Foundations* passage (high school and after-school programs) and latter *Influence* passage (faculty appointments and senior leadership positions), but the project currently begins tracking data in undergraduate design programs. Academic programs located in Northern Ohio comprise the first group of schools included in the Index.

### **Selection criteria**

A critical component of the Investigation Phase of the project was selecting the academic institutions to include in the first version of the Design Diversity Index (DDI). The project employed three criteria for selection:

1. Location
2. Design Discipline
3. Degree

Since Ohio boasts more than 250 educational institutions and the available scope for the project was limited, the project team decided to focus on institutions in the northern third of Ohio. The geographic location of academic institutions included in the DDI could expand in subsequent versions of the project to include colleges and universities in the central third and southern third of the state.

The next criteria used to select which academic institutions to include in the project were the design disciplines available at the college or university. A discipline is a branch of knowledge, typically studied in higher education. The Design Diversity initiative is led by individuals from academic institutions and professional organizations engaged in work related to the built environment. Therefore, the design disciplines selected as the focus of the Design Diversity Index are related to the built environment and often interact with each other. The academic institutions included in the DDI had to provide programs in at least one of six design disciplines.

The third criteria for inclusion employed during the Investigation Phase was the specific degree offered by the academic institution. Since the first version of the DDI required limits on the volume of data processed, the project team decided to only include design programs with terminal degrees. A terminal degree is a university degree in the United States that is either highest on the academic or professional track in a given field of study. The terminal degrees for relevant design programs include:

- Associate of Applied Sciences (A.A.S) and Associates of Applied Business (A.A.B.)
- Bachelor of Arts (B.A), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Science C (B.S.C.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), Master

of Arts (M.A.), Master of Design (M.D.), Master of Industrial Design (M.I.D), Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.)

- Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.), Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), Doctor in Architecture (D.Arch.)
- Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.) and Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A.)
- Master of Urban Planning (M.U.P.), Master of Planning (M.Plan.), Master of City and Regional Planning (M.C.R.P.), Master of City Planning (M.C.P.)

Based on the location, design discipline, and degree selection criteria, 25 schools were identified for inclusion in the first group of academic data sources. This cohort included six public universities, referred to as:

**Group 1 - Section A:**

1. Bowling Green State University
2. Cleveland State University
3. Kent State University
4. University of Akron
5. University of Toledo
6. Youngstown State University

The next segment includes nine public community colleges, referred to as:

**Group 1 - Section B, :**

1. Cuyahoga Community College
2. Lakeland Community College
3. Lorain County Community College
4. North Central State College
5. Owens Community College
6. Stark State College
7. Terra Community College
8. Northwest State Community College
9. Eastern Gateway College

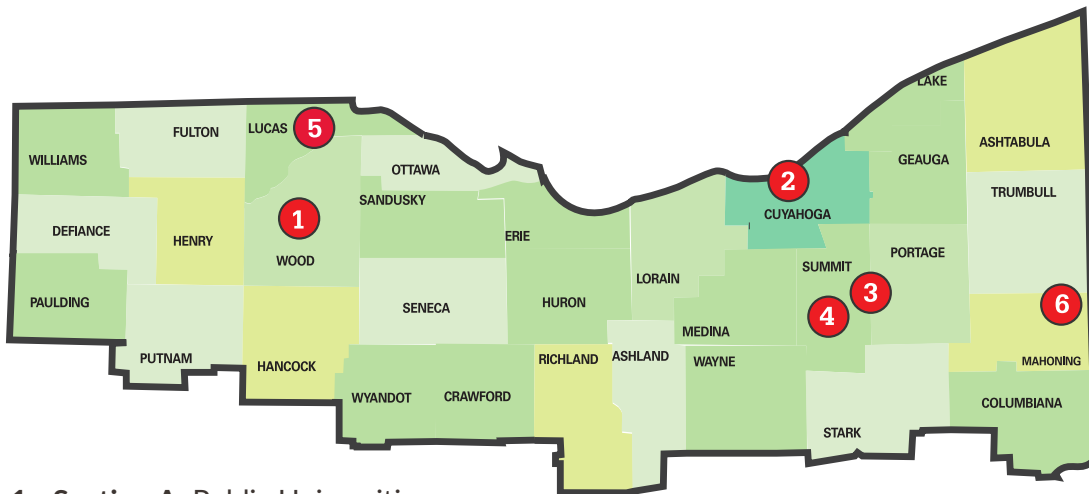
The last subset of 25 schools includes the private and for-profit academic institutions:

**Group 1 - Section C:**

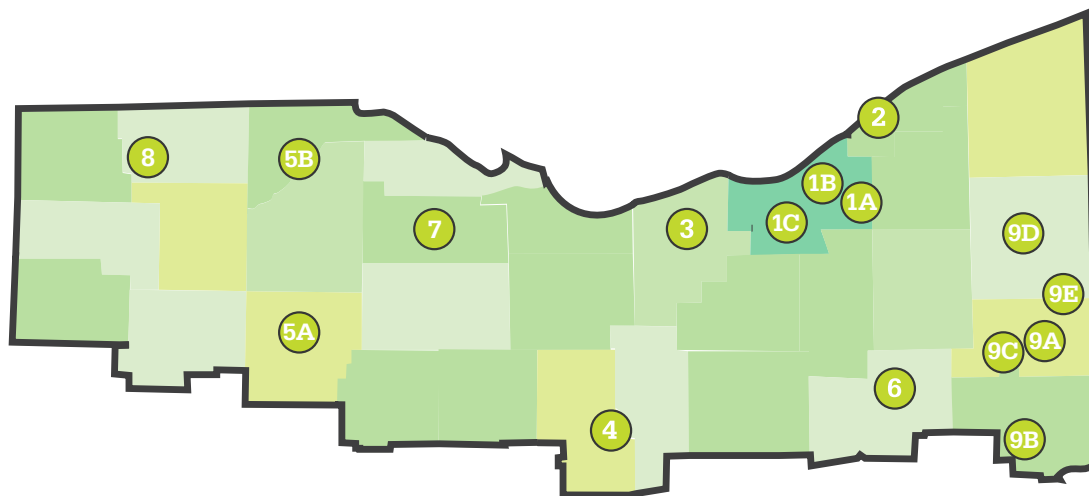
1. Ashland University
2. Baldwin Wallace University
3. Bluffton University
4. Cleveland Institute of Art
5. Defiance College
6. Malone University
7. Notre Dame College
8. University of Findlay
9. Ursuline College
10. Walsh University

Creating visual graphics of the student demographic data from all 25 of these institutions was beyond the capacity of the current project. During the data Visualization Phase, the focus was further refined from these 25 institutions to only the six public universities in Group 1 - Section A. This smaller number of schools offered a more manageable volume of data to transform into graphic format.

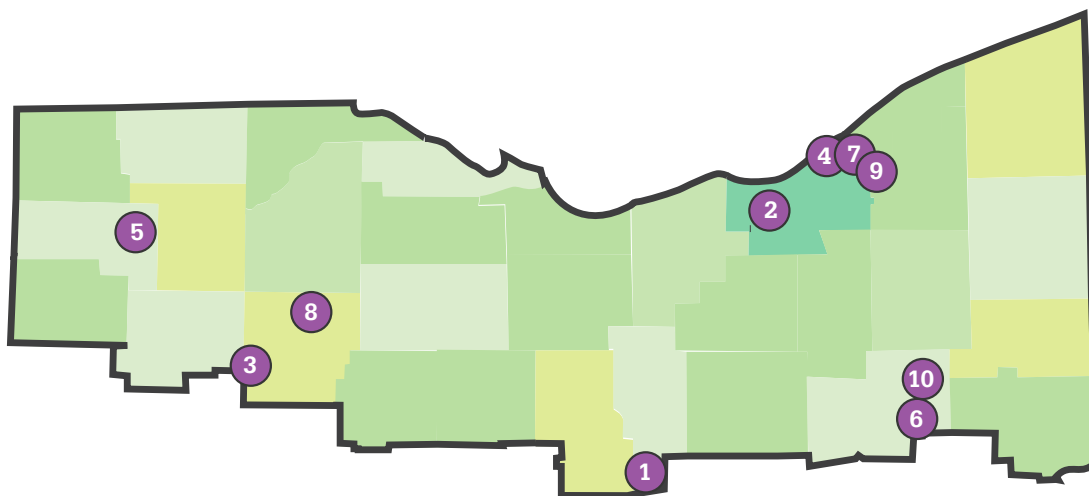
Since these six public universities are geographically spread across multiple cities and draw students from various economic and ethnic backgrounds, the project team viewed these Section A institutions as a more representative sample of Group 1 schools than either community colleges (Section B) or private institutions (Section C). The process established to collect and visualize data from these six schools will be repeated with additional schools in subsequent versions of the DDI.



Group 1 - Section A: Public Universities



Group 1 - Section B: Community Colleges



Group 1 - Section C: Private Academic Institutions

### Data availability

The six public universities chosen for the first group of schools offer terminal degrees in five of the six design disciplines tracked by the DDI. The only discipline not represented by the public universities is industrial design. As the DDI continues to grow with more data sources, academic institutions with industrial design programs will be added, such as Cleveland Institute of Art and Columbus College of Art and Design.

Design programs in both undergraduate and graduate curriculum at the six public universities are included in the data. The “Undergraduate Programs Data” and “Graduate Programs Data” matrices visualize the student demographics available from each university. Employing four different icons, the matrices provide an overview of the disciplines available at each school and the level of demographic data provided by each school. The first icon (○) indicates “Discipline Not Applicable to School.” This simply means the university does not offer programs in that particular discipline. The second icon (●) means the university offers programs in the discipline and all the requested data was provided. The third icon (◐) indicates the design program is available, but the university did not provide all the demographic data requested for the DDI. Lastly, (◑) indicates the design discipline is offered at the university, but no demographic data was available or provided.

DDI received full or partial data from all of the universities in Group 1 - Section A. As the undergraduate matrix shows, the DDI incorporates data from ten different undergraduate design programs. An additional five programs provided graduate student data. The University of Toledo only provided program

data in percentage format, not raw numbers, so the icon shown for its graphic design program indicates, “Discipline Available, Partial Data Available.” Raw numbers are required to calculate the total number of students in a particular discipline across multiple universities. Then the relative percentages of African American and Latinx students in each discipline can be meaningfully compared.

As expected, fewer design programs are available at the graduate level. But all five icons in the Graduate Programs Data matrix indicate, “Discipline Available, Data Available.” The same icon system developed for Academic Programs was also used for Professional Workforce data, shown in a later section of the report. Examining the demographic data across different academic programs provides useful comparisons between disciplines and offers insights on anticipated changes in the design professional workforce.

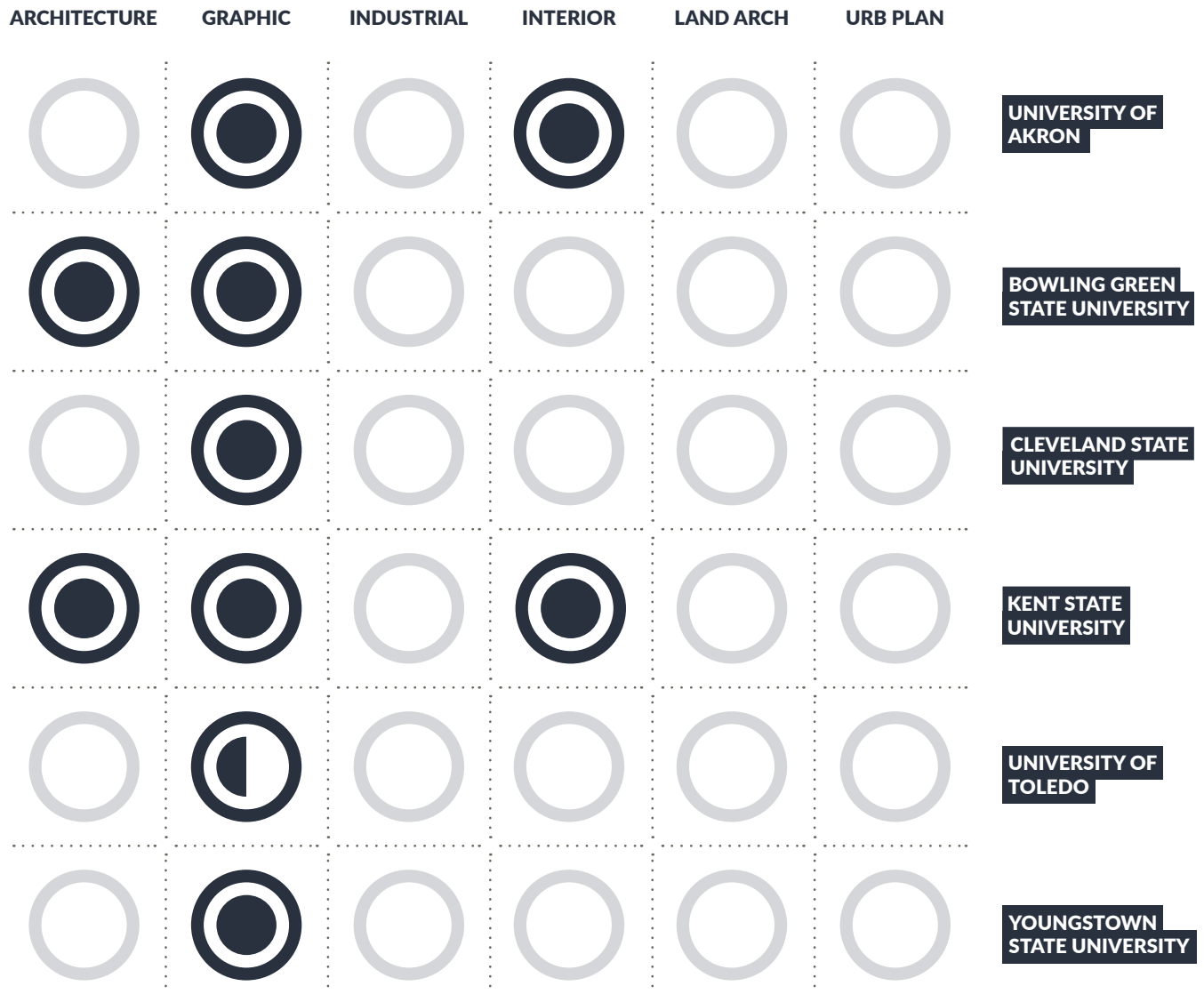
### Architecture

The second most common undergraduate design discipline available at the public universities is architecture. Both Kent State University (KSU) and Bowling Green State University (BGSU) offer degrees in the discipline and shared their student demographic data. Visual data comparing each university’s total student population and their design programs is available on their respective profile pages. The percentage of African American and Latinx students at each university is relatively similar. African Americans comprise 9% of the total student population at both KSU and BGSU. The Latinx populations at both universities are also similar: 3% at KSU and 4% at BGSU. Slightly larger differences emerge between the demographics within the architecture programs.



# Undergraduate Programs Data

This is a graph of the schools sampled, against the design disciplines examined, and level of data available from each.



Discipline Not Applicable to School    
 Discipline Available Data Available    
 Discipline Available Partial Data Available    
 Discipline Available No Data Available

Combining the demographics between undergraduate and graduate programs in architecture, KSU's student breakdown is:

- White - 74%
- African American - 4.9%
- Latinx - 3.5%
- Other - 17.6%

An important point to note is that the "Other" category includes Asian, International, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Native American or Native Alaskan, Multiple Ethnicities, and Not Reported. Students who reported Multiple Ethnicities or chose not to report their ethnicity may include individuals with African American, Latinx, or other ethnic backgrounds, but the data available does not indicate which ones. For this reason, the number of African American and Latinx students might be higher than indicated, if students with multiple ethnicities were included. This is one of the challenges in data gathering that the DDI intends to address in future versions of the tool.

Based on the known data, the percentage of African American students in KSU's architecture program is 4.1% lower than the percentage of African American students in the university's total population. But the percentage of Latinx students in architecture is slightly higher, by 0.5%, than the total student population.

Applying a similar combination of undergraduate and graduate program numbers, BGSU's architecture programs include the following demographics:

- White - 68.9%
- African American - 6.9%
- Latinx - 3.5%
- Other - 20.7%

The percentage of African American students in BGSU's architecture program is lower than the percentage of African American students in the overall university population by 2.1%. This relatively close relationship between design program and university-wide population is even closer in the Latinx population. The percentage of Latinx students in the architecture programs (3.5%) is only 0.5% lower than the percentage of Latinx students in the overall population (4%).

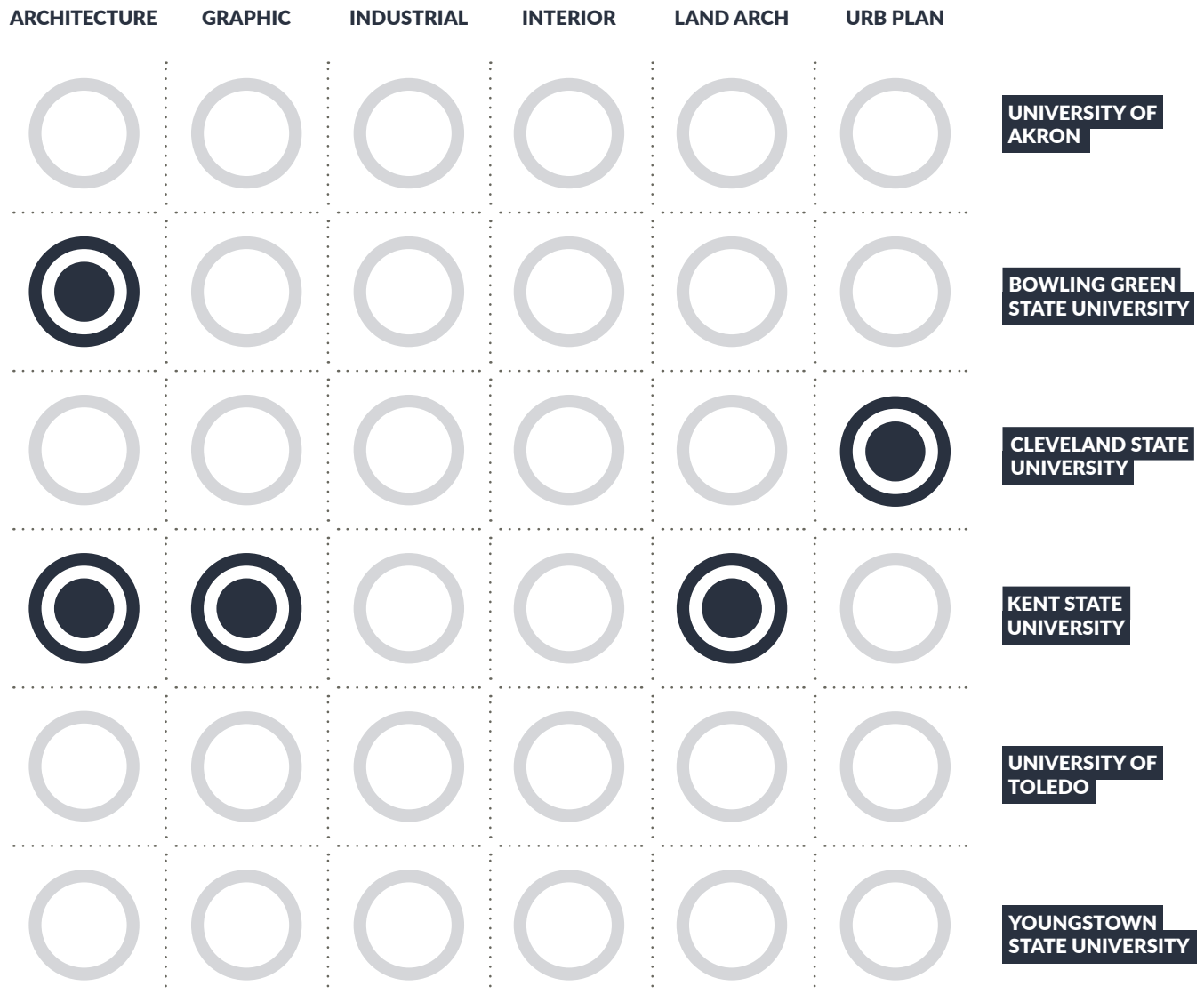
In addition to comparing each university's architecture programs to the overall student body, other diversity benchmarks could employ comparisons with the state's overall demographics. Since many universities draw students from other states, this comparison to Ohio's population was reserved for data on professionals working in the state. Comparative data on African American and Latinx populations in Ohio vs. demographic data on design professionals is available in the Professional Workforce section.

The combination of demographic information from KSU and BGSU provides an overview of the diversity of Northern Ohio's undergraduate and graduate architecture programs. Combining undergraduate programs in architecture at KSU and BGSU equals 413 students. The diversity figures for undergraduate architecture students are as follows:

- White - 72.6%
- African American - 5.6%
- Latinx - 3.4%
- Other - 18.4%

# Graduate Programs Data

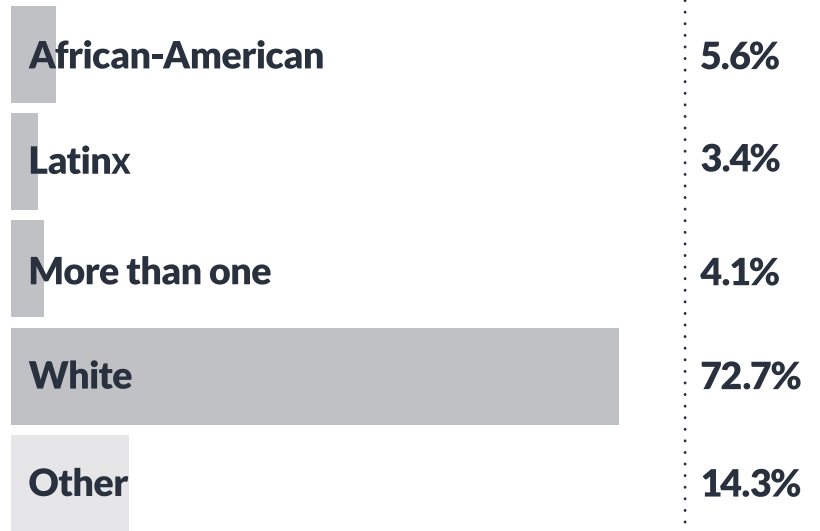
This is a graph of the schools sampled, against the design disciplines examined, and level of data available from each.



○ Discipline Not Applicable to School    ● Discipline Available Data Available    ◐ Discipline Available Partial Data Available    ○ Discipline Available No Data Available

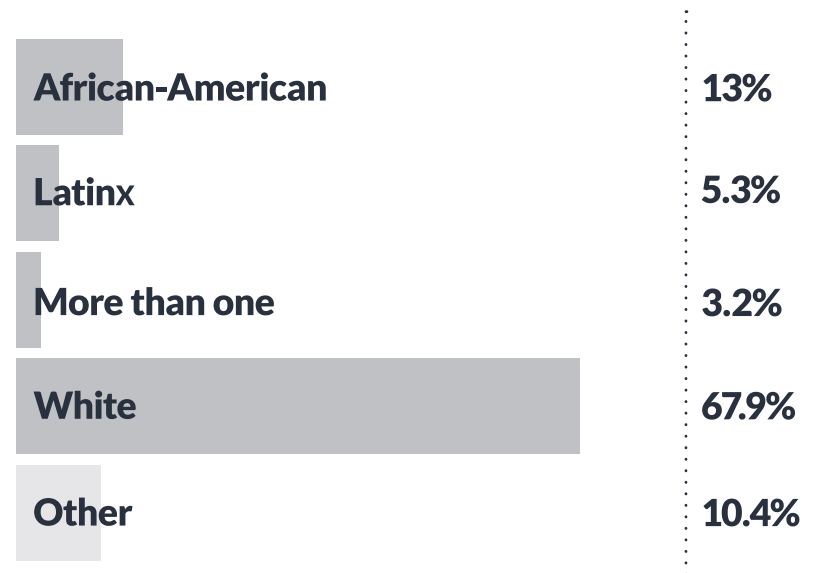
## Ethnicity of Undergraduate Students in Architecture

(Kent State University & Bowling Green State University)



## Ethnicity of Undergraduate Students in Graphic Design

(Kent State University, Bowling State Green University, Cleveland State University, Youngstown State University, University of Akron & University of Toledo)



Taking a look at architecture graduate programs, the percentage of African American students drops by half compared to undergraduate students. But the percentage of Latinx students increases, slightly. The demographics of graduate architecture students at KSU and BGSU are as follows:

- White - 77.8%
- African American - 2.8%
- Latinx - 4.2%
- Other - 15.2%

The decrease in African American graduate students aligns with the Design Journey framework, which recognizes a significant drop in representation at key passages in the educational and professional trajectory for people of color. The transition from undergraduate to graduate education is one of the most important links in the process of becoming a licensed architect. Although the percentage of Latinx students increased by 0.8% between undergraduate and graduate programs, the actual number of Latinx students is only three. The number of students of any ethnicity is significantly lower in graduate programs than undergraduate programs, therefore a small change in the raw number of graduate students of color can make a notable change in percentage.

Lastly, combining the number of undergraduate and graduate students at KSU and BGSU results in the total number of architecture students in Northern Ohio. The demographic percentages of these architecture students provide useful comparisons to other design disciplines in the region. A total of 485 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled at KSU and BGSU in fall semester of 2017:

- White - 73.4%
- African American - 5.2%

- Latinx - 3.5%
- Other - 17.9%

Although the current project scope does not include the investigations required to discern underlying causes for the demographic percentages shown, the data do provoke some initial questions to pursue. For example, the architecture programs at BGSU enroll 2% more African American students than KSU, while retaining the same percentage of Latinx students. Is this difference due to geographic location, characteristics of the academic programs, recruiting activities or some other reason? The percentage of Latinx graduate students in architecture at KSU is 5.6%, over 2% higher than the percentage of Latinx students in the total KSU student population. Can this relative significance be traced to a known cause or intentional activity? Will this particular year's demographics become a trend over time? Questions like these, and others, may encourage inquiry and collaborative action between schools. When applied to different design disciplines, these investigations may inspire exchange of diversity strategies between the larger design community.

### **Graphic Design**

Graphic design is the most common design discipline among the public universities in Group 1—all six schools offer undergraduate graphic design programs. Only Kent State University offers a graduate degree in Visual Communication Design. All of these institutions provided at least partial student demographic data at the level of the design program and the entire university population. The University of Toledo provided partial data, only in percentage format. The other five universities provided data in raw numbers. Therefore, the combined demographic

numbers for graphic design students could not include University of Toledo.

Starting with the undergraduate programs, the data include demographics for a total of 680 students. The largest number of students comes from BGSU, which offers two undergraduate programs in the graphic design discipline: Visual Communication Technology (VCT) and Graphic Design. 309 students are enrolled in VCT and 79 students in Graphic Design.

The demographics for the VCT program at BGSU are as follows:

- White - 79.9%
- African American - 8.4%
- Latinx - 5.2%
- Other - 6.5%

The demographics for the Graphic Design program at BGSU:

- White - 68.3%
- African American - 8.9%
- Latinx - 11.4%
- Other - 4.9%

Based on the above data, the percentage of African American students in both programs is quite similar. But the the percentage of Latinx students in the graphic design program is more than double the percentage of Latinx students in the VCT program. Is the percentage of Latinx students correlated to the content of the programs? Similar to other disciplines, the academic programs in graphic design vary from university to university. Some programs emphasize technical skills, while others highlight design theory. Correlation between curricular emphasis and demographic representation was not studied in this project, but may offer important insights for future action.

The second largest number of undergraduate graphic design students comes from Kent State University. The single Visual Communication Design program at KSU includes 370 students. Demographics for fall semester of 2017 are as follows:

- White - 74.9%
- African American - 7.3%
- Latinx - 5.4%
- Other - 12.4%

Recalling the similar percentages of African American (9%) and Latinx (3% at KSU and 4% at BGSU) students at KSU and BGSU reveals a notable figure. All three graphic design programs at both schools have a larger percentage of Latinx students than the percentage of Latinx students in the overall student population. In fact, this is also the case for University of Akron and Cleveland State University. Only Youngstown State University shows a slight decrease in the percentage of Latinx students in the graphic design program (3.7%) compared to the total school population (4%).

Among the five public universities with data available from their graphic design programs, Cleveland State University (CSU) has the highest percentage of African American students. Out of a total of 75 students in the graphic design program, 20% are African American. The percentage of Latinx students is also relatively high compared to other programs in the cohort. Only BGSU's Graphic Design program has a higher percentage of Latinx students. CSU's graphic design demographic numbers are:

- White - 61.3%
- African American - 20%
- Latinx - 10.7%
- Other - 8%

Cleveland State University has the highest percentage of African American students in the total school population (17%) and ties with University of Toledo for the highest percentage of Latinx students (5%). This relatively large number of African Americans on CSU's campus is very likely one reason why African American representation in CSU's graphic design program is higher than other programs. But unlike other programs, the percentage of African Americans in CSU's graphic design program (20%) is also higher than the percentage of African American students in the total university population (17%). The 3% increase indicates that CSU's program is worthy of further investigation.

University of Akron's (UA) graphic design program includes 172 students, the third largest in the cohort. The total school diversity ranks second in terms of percentage of African American students (12%) and lowest in percentage of Latinx students (2%). As previously mentioned, the percentage of Latinx students in the graphic design program (2.9%) is larger than the percentage of Latinx students in the total student population (2%). Notably, the percentage of African American students in the graphic design program is 3.9% lower than the percentage of African American students at the university. Reasons for the preference for other degree programs at UA may reveal lessons for attracting designers of color. A demographic breakdown of CSU's graphic design program is shown below:

- White - 82%
- African American - 8.1%
- Latinx - 2.9%
- Other - 5.2%

Similar in size to Cleveland State University's program, Youngstown State University (YSU) has 82 graphic design students. The

university's overall student population is 10% African American and 4% Latinx. YSU is the only university with a lower percentage of Latinx students in the graphic design program (3.7%) compared to the overall student population (4%). Although the difference is only 0.3%, this unique situation may hint at some significance. Additional research is required to understand why the programs outside the design field draw a larger percentage of YSU's Latinx students.

The percentage of African American students in the graphic design program is 1.5% less than the percentage of African American students in the entire student body. The slight underrepresentation of African American graphic design students corresponds to similar numbers for KSU and BGSU. Demographics for YSU are as follows:

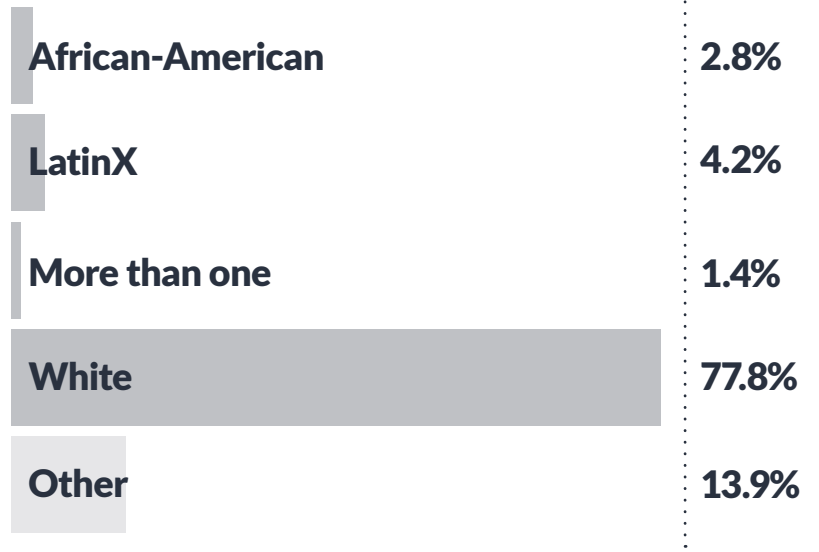
- White - 76.8%
- African American - 8.5%
- Latinx - 3.7%
- Other - 3.7%

Design Diversity Index incorporates data from five undergraduate graphic design programs: Bowling Green State University, Kent State University, Cleveland State University, University of Akron, and Youngstown State University. A combined total of 680 students comprise the undergraduate graphic design programs at all five universities. The following demographic percentages breakdown this total number:

- White - 67.9%
- African American - 13%
- Latinx - 5.3%
- Other - 13.6%

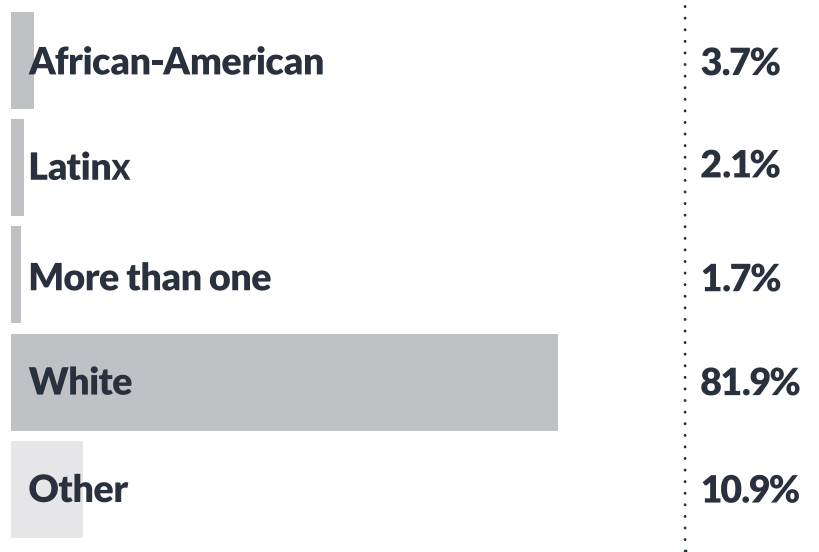
## Ethnicity of Graduate Students in Architecture

(Kent State University & Bowling Green State University)



## Ethnicity of Undergraduate Students in Interior Design

(Kent State University & University of Akron)





The data shows a much smaller number of graphic design students pursuing a graduate degree. All 27 graduate students in graphic design are enrolled at Kent State University. Notably, the percentage of African American students in the graduate program is 11.1%, over 2% higher than the total university population.

KSU's graduate program in graphic design reflects the following demographics:

- White - 48.2%
- African American - 11.1%
- Latinx - 0%
- Other - 40.7%

During the year the data was collected, no Latinx students were enrolled in the graduate graphic design program. Latinx students comprise 5.5% of the undergraduate graphic design program at KSU, so additional research may provide a better understanding of the reasons for the lack of continuation to the graduate level.

Combining the undergraduate programs in graphic design from all five universities with the single graduate program at KSU produces the following demographic percentages:

- White - 67.2%
- African American - 13%
- Latinx - 5%
- Other - 14.8%

### **Industrial Design**

The six design professions selected for the Design Diversity Index includes Industrial Design. Unfortunately, the six public universities used in the first group of academic institutions do not offer industrial design. This discipline is an important connection between the other design fields, particularly Architecture and Graphic Design. Therefore, future versions

of the Design Diversity Index will include data from industrial design programs. The second group of academic institutions is expected to add private universities and community colleges in Northern Ohio, which do include industrial design programs.

### **Interior Design**

The number of interior design programs within Northern Ohio's public universities is significantly smaller than graphic design programs. Only two universities offer interior design programs: University of Akron and Kent State University (KSU). Both are undergraduate programs.

The University of Akron's (UA) interior design program is significantly smaller than KSU's program. As of fall 2017, UA had 50 students compared to 188 at KSU. But the percentage of African American and Latinx students at UA is much higher. Compared to UA's overall student population, the percentage of African Americans in interior design is 4% lower and the percentage of Latinx students in interior design is 2% higher. The following numbers breakdown the demographic percentages in UA's interior design program:

- White - 74%
- African American - 8%
- Latinx - 4%
- Other - 14%

The interior design program at Kent State University is over three times the size of the program at University of Akron, but about half the size of the architecture program at KSU. The percentages of African American and Latinx students in KSU's interior design program are much smaller than the university overall. KSU's total student population is 9% African American and 3% Latinx. The

demographic percentages for the KSU's interior design program are as follows:

- White - 84%
- African American - 2.1%
- Latinx - 1.6%
- Other - 12.3%

A combination of data from both UA and KSU reveals a demographic picture of interior design students in Northern Ohio's public universities:

- White - 81.9%
- African American - 3.7%
- Latinx - 2.1%
- Other - 12.6%

The relatively low percentage of African American students at both UA and KSU provokes questions about the lack of representation. Awareness of the discipline, faculty representation, or a number of other causes may influence student decisions. Further investigation may help illuminate the issue.

### **Landscape Architecture**

The landscape architecture program at Kent State University is the smallest and youngest design program in the study. The program had eight students in fall 2017, its fourth year in existence. As a relatively new program, the total numbers and demographic percentages are likely to change significantly from year to year. In order to set a baseline for future annual updates, the current demographic percentages are as follows:

- White - 75%
- African American - 0%
- Latinx - 0%
- Other - 25%

As the only landscape architecture program in Northern Ohio, KSU will remain the sole representative of the discipline until The Ohio State University is added to the Design Diversity Index. The addition of academic

institutions from Central Ohio is anticipated during the next stage of the project. At that time, comparisons between different landscape architecture programs can be made. In the meantime, comparison with other design programs in Northern Ohio may serve as a useful benchmark to track diversity goals.

### **Urban Planning**

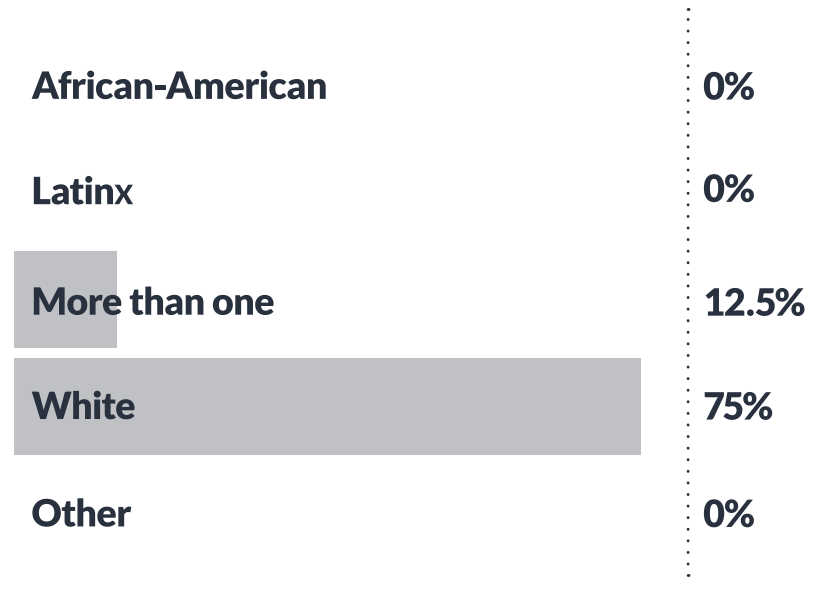
Similar to Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning is only represented by one graduate program in the cohort of six public universities. Located at Cleveland State University, the Urban Planning program includes 35 students. The racial diversity of the program is significantly below that of the university overall. Although CSU has the highest percentage of African American students among the other public universities in Northern Ohio, the percentage of African American students in CSU's Urban Planning program is one of the lowest across all the design disciplines in the study. The following percentages express the demographics of the urban planning program at CSU:

- White - 91.4%
- African American - 2.9%
- Latinx - 0%
- Other - 5.7%

In order to align with the percentage of African American students in the total university population, the percentage of students in the urban planning program must increase by a factor of three. Since the total number of students in the program is relatively small, a significant increase in the percentage of African American, and particularly Latinx, representation can be made in the future with a few new students. A small step in that direction may produce a notable trend in future versions of the Design Diversity Index.

# Ethnicity of Graduate Students in Landscape Architecture

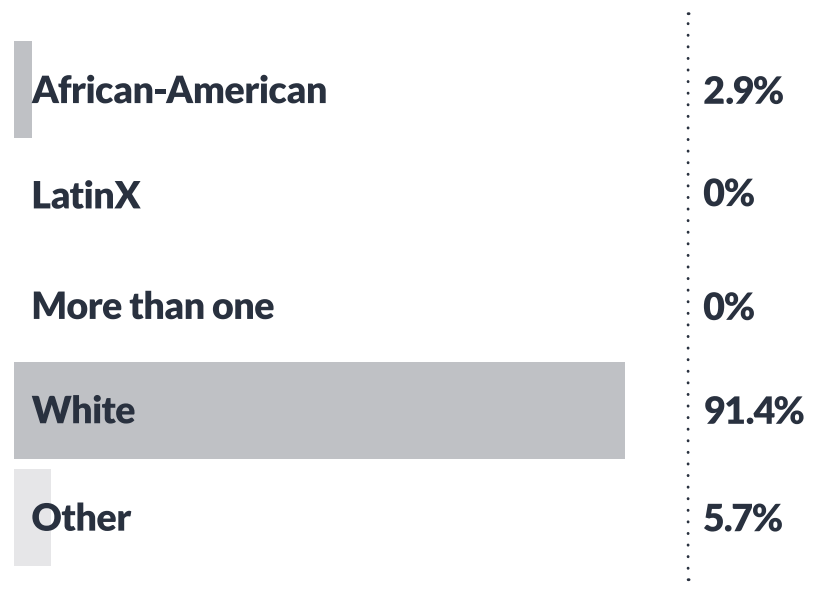
(Kent State University)



\*All Data as of 2017

# Ethnicity of Graduate Students in Urban Planning

(Cleveland State University)



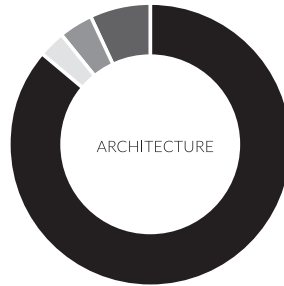
\*All Data as of 2017

# Kent State University

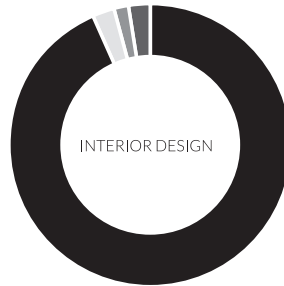
## ABOUT

Location	Kent, OH
Size	41,214
Degrees	BA, BFA, MArch, MUP MFA, MDes, BS/MBA
Design Programs	Architecture Landscape Urban Planning Urban Design Industrial Graphic Fashion Interior
Student Orgs	AIGA AIA

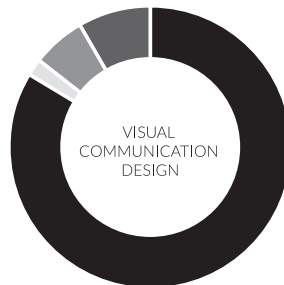
## TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE



- 72.7% White
- 5.7% African-American
- 3.2% LatinX
- 2.7% Other



- 84% White
- 2.1% African-American
- 1.6% LatinX
- 2.1% Other



- 74.9% White
- 7.3% African-American
- 5.4% LatinX
- 1.9% Other

## TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



- 74% White
- 9% African-American
- 3% LatinX
- 10% Other

\*All Data as of 2017

# Bowling Green State University

## ABOUT

**Location** Bowling Green, OH

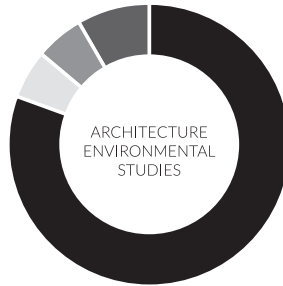
**Size** 19,331

**Degrees** BA, BS, BFA, MARC

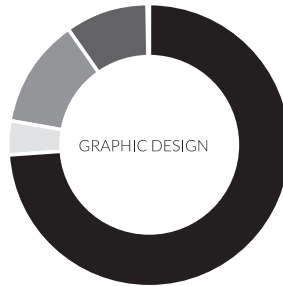
**Design Programs** Architecture  
Environmental Studies  
Graphic  
Visual Communications Tech

**Student Orgs** AIA

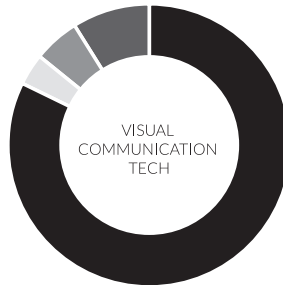
## TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE



- 72.5% White
- 7.5% African-American
- 5% LatinX
- 5% Other



- 68.4% White
- 8.9% African-American
- 11.4% LatinX
- 3.8% Other



- 79.9% White
- 8.4% African-American
- 5.2% LatinX
- 3.6% Other

## TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



- 77% White
- 9% African-American
- 4% LatinX
- 6% Other

\*All Data as of 2017

# University of Akron

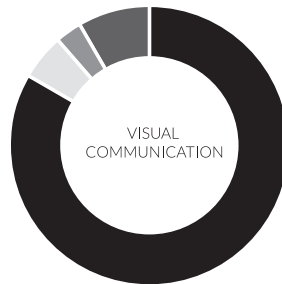
## ABOUT

Location	Akron, OH
Size	21,104
Degrees	BA, BFA

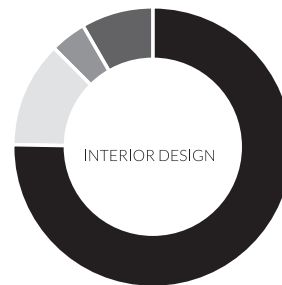
Design Programs	Visual Communication Interior
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Student Orgs	ASID
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TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE



TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



\*All Data as of 2017

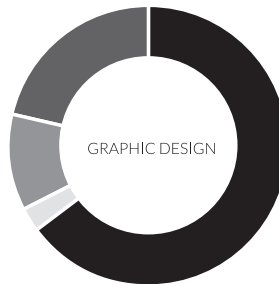
# Cleveland State University

## ABOUT

Location	Cleveland, OH
Size	17,730
Degrees	BA, MUPD
Design Programs	Graphic Urban Planning

Student Orgs	AIGA
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### TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE

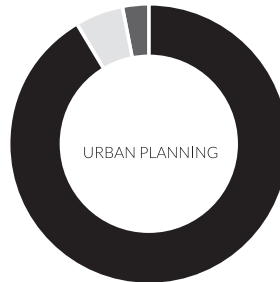


- 61.3% White
- 20% African-American
- 10.7% LatinX
- 2.7% Other

### TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



- 63% White
- 17% African-American
- 5% LatinX
- 8% Other



- 91.4% White
- 2.9% African-American
- 0% LatinX
- 5.7% Other

\*All Data as of 2017

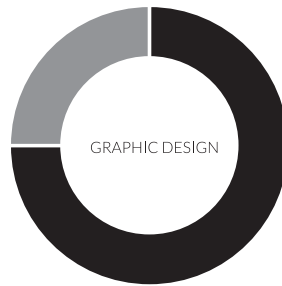
# University of Toledo

## ABOUT

Location	Toledo, OH
Size	20,400
Degrees	ATS, BS
Design Programs	Graphic

## Student Orgs

### TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE



- 75% White
- 0% African-American
- 25% LatinX
- 0% Other

### TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



- 68% White
- 11% African-American
- 5% LatinX
- 10% Other

\*All Data as of 2017



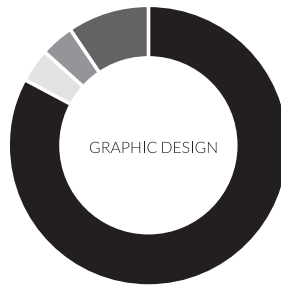
# Youngstown State University

## ABOUT

Location	Youngstown, OH
Size	12,800
Degrees	BA, BFA
Design Programs	Graphic

## Student Orgs

### TOTAL DIVERSITY IN DISCIPLINE



- 76.8% White
- 8.5% African-American
- 3.7% LatinX
- 3.7% Other

### TOTAL SCHOOLS' DIVERSITY



- 75% White
- 10% African-American
- 4% LatinX
- 6% Other

\*All Data as of 2017

## PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE

In addition to tracking demographic data from academic programs, the Design Diversity Index includes data on the racial representation of design professionals. Professional employment data aligns with the third passage in the Design Journey: *Workforce*. Once students of color graduate from academic design programs, many enter the professional world only to encounter additional barriers to overcome. Whether working for a large design firm or as an entrepreneur, challenges faced by people of color during the *Workforce* passage divert many away from continuing on the Design Journey. The fourth passage, *Influence*, involves promotion to senior leadership and mentorship roles within the design professions. Although the Design Diversity Index does not currently track data on the influence or seniority of people of color in the design professions, future versions of the tool may expand to this final passage. For now, the Design Diversity Index collects available demographic data on designers employed in Ohio.

### Diversity of Ohio's Population

The demographic data on design professionals in Ohio can be compared to the overall demographic data on Ohio's population to determine the level of ethnic representation in the state. According to the 2016 American Community Survey, Ohio's total population is 11.6 million people. The state's race and ethnic representation, in order from largest to smallest, is as follows:

- White - 79.4% (9,220,000)
- Black - 12.2% (1,420,000)
- Hispanic - 3.6% (420,081)
- Two or more - 2.4% (280,695)
- Asian - 2% (237,401)
- Other - 0.328% (38,307)

## Ohio's Professional Design Associations

In order to estimate the current number of African American and Latinx design professionals in Ohio, the Design Diversity Index utilized data from three different sources:

- Professional design associations
- U.S. Census - Bureau of Labor Statistics
- The Directory of African American Architects

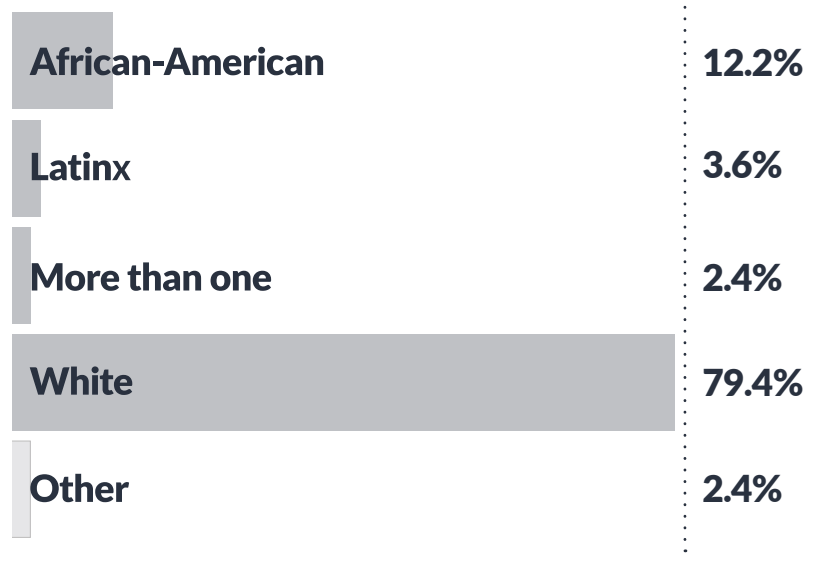
Professional design associations exist to build awareness of their particular discipline and advocate for the needs of their members. The professional design associations contacted through the project include:

- **AIA** - American Institute of Architects
- **AIGA** - The Professional Association for Design
- **APA** - American Planning Association
- **ASLA** - American Society for Landscape Architects
- **IDSIA** - Industrial Designers Society of America
- **IIDA** - The Commercial Interior Design Association

Each of these professional associations represent at least one of the six design disciplines included in the Design Diversity Index. Additional professional associations may be added to the list of data sources in the future. The Design Diversity project team welcomes recommendations for creating a more inclusive data set of design associations and their members.

Most of the professional associations contacted during the project have initiatives to increase the diversity of their membership. The definition of the term "diversity" varies across the list of associations, from diversity of thought to diversity of specific ethnicities.

## Ethnicity of Population in Ohio



\*All Data as of 2017

Some diversity initiatives are led from the association's national level, while others are generated by state or local city chapters. For example, the American Institute of Architects is the professional association for individuals in the field of architecture and carries out multiple diversity initiatives at national and local levels. In 2017, AIA adopted the following diversity statement for its national membership:

“The American Institute of Architects, as part of the global community, champions a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the profession of architecture to create a better environment for all. Achieving this vision has a direct impact on the relevance of our profession and the world's prosperity, health, and future.”

The statement's approval was preceded by a study and report focused on perceptions of diversity among AIA members. According to the “Diversity in the Profession of Architecture” report, approximately 70% of AIA members believe that people of color are either somewhat underrepresented or very underrepresented in the profession.

The American Planning Association adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Vision, Mission and Strategy in April of 2018. It includes strategies for expanding the representation of diverse and inclusive perspectives within the planning profession, and for recruiting and retaining underrepresented people in the profession. But does not specify tracking measures or tools. Based on information gathered from association websites, reports, and personal communications, all of the listed associations recognize African American and Latinx individuals are underrepresented in their respective professions.

**U.S. Census - Bureau of Labor Statistics**

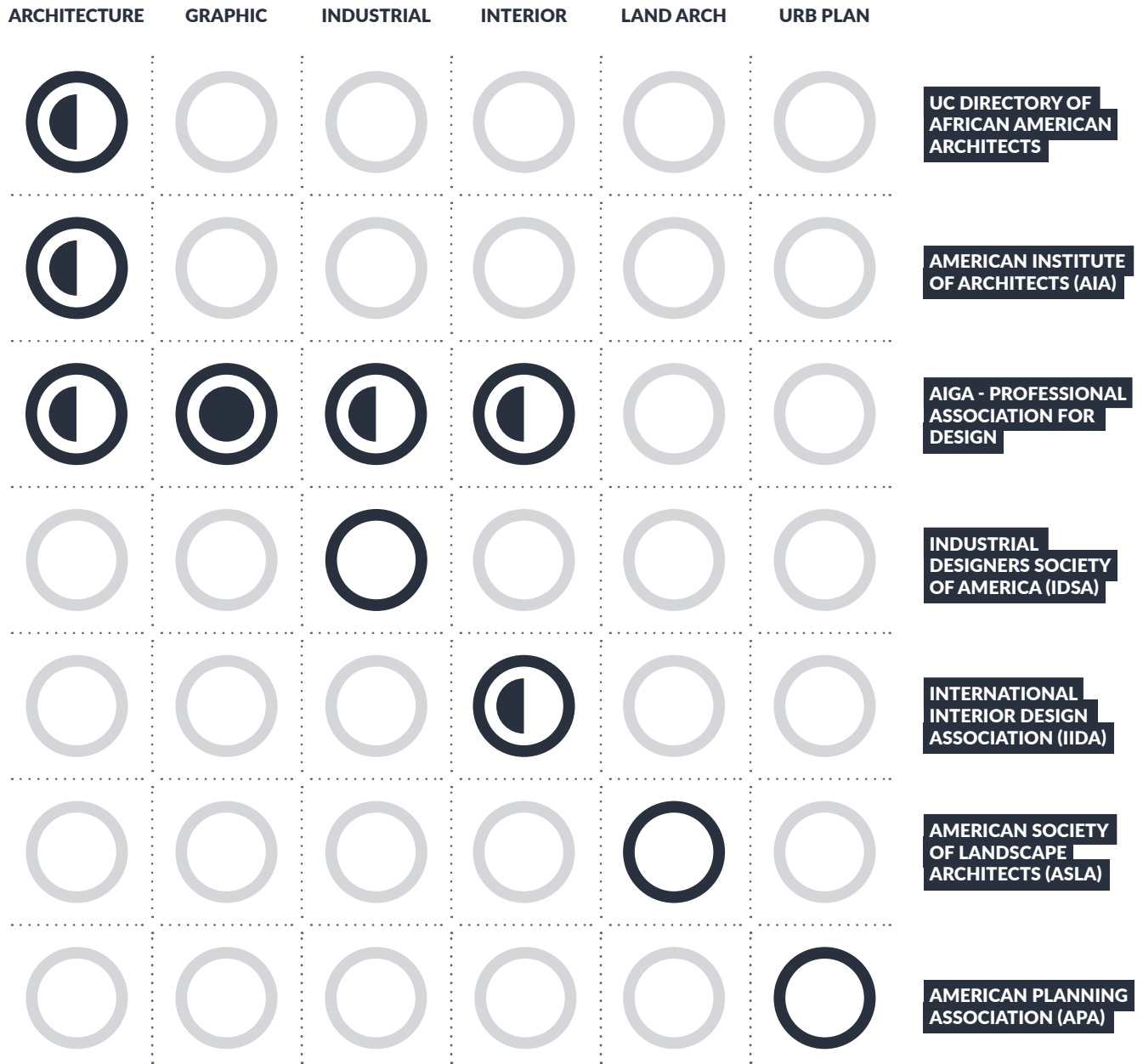
In addition to gathering available data from professional design associations, the Design Diversity Index also collected data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Many professional associations currently do not collect demographic data at the state level. In addition, membership in professional associations may not accurately reflect the diversity of the profession as a whole. Based on anecdotal evidence collected by the project team, African American and Latinx individuals may feel uncomfortable joining professional organizations with low representation of their ethnic community. Hypothetically, even if more data was available from professional associations, the data might underrepresent the actual number of people of color in the design professions. Therefore, in order to gain a more well-rounded assessment of diversity in Ohio's design professions, multiple sources of data must be collected and compared.

The Design Diversity Index used the most recent data set available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, which includes Occupation, State, and Ethnicity categories. The data was collected through the 2016 American Community Survey. Although the data set includes many occupations, it only identifies three occupational categories relevant to the Design Diversity Index. The three design occupations included in the 2016 ACS data are: Architects (OCCP code: 1300), Urban and Regional Planners (OCCP code: 1840), and Designers (OCCP code: 2630).

Architects and Urban/Regional Planners match up with two of the six design disciplines defined by the Design Diversity Index. But the “Designers” category is broader than any one professional discipline. Respondents to the ACS who categorized themselves as “designers”

# Professional Associations Data

This is a graph of the professional associations engaged, against the design disciplines examined, and level of data available from each.



Discipline Not Applicable to School

Discipline Available Data Available

Discipline Available Partial Data Available

Discipline Available No Data Available

might also identify with a more specific professional category unavailable in the data, such as graphic designer, industrial designer, interior designer or landscape architect. For this reason, the current ACS data is limited to providing an overview of architects and urban planners, but only an aggregate sense of ethnic diversity in the other four design professions.

### **Architects**

As of 2016, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics includes a total of 5,908 individuals identified as architects in Ohio. Of this total, the majority 84.29% identify as White (4,980). The second highest ethnicity is Hispanic at 4.87% (288), followed by Asian at 4.62%. After Asian, the fourth highest ethnic category is Other at 3.59% (212), which likely includes Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and individuals who chose not to provide an ethnicity. The fifth highest category includes individuals with two or more ethnicities at 1.34% (79). The ethnicity defined by the American Community Survey with the lowest percentage of architects is African American with 1.29% (76).

### **Urban Planners**

The data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics uses the term “Urban and Regional Planning” for the occupation labeled simply as “Urban Planning” in the Design Diversity Index. The Bureau of Labor Statistics data was collected through the 2016 American Community Survey. Remarkably, the data for Urban and Regional Planners indicates no representation from ethnicities other than White in Ohio. The total number of individuals categorized in this occupation is 311. Of this total, 100% are identified as White (311). The data shows no individuals in Urban and Regional Planning with African American, Hispanic, Other or Two or More ethnicities.

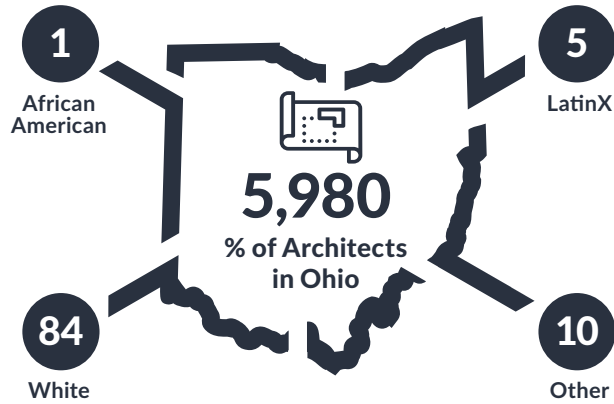
Based on the project team’s personal knowledge, at least a few urban planners in Ohio are African American. The complete lack of African Americans in the state labor data may be due to the relatively small number of respondents to the 2016 American Community Survey—not all planners in Ohio respond to the survey. The actual percentage of African American urban planners might be in the low single digits, landing within the data’s margin of error.

In addition to drawing data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, future versions of the Design Diversity Index may include demographic data provided by the American Planning Association (APA). The national and state chapters of APA do not currently collect data on both the location and ethnicity of its members. But APA leadership has expressed interest in collecting this data. In the next year or two, APA may send surveys to its members with African American and Latinx demographic questions. This new dataset would provide a useful complement to state labor statistics in order to more accurately estimate the diversity of Ohio’s urban planning professionals.

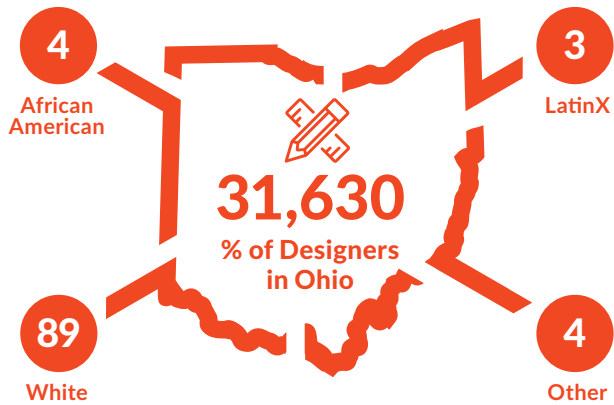
### **Designers**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics data from the 2016 American Community Survey includes the occupation “Designers,” alongside “Architects” and “Urban and Regional Planning.” These three categories are the only occupations relevant to the six design disciplines identified by the Design Diversity Index. The term “Designers” is too general to assign to any one discipline used by the Design Diversity Index. It may include designers from multiple disciplines, including Industrial Designers, Graphic Designers, Interior Designer, and Landscape Architects. But the

## Architects in Ohio



## Designers in Ohio



## Urban Planners in Ohio



demographic data for general Designers serves as a useful point of comparison to Architects and Urban Planners.

According to the 2016 ACS data, a total of 31,630 Ohioans identified themselves as Designers. The data shows the vast majority of Designers are White: 89.29% (28,242). The second highest ethnic group is African American with 3.77% (1,191). The third largest ethnicity is Asian with 3.06% (968), followed by Hispanic with 2.78% (880). The fifth largest category includes individuals with two or more ethnicities. Lastly, the lowest number of individuals, 0.37% (117), identified as Other.

### **The Directory of African American Architects**

Maintained by the University of Cincinnati, the Directory of African American Architects is a one-of-a-kind resource, providing publicly accessible data online at:

[www.blackarch.uc.edu](http://www.blackarch.uc.edu). The database includes gender, geographic location, and faculty status of African American Architects and Landscape Architects across the United States. Searchable by alphabetical listing or by state, the resource enables users to quickly obtain a subset of data relevant to the Design Diversity Index.

According to the Directory of African American Architects, 63 African Americans are licensed to practice architecture in Ohio. The Ohio city of residence for each of these individuals is listed in the database. Importantly, the information used by the Directory is self-reported, not drawn directly from an official licensure organizations. So, the Directory must rely on an individual's awareness of the database and self-motivated action to submit accurate data. The official organization responsible for architecture accreditation is the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Known as

NCARB, the organization does not keep records on the racial/ethnic background of registered architects, but it does track the total number of architects in each state.

Based on NCARB's 2016 survey, 2,673 Architects reside in Ohio and an additional 3,762 Architects hold reciprocal registration in the state. Reciprocal registration means an architect is registered in the state, but may reside and hold registration in a different state. Therefore, the total number of Architects registered to practice in Ohio is the sum of these two numbers: 6,435. The Design Diversity Index only utilizes the number of Architects residing in Ohio as the figure for relevant comparison.

If the total number of Architects residing in Ohio is 2,673 and 63 of them are African American, then only 2.36% of the Architects in Ohio are African American. By comparison, the percentage of African Americans in Ohio's population is 12.2%. This means African Americans are underrepresented in Ohio's Architects by nearly 10%. In other words, the current number of African American Architects in Ohio could double, then double again, and still not reach the percentage of African Americans in Ohio's population.

### **SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

The data shown in the previous sections on Academic Programs and Professional Workforce reveal several interesting findings. Additional research will be required to better understand the causes and context for these data points. But awareness of these statistics may inspire:

- The percentage of African American students in KSU's architecture program is significantly lower than the percentage



of African American students in the university's total population. But both KSU's undergraduate and graduate architecture programs achieve relatively equitable percentages of Latinx students.

- The percentage of African American students in BGSU's architecture program is only 2.1% lower than the percentage of African American students in the overall university population. This relatively close relationship between design program and university-wide population may offer insights for increasing African American student enrollment at other architecture programs in the state.
- Latinx students are well-represented in undergraduate graphic design programs, but not represented at all in the graduate graphic design program. Advancement to graduate education could be an effective first action to increase Latinx representation in senior positions and faculty in graphic design.
- The significant difference between the percentages of Latinx students in BGSU's two graphic design programs may provide meaningful reasons for Latinx presence in other academic programs.
- Unique among other programs, CSU's percentage of African Americans in the graphic design program (20%) is higher than the percentage of African American students in the total university population (17%).
- The low percentage of African American students in the interior design programs at both UA and KSU provokes questions about the lack of representation in the field, overall.
- The single landscape architecture program in Northern Ohio is only four years old, providing an opportunity to incorporate successful strategies from the start to attract people of color.
- Although CSU has the highest percentage of African American students among the other public universities in Northern Ohio, the percentage of African American students in CSU's Urban Planning program is one of the lowest across all the design disciplines in the study. Lessons from CSU's graphic design program or other academic institutions may offer ideas for increasing African American representation over time.
- Based on limited data available from the American Community Survey, the urban planning profession retains the lowest representation from people of color among the design disciplines. No African Americans or Latinx urban planners were shown in the data. Surveys from the American Planning Association may provide more accurate and detailed information to track demographic changes in the future.
- African Americans are the second largest ethnic group in Ohio (12.2%), but have the lowest representation in architecture among the five ethnic groups (African American, Hispanic, Asian, White, and Other). According to the American Community Survey, only 1.29% (76 people) of Ohio's architects are African American.
- The percentage of African Americans categorized as "designers" in Ohio's labor data is significantly higher than architects or urban planners. Individuals in this broad occupational category could be engaged to consider careers in design disciplines with lower demographic representation.
- Available in late 2018, new American Community Survey data will include missing information on Ohio's design professions





## 5.0 NEXT STEPS

*Parents, researchers, professionals, and students are encouraged to pursue answers to the many questions raised.*

### 5.1 FUTURE OF DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX

In order to evaluate the success of the Design Diversity Index pilot, the project team established short- and long-term objectives. In the short-term, the project aims to identify the currently available demographic data for academic and professional design disciplines. Missing data sets were noted and potential paths to collect this data were proposed. Although limited, the available data was used to develop a novel framework for comparing data across design disciplines. As a next step, the project team encourages individuals to read the report and review the online website, then share comments.

The online website is accessible at:  
[www.designdiversity.org/index](http://www.designdiversity.org/index)

Comments and questions may be emailed to:  
[cudc@kent.edu](mailto:cudc@kent.edu)

The project established current baseline conditions and plans to track future progress toward expanding racial diversity in Ohio's

design professions. In the long-term, the project can be judged by the level of accurate and reliable data published, as well as the volume of users accessing Design Diversity Index. For the project to expand to more universities and continue in the future, additional funding sources will be pursued. The data presented in Design Diversity Index may inspire other researchers or students to follow their own research questions.

### Future Research Questions

The primary objective of the the Design Diversity Index is to provide a tool for the public to discover and track demographic changes in the local design community. Starting with Northern Ohio's public universities, the first version of the tool presents data on African Americans and Latinx students in six design disciplines. Compiling the data is the first step in understanding the root causes for the common lack of equitable representation. The current study did not focus on identifying these root causes, but some initial questions did emerge from the

process. Parents, teachers, researchers, design professionals, and students are encouraged to review the data and pursue answers to the many questions raised:

- Do universities which have diversity organization student chapters show higher representation of people of color?
- Do universities with a disciplinary pipeline from undergraduate to graduate program result in higher numbers of people of color?
- What is the relationship between the presence of international students and students from African American or Latinx backgrounds?
- Which design programs have a representative number of fellow students from my ethnic background?
- What factors impact whether my child will successfully complete a course of study in a particular design program?
- What are the main factors that explain why graphic design has a significantly higher percentage of people of color compared to other design disciplines?
- Why are the percentages African Americans and Latinx students in interior design programs significantly lower than related design fields?
- To what degree is affordability of a university correlated to its diversity representation?
- Why is school diversity not always correlated to design program diversity?
- What role does a city's population diversity play in influencing the diversity of the local university?
- To what degree are high school students aware of the various design programs available at universities?
- What lessons can be transferred from one design discipline to another to increase African American and Latinx representation?

## 5.2 ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE NOW

The Design Diversity Index will be updated periodically to reveal new insights and trends. Over time, the tool will grow in its ability to measure the success of diversity efforts. But seeing the data in the Design Diversity Index may inspire some to take action now. Here are 10 actions individuals can start today to positively impact the design professions:

1. Join a professional design association.
2. If you're already a member of a professional association, consider participating in an existing initiative to increase the association's diversity. If an initiative doesn't already exist, start one.
3. Collect demographic data on membership in your design association and share it publicly. Take the survey, if you get one.
4. Carefully consider the ethnic composition of individuals you invite to give lectures, attend studio reviews, or otherwise participate in your design program.
5. Investigate what is the demographic composition of your state or local community. Does your design program or office reflect this level of diversity?
6. Join or offer support for organizations which support people of color in the design professions, such as the National Association of Minority Architects (NOMA).
7. Celebrate the notable achievements of underrepresented designers through monographs, exhibitions, and public talks.
8. Share the Design Journey framework with friends and colleagues.
9. Talk to professors, students, and professionals from other design disciplines to learn what diversity strategies are considered most effective in their field.
10. Consider starting a version of the Design Diversity Index in your home state.

### 5.3 DESIGN DIVERSITY INDEX TEMPLATE

The following template illustrates the actions other communities can take to create their own local version of the Design Diversity Index.

