



nbbj

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Snapshot 2022

NOTE:

This report was created for and issued to all NBBJ employees. As part of our effort to be transparent in our JEDI practices, we have made this available on our website.

We are a stronger firm when our diverse voices come together to speak up. That same spirit guides the creation of this annual snapshot. It's an opportunity to learn from each other's perspectives, both about the past and the future. It begins with this, insights about our JEDI program directly from employees across the firm.

We asked:

“

What's an example of progress or growth you've seen in the last year?

The opportunity to use JEDI Bank hours to volunteer during the work day has really helped. Most people don't have extra time on nights or weekends, so this opportunity really opened doors.

I've loved seeing our studio step up over the last year. Many of us volunteered our time to support the HBCU career fair and workshop. A connection even lead to a recent hire!

The continuation of Kwame's conversations has been great for the firm.

It's great to see our office using JEDI Bank hours to volunteer together as a group.

Our JEDI principles are actioned in multiple ways: recruiting efforts include HBCUs, and new staff seems much more diverse than in the past. In addition, learnings from Kwame are being used to help with difficult conversations, and many project teams are making more concerted efforts to ensure the overall team includes minority firms.

Our studio's hiring committee has representation across the board and in interviews across the table. We also revised our job posting description and passed the information to others to improve all postings for the firm.

I'd like to see us strengthen firm-wide participation in HBCU events.

“

What's an example of something you'd like to see improve or invested more in?

The opportunity to participate in student mentoring is been extremely rewarding. I would love to see NBBJ make an even bigger investment in this in the future.

Looking forward, increasing our pro bono projects would be a great way to bring together our JEDI principles and our firm vision and purpose together.

Representation at the leadership level could be improved, and publishing annual leadership rosters to see how they compare each year.

There is always room for improvement, but we are on the right track. One specific area I'd love to see improve is diversity in firm leadership roles. The decision-makers must represent, and be inclusive of, the firm's diversity.

I'd love to see more action performed by the firm as a whole. Gathering metrics that can be measured against each year. Providing annual summaries of each office or studio and their achievements for the year.

It would be nice to see more detailed firm demographic data to get a more accurate depiction—separating out gender and diversity roles for architects, interior designers, and by title, etc.

JEDI Annual Snapshot

Dear NBBJ,

Since the launch of our first JEDI Action Plan, we've been gaining momentum on this important endeavor across the firm. From the Courageous Conversations series with Kwame Christian and launch of our JEDI Ambassador Program, to the utilization of JEDI Bank hours—we are beginning to take important steps towards our goal of being a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive firm.

As with many ambitious undertakings, the impact is often only as powerful as the force of the people behind it—and so we want to say thank you to everyone who has participated and contributed throughout the program's first year. Looking forward, we also want to encourage everyone to join in on the action. There are many opportunities to get involved in JEDI work at NBBJ—whether by taking advantage of JEDI Bank hours, lending your knowledge or talents to an existing partner program like [Hip Hop Architecture Camp](#), or by reaching out to the JEDI Advisory Group with a new idea we haven't even explored yet!

In the past year, we also recognized the need for change to be backed by additional investment and action. And while we have much progress to celebrate, there is always more to be done. Highlighting two goals for the year ahead: we will strive to integrate Design Justice Principles with our design process in order to scale our JEDI impact through our projects and create an NBBJ Internship Scholarship Fund focused on promoting equity and diversity in our internship program. You can learn more about these two initiatives, and the status of all JEDI Program efforts, in the pages that follow.

Making a commitment to pursue lasting change for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in our firm, our work and our communities is an active and ongoing journey. A journey ultimately fueled by your continued passion and participation.

Sincerely,



Greg Swinton, LEED GA
Diversity and Inclusion Leader



Steve McConnell, FAIA, LEED AP
Managing Partner

A Values-Led Vision

Our commitments stem from our values. This ensures we stay focused, on mission and that we are authentic in who we are. This also explains why our commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) is a fundamental principle of life at our firm.

We believe diversity drives better outcomes, stronger projects and healthier communities.

Tracking Our Progress

We know that meaningful change takes time, active evaluation and humility. Therefore, each year we will reflect back and share on the progress we’ve made, commitments we’ve yet to action, and areas where we need to re-think how best to move forward.

Section 1

Our People

Education and Training

Equity and Representation

Section 2

Our Work

Inclusive Design Practice

JEDI-Focused Projects

Consultant Collaboration

Enhanced Communication

Section 3

Our Community

Community Outreach

Philanthropy and
Pro Bono Work

Section 1

Our People



When we think about the world we want our children to inherit, we know that change begins with us. That is especially true in an industry like ours—a creative force for good, but one that often lacks the diversity of the communities in which we work. That’s why we’re committed to create belonging in our own workplace by providing opportunities to develop and increase representation at all levels and roles within our firm.

Our People

Education and Training

To be an effective advocate for JEDI in the workplace, we are dedicated to educating our people through new avenues and opportunities, like the JEDI Ambassador Program, as well as enhancing existing training programs.

2022 Progress

Ambassadors for Change

The JEDI Ambassador Program, launched in 2021, plays a crucial role in advancing the firm’s JEDI goals, as well as communicating about them to the firm.

The JEDI Advisory Group is made up of four individuals who oversee the day-to-day leadership of the ambassador program.

Ambassadors, currently 19 members strong, are embedded in nine office locations, serving as local points of contact for JEDI activities, programs, partnerships and questions. The ambassadors meet monthly to discuss ideas and learning opportunities, upcoming events, program support work, feedback or questions coming from their studios, and coordinated communications to the rest of the firm about JEDI progress.

Lead by Example

To educate and equip our people with the best knowledge and resources available, we offered an updated and enhanced version of our “Building a Respectful Workplace Culture” training course. This training sets the tone for JEDI expectations within NBBJ and respectful professional standards that all should exemplify within the workplace.



Where We’re Going Next

Listen and Learn

The “Courageous Conversations Series” started as an effort to create safe spaces for our people to come together to listen, learn and ask questions surrounding pressing JEDI issues. Hosted by Kwame Christian, Managing Director of the American Negotiation Institute, the conversations were the most attended firmwide events of the year. Topics included “How to Have Difficult Conversations about Race and Justice” and “Understanding Cultural Intelligence.”

Leading Change

In 2022, we invited Kwame Christian to participate as a faculty member for our Leading Change program. Leading Change is NBBJ’s unique leadership development program, designed specifically for leaders in a creative organization. Its purpose is to identify, develop and improve leadership and coaching capacity at all levels within our firm. Kwame provided his expertise and guidance around how refined leadership skills can produce better negotiations and more inclusive persuasion.



Kwame Christian
Founder and CEO,
The American Negotiation
Institute

Equipping Our Leaders

Continuing our partnership with Kwame Christian and his team, we offered an “Inclusive Leadership” series to all NBBJ leaders in 2022, and will look at keeping this for future years as well. This series explores how to best lead by example, connect with and motivate diverse teams, and how to communicate effectively about JEDI issues.

Our People

Equity and Representation

As part of our goal to increase representation across our employee base, including leadership, we report trends related to our firm’s population demographics.

2022 Progress

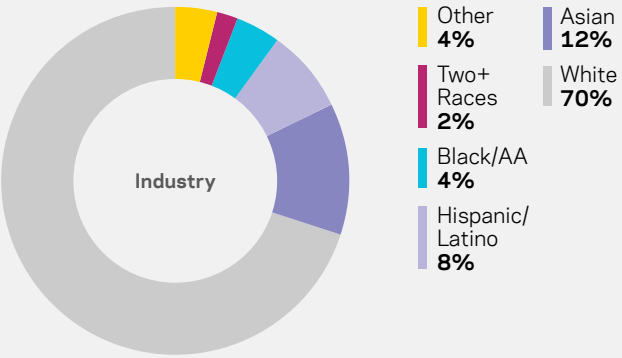
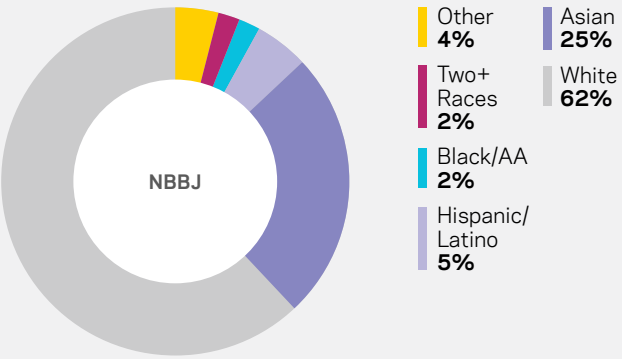
We aim to surpass the diversity targets and averages set by our industry and will document our progress annually. At the same time, we are still listening, researching and seeking to understand what specific targets make the most sense for NBBJ to strive for in these categories.

The intent of sharing these data points is to be transparent in our reporting, and to begin showing our diversity trends each year.

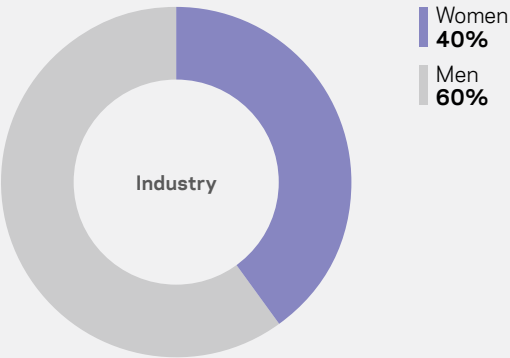
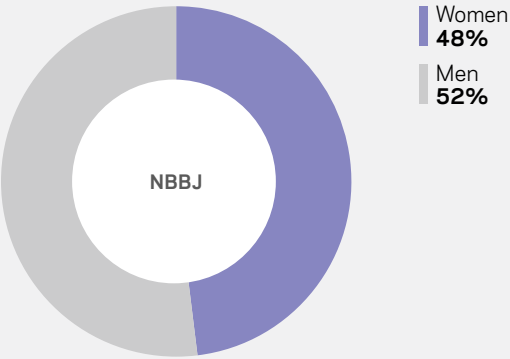
We also know that real change in these areas takes time, which is why we are prioritizing efforts that make the most meaningful impacts to our candidate pipeline from the ground up, like Hip Hop Architecture Camp and NOMA’s Project Pipeline.

Race and Gender: Our Industry* Compared to NBBJ

Race

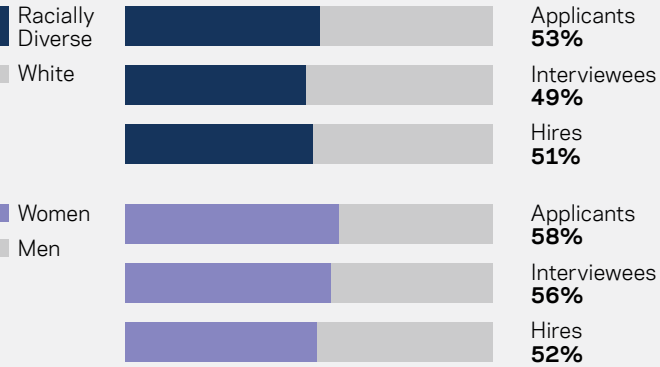


Gender

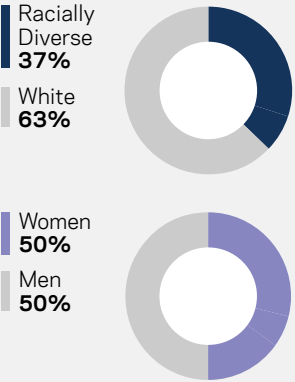


NBBJ Recruiting and Leadership Metrics

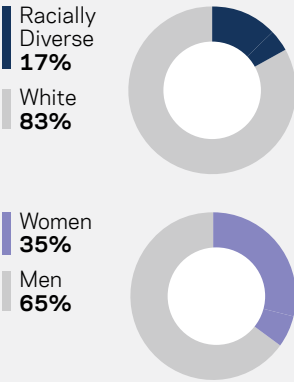
Recruitment



Promotions



Leadership Positions



*Industry data is based on average calculations and analysis of three third-party design industry sources.

Our People

Equity and Representation

Where We’re Going Next

Transparency of Employee Data

One of our goals is to bring greater transparency to employee data through a live dashboard system, accessible to all. While implementing this system is taking longer than we hoped, we released snapshots of data via the one-page JEDI Dashboard linked below, and plan to officially roll out a quarterly dashboard in the coming year.

HBCU Partnerships for Recruiting

We are establishing formal relationships with HBCUs to ensure we promote our open positions to, and employ interns from, a diverse set of candidates. This remains a goal. We are actively participating in mentorship workshops and career fairs focused on professional development with the eight HBCUs through NOMA sponsored events.

Removing Barriers With Internship Scholarships

We are committed to establishing an NBBJ Intern Scholarship Program, backed by the NBBJ Philanthropy program, to support intern living expenses for our internship program. This will help make the NBBJ internship a possibility for students who may otherwise not be able to accept the position.

Career Advocacy

We continue to champion and invest in the diversity of our leaders across the firm. As such, we will continue to enhance our career development, mentorship, advocacy and promotion programs to ensure we are creating clear pathways to growth and leadership for our diverse staff.

Everyone Can Be a Voice of Change

A conversation with JEDI Ambassador Tami Chen in Portland about her experience and hopes for the future.

What made you want to become an ambassador?

I want to be an advocate for change, and I’ve always felt our industry has room for improvement when it comes to issues of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. So when NBBJ created an official opportunity to join the foundation of this important work, I jumped on it.

What’s been a highlight of your ambassador work so far?

I’m really proud of our studio. They have been continually engaged and supportive of the JEDI program. It’s been really great to see the high participation across the board.

What’s some of the work you’ve been a part of in your studio as an ambassador?

Our studio took the original JEDI action plan and honed in on certain goals. These areas of focus include recruitment, youth pipeline and outreach, project team diversity, and equity and justice in our design. Some examples of our work from the last two years include design crit discussions, participation in the NOMA HBCU workshop and career fair, increased representation in interviews and revised job descriptions. The JEDI ambassadors in our studio also have monthly check-ins with our core team, which helps keep ourselves on track in meeting our goals.

What do you hope to accomplish in the future?

I would love to see more participation from people across the firm. There is so much willingness to support the firm’s JEDI goals and efforts, but sometimes people just don’t know where to start. Mostly, the JEDI program should connect with people in a way where everyone, ambassador or not, starts to think “how can I show up as an ally for others?”

What would you say to someone considering applying to be a JEDI ambassador?

As they say, “many hands make light work.” We are always looking for more people out there who are willing to jump in and take part. The more ambassadors, the better!

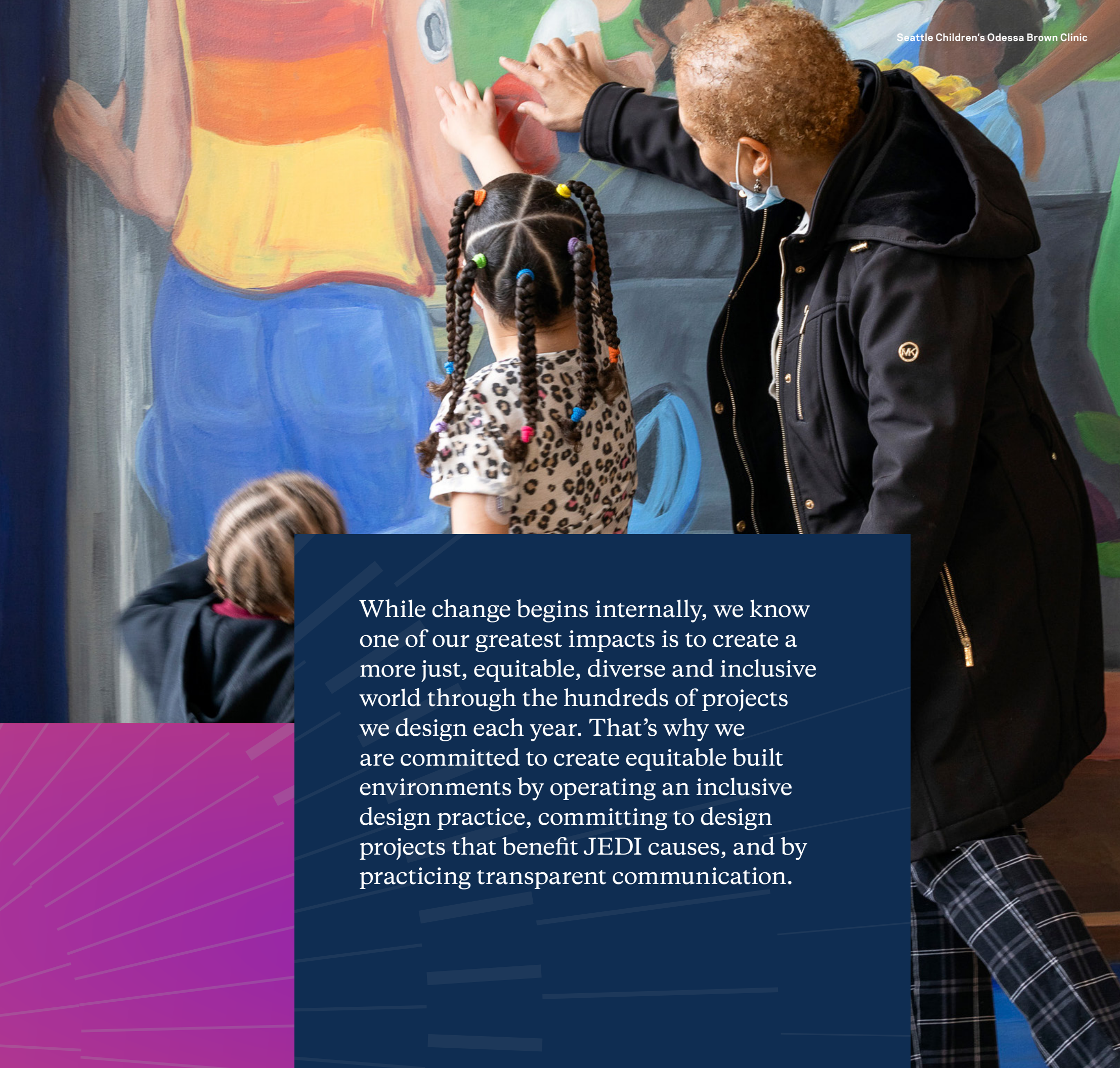


“

Many hands make light work.

Section 2

Our Work



While change begins internally, we know one of our greatest impacts is to create a more just, equitable, diverse and inclusive world through the hundreds of projects we design each year. That's why we are committed to create equitable built environments by operating an inclusive design practice, committing to design projects that benefit JEDI causes, and by practicing transparent communication.

Our Work

Inclusive Design Practice

One of our JEDI commitments is to implement formal design justice principles into NBBJ’s design process. Eloquently captured by guest speaker Bryan Lee, Jr. from the non-profit, Colloquite: “*Design justice forwards the radical vision of racial, social and cultural reparation through the process and outcomes of design.*” This is what we are committed to pursuing, beginning with the research phase in 2022.

2022 Progress

In the past year, the Design Performance Leadership Team (DPLT) hosted a Design Justice Workshop. This workshop prompted questions and invited a new perspective about what design justice should look like for NBBJ designers.

The DPLT also hosted two firmwide conversations with outside experts:

(1) A dialogue around the future of design to dive deeper into the context of the intersecting imperatives of sustainability and design justice with Dr. Hazel Edwards, Professor and Chair of the Department of Architecture of the College of Engineering and Architecture of Howard University.

(2) A design justice dialogue panel discussion to better understand the potential impacts and implementation process of design justice principles with Melissa Dittmer, SVP of the Office of Urban Strategy & Innovation at Bedrock.



Dr. Hazel Edwards
Professor and Chair, the Department of Architecture of the College of Engineering and Architecture, Howard University



Melissa Dittmer
SVP of the Office of Urban Strategy and Innovation, Bedrock

Where We’re Going Next

We will formally establish design justice principles, update our Process Design methods, craft guidance for project teams to discuss with clients to ensure alignment, and plan additional design justice-themed workshops, like our intern-led design justice workshop, of which we’ve included snapshots of key insights below:

“Design Justice is fluid, not static. We must design and think about spaces as fluid, and work in tandem with societal changes.”

“Design Justice is design that does not create comfort for one at the expense of another. Design that actively and equitably brings all a better world.”

“Design Justice means actively avoiding designs that reproduce inequalities.”

Our Work Values in Action

The projects below are examples where we are implementing our design justice mindset, and working diligently to reflect the needs of diverse communities. Now the challenge is to scale this approach across all our practices



Odessa Brown Children's Clinic

The Odessa Brown Clinic was founded in 1970 to counter inequities in healthcare provided to the African Americans living in Seattle's Central District. Supported by Seattle Children's Hospital, the clinic evolved to not only provide quality care with dignity, but also combat systemic racism and advocate for policies and programs that are cornerstone to a thriving community. Recently, NBBJ designed and opened a new clinic in the Othello neighborhood.

The project is designed to embrace integrated care, represent the community that it supports and create a village of transparency where kids see every part of the work. We quickly learned that a conventional

design process would not lead to outcomes the community needed most. Instead, we challenged our own way of thinking and, with the community, co-created a clinic that directly supports their aspirations and well-being. In creating this new space, the design team was also exposed to biases in the design process and industry, and worked to combat inequities in our field. The clinic is part of a community-driven, equitable development that seeks to enable residents to thrive and remain in the community.

The Tubman Center for Health and Freedom

The Tubman Center is a community organization committed to the principles of healing and people's liberation from systems that make them unwell. It works to advance health justice, culturally appropriate care and integrative medicine. NBBJ partnered with the center to conduct a deep dive workshop to create an inclusive and actionable design strategy aimed to better meet the health and wellness needs of the local community. Once open, the center will offer integrative family medicine and ongoing community programs.

“We initially got the chance to meet the people of the Tubman Center through a connection from another project: the Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic. This opened the door for us to conduct a comprehensive pro-bono, hands-on workshop at our office with their leadership. Our team was able to learn, lean in, ask hard questions, and run through exercises to help them clarify their needs and process. This was a meaningful exercise in building trust, and further helped the client solidify their vision.”



—**Jessica Radecki**
NBBJ Project Team
Member



Our Work

Consultant Collaboration

We are committed to increasing collaborations with women and minority owned businesses (W/MBE), vendors and consultants as a way to raise the inclusive bar of our standard way of working.

2022 Progress

While we continue to put processes in place to help us discover, track, and sustain strong partnerships with new W/MBE firms, here are just a few of the great organizations we’ve had the pleasure of working with in the last year.

Michael Marshall Design

In an effort to move our strategy forward—and begin building strong local relationships for our DC practice—we partnered up with MBE (black-owned) firm Michael Marshall Design to help with the design of Amazon’s HQ2. In addition to receiving several NOMA Design Excellence awards, Michael Marshall was also awarded the “WBJ Minority Business Leader Award” by the Washington Business Journal.

DREAM Collaborative

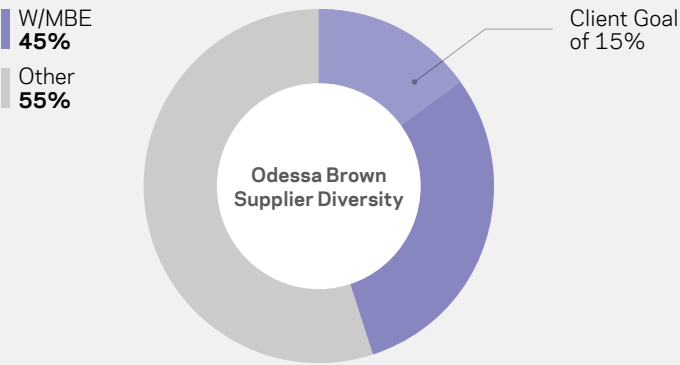
In Boston, we are working with DREAM Collaborative on the Volpe project. They’re Boston’s leading MBE (black-owned) architecture firm and play a key role in the design of the building. DREAM aims to “sensitively respond to community priorities, championing environmental stewardship and innovation and creating places to build wealth opportunities for under-represented groups within the built environment.”

Audrey O’Hagen Architects

We partnered successfully with a WBE (female-owned) firm, Audrey O’Hagen Architects, on our Massachusetts General Hospital Cambridge Street Project. Audrey O’Hagen Architects was involved in the design of the project’s public spaces, currently under construction. Audrey O’Hagen Architects is “dedicated to quality service and exceptional design. At the core of the firm is a passion for excellence, quality and integrity.”

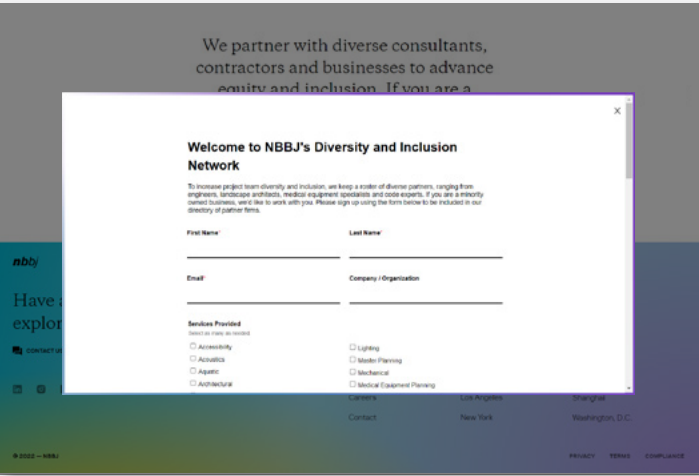
Odessa Brown Clinic Partnerships

On our Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic project in Seattle, 45% of construction suppliers were W/MBE, a significant increase from the client’s initial goal of 15%.



Where We’re Going Next

While we have already launched a tool on NBBJ.com to solicit partnerships with W/MBE firms, we will further expand our efforts in 2023 by formally tracking and reporting the integration of these firms on project work across the firm.



W/MBE Partner Links

- [Michael Marshall Design](#)
- [DREAM Collaborative](#)
- [Audrey O’Hagan Architects](#)

Our Work

Enhanced Communication

We aim to communicate more robustly and intentionally to raise awareness of the productive impact of design justice. In 2022, we highlighted meaningful stories about our commitment in well-known publications, marketing collateral, social media and on our firm intranet, called Connect.

Raising Awareness

Using our platform as a large, global architecture firm can spur the industry to greater action. Which is why we developed marketing collateral to more easily communicate our commitments.

In addition, our Communications Team implemented an ongoing editorial calendar (internal and external) covering key JEDI topics, holidays, and thought leadership to ensure we are recognizing and telling stories about the efforts we value most.

For example, *Modern Healthcare* featured NBBJ in a story about designing with DEI in mind; *Fast Company* wrote a piece about designing for vision-impaired patients; and *Dezeen* highlighted NBBJ’s JEDI program in a roundup of top global architecture firms’ diversity updates. The article featured a summary of our JEDI ambassador program, our collaboration with Kwame Christian, as well as our partnership with Hip Hop Architecture Camp and NOMA. It also mentions our work on equity-focused projects such as the Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic. Internally, you can find most articles and stories by searching #JEDI on Connect.

Communication Links

▶

[Modern Healthcare article](#)

▶

[FastCompany article](#)

▶

[Dezeen article](#)

Modern Healthcare article on designing with DEI in mind

LinkedIn and Instagram messaging for Black History Month

Fast Company article on designing for the visually impaired

LinkedIn and Instagram messaging for International Women's Day

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How an Inclusive Design Process Drives More Beneficial Outcomes

An interview with Kristen Svorka in New York about the pro bono design of Nickerson Gardens, a South-Central Los Angeles neighborhood Community Center.

What is the Nickerson Gardens Project and what do they hope to accomplish?

Nickerson Gardens is a low income housing development in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, CA. Central to this development is a community center, which includes an outdoor space comprised of children’s playground equipment, an adult exercise area, a basketball court and areas with picnic tables and other casual seating.

The existing playground is in a state of disrepair and is utilized mostly for activities that the community would like to discourage. Our work on this project is to renovate and improve this outdoor area in order to make it more appealing to the community, and to encourage a sense of pride and ownership. Key goals of the design are to: create spaces that can be used by a wide range of ages—including equipment appropriate for children as well as adults, integrating lighting so that the playground can be used into the evening and creating areas of shade to keep the playground cool, especially in the summer months.

How was the community involved in the process?

During our concept design phase, we had many meetings with the Watts Community Group, which oversees the adjacent community center, and the Housing Authority of Los Angeles, who owns

the property. We made sure to gather input from these groups prior to starting design work, and had regular check-ins to solicit feedback along the way. Our design work was also pinned up at the community center and people were encouraged to submit feedback anonymously, so we could get as much input as possible from those that would be using this playground.

What has it been like working with the people in the community?

The Watts Community is so grateful to have this playground redesigned, and are incredibly enthusiastic about the improvements to the quality of life and pride in the community that it will provide. Their design feedback is always thoughtful, practical and well-considered, reflecting their wonderful understanding of people’s needs.

What’s been rewarding about this work so far?

Speaking to the community members, some of whom have spent their entire lives living and working in this neighborhood, has been incredibly rewarding. Many of them were almost in tears when they had the chance to see the proposed redesign of the playground. In addition, they are committed to dedicating time and resources after the playground opens to make sure it can be enjoyed for years to come.



“Speaking to the community members, some of whom have spent their entire lives living and working in this neighborhood, has been incredibly rewarding.”

Section 3

Our Community

As a purpose-driven firm committed to creating community, health and sustainability, our JEDI work should make the lives of people around us better. That's why we are committed to prioritizing philanthropy, pro bono work and community engagements that emphasize these important attributes.



Hip Hop Architecture Camp



Our Community

Community Outreach

To create a more diverse future, we have increased our participation in mentorship activities and active organizations in our communities.

2022 Progress

Hip Hop Architecture Camp (HHA)

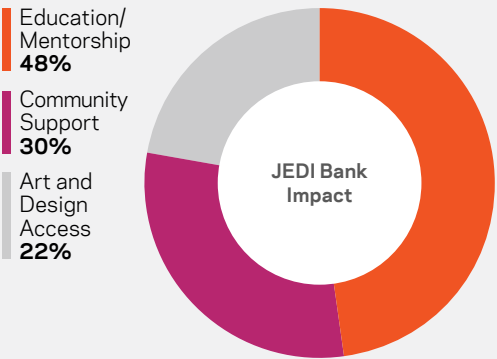
Our support of HHA exposes underrepresented, inner city youth to design while infusing the experience with hip hop collaborations and creativity. In 2022, we continued our partnership with HHA by becoming an official platinum level sponsor. Our donation ensures a fully funded camp for at least 40 students.

The National Organization of Minority Architects

In 2022, NBBJ joined the NOMA Presidents Circle. NOMA's mission is to empower local chapters and membership to foster justice and equity in communities of color through outreach, community advocacy, professional development and design excellence. Through our partnership, we also gain access to NOMA diversity consultants and a membership discount for all NBBJ NOMA members.

JEDI Bank Hours Launch

In 2022, the firm rolled out a new employee benefit to support our people serving communities and organizations in need. JEDI Bank Hours are available for employees across the firm to utilize during the work day. In the last year, more than 105 JEDI Bank Hours were used to make a difference with organizations like Portland Backpack, OpenCity and Little Essentials. The JEDI Bank's impact to-date has been directed in the following ways:



Where We're Going Next

We already have extremely active engagement in our JEDI Bank program in 2022 and we will continue our philanthropy program giving efforts. Additionally, the Firm Leadership Team will explore the possibility of recognizing Juneteenth as a future firm-wide holiday or day of service.

Community Outreach Links

- [▶ Hip Hop Architecture Camp](#)
- [▶ NOMA](#)

Our Community
Inspiring a More Diverse
Generation of Designers

Hip-Hop Architecture Camp

In 2022, we continued our four-year long partnership with Hip Hop Architecture Camp, expanding beyond the original location in Seattle to Columbus, Ohio. Our sponsorship made it possible for 22 kids to attend the camp free of charge. The camp was hosted at Capital University where kids learned how to build physical models (based on hip hop songs of their choice) with staples, wood base, gold paint and greenery. Campers also spent time working in Tinkercad to build a business. Later in the week, campers composed and recorded a hip hop song to go with their proposed business, which we then filmed a music video for while we toured around Columbus.

“Being a part of this experience was an amazing opportunity to introduce local students to the world of design and show them the impact their perspective and talents could make.”



—Dan Ayars
NBBJ Columbus



Our Community

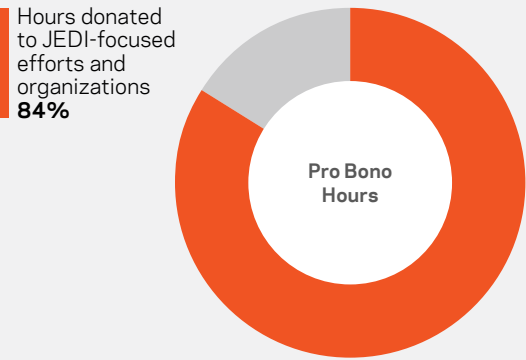
Philanthropy and Pro Bono Work

In 2022, our giving and volunteering was directed to organizations that support JEDI causes like Nickerson Gardens in Los Angeles, California, and the University of Washington School of Nursing Camps in Seattle, Washington.

2022 Progress

Pro-Bono Work

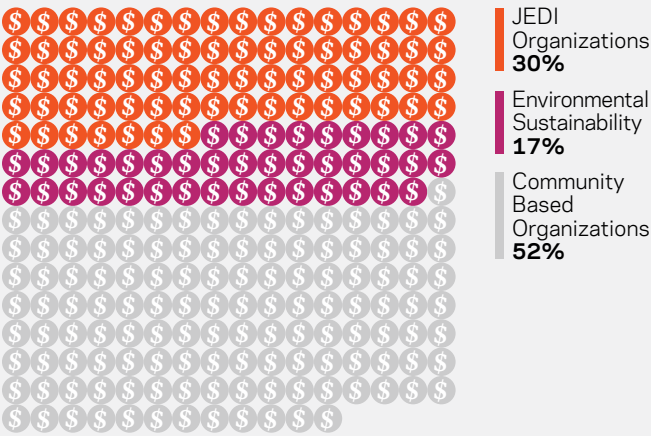
Over \$160,000 worth of pro bono labor was donated this past fiscal year. This includes design work for the Bainbridge Island Performing Arts Center and the Nickerson Gardens Project in Los Angeles, California.



Charitable Donations

Among the firm’s 2022 direct cash giving of \$236,000, 30% went to JEDI focused organizations, including donations that support Hip Hop Architecture Camp and NOMA memberships, as well as several local community organizations such as neighborhood food banks, Big Brothers Big Sisters, ACE Mentorships, HEPIA, University of Washington School of Nursing Camps, Open City Architecture, Blueprint for All in London, and many more.

Charitable Donations



1 circle = \$1,000

Where We’re Going Next

We remain committed to supporting like-minded organizations through pro bono work and donations that align with our JEDI values. This will continue into 2023.



Each NBBJ office partners with local nonprofits like the ACE Mentor Program to join forces and encourage an inclusive design approach and access to education and support in the design field.

The Importance of Mentoring and Real-World Outcomes

An interview with Luke Kilpatrick in London about his recent work with a UK-based non-profit.

Tell us how the London office was able to utilize JEDI Bank hours for mentoring?

NBBJ’s London office used work hours in partnership with Open City to participate in Accelerate, a pioneering education and mentoring program aimed at increasing diversity in our profession. This program gives students from disadvantaged backgrounds the confidence and skills required to study architecture and subjects linked to the built environment, building towards a more diverse demographic to shape the UK’s creative profession’s related to construction and beyond. Seventy percent of Accelerate participants secure conditional offers to study architecture and related subjects at universities including Cambridge and Manchester.

What made you partner with this organization?

In short, their work and mission is a direct tie to the type of JEDI values that we support at NBBJ. Students who participate in Accelerate must meet the program’s eligibility criteria which include: being the first in their family to attend university, living in social housing or care, being eligible for free school meals, coming from a Black or ethnic minority background, and having a disability or having any other special circumstance that meets university participation criteria. In essence, Accelerate exposes local young people, who otherwise may not have had the opportunity, to

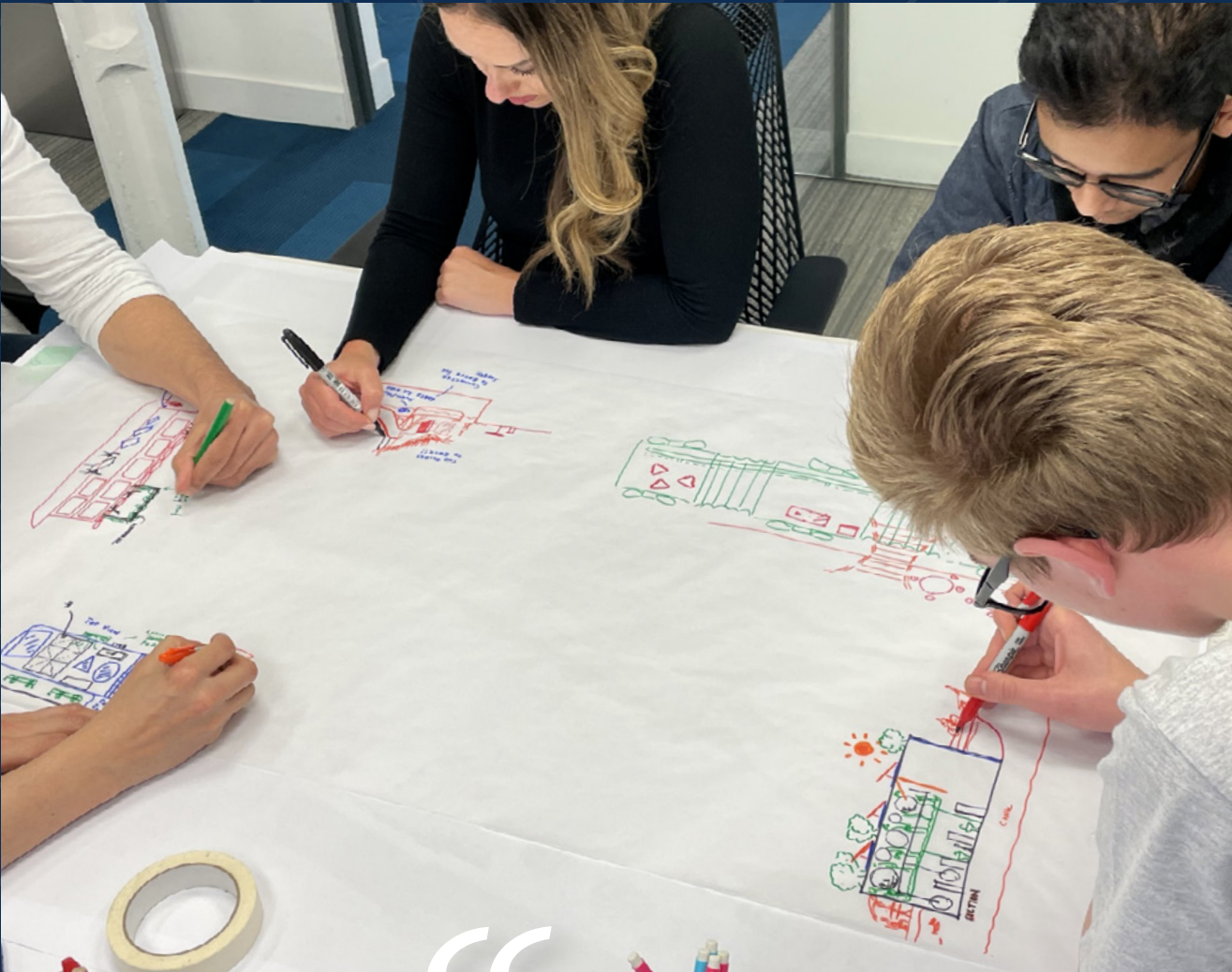
begin to realize their dream or just start the journey to understand themselves. Accelerate tries to simplify access to these courses and career paths, by removing some of the first hurdles.

What did the activities look like?

We hosted three students through the mentorship program, and had five volunteer mentors from the studio. We were able to take advantage of the JEDI Bank to mentor students over a period of three months. The main objective was to give them a taste of working as an architect, interior designer, BIM coordinator, administrator, model-maker and all other roles that exist in our office. You can read more about Accelerate and the specific work we did with our three students in our Connect post.

What was a highlight from your experience?

Similar to the work done through Hip Hop Architecture Camps, this organization allows us to not only serve the community around us by volunteering our time and expertise, but it also works to diversify, elevate and inspire the next generation of designers. A great outcome from this effort is the relationship established with the founders, Open City. We were encouraged to be a part of other mentoring workshops through Open City and to reach out again for any future opportunities we want to be a part of.



Accelerate exposes local young people, who otherwise may not have had the opportunity, to begin to realize their dream or just start the journey to understand themselves.

Our Journey Continues...

While we are proud of all that has been accomplished in the inaugural year of our JEDI program, we recognize that there is still much to be done. Looking back, our ambassador program, project work and community involvement propelled forward faster than we expected, yet other action items like tracking diversity consultants and partnerships with HCBUs require increased attention in the year ahead.

None of these steps—both progress made and work yet to be done—can be realized in isolation. Between the three JEDI pillars of people, work and community, there are so many ways to get involved, and we want to do it in partnership with you. If you have an interest in serving, ideas for where we should go next or have questions about this report, please reach out to your local JEDI Ambassador or the JEDI leadership team.



