

Freelance Consulting Project, 2023

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report

Gender Equality Plan and Workforce Analytics, Tech Sector

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Commissioned by: Confidential Tech Client Classification: Internal and Confidential

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01 · ABOUT THIS PROJECT

# About This Project

This report was commissioned by a mid-sized tech company as part of a broader push to understand where they actually stood on gender equity, not just where they hoped they stood. I was brought in as a freelance HR consultant to gather the data, analyse it honestly, and turn it into something leadership could act on.

The company had grown quickly and knew that diversity initiatives had not kept pace with headcount. They wanted a clear picture before committing to any public statements or investor ESG disclosures. The brief was simple: tell us the truth, and tell us what to do about it.

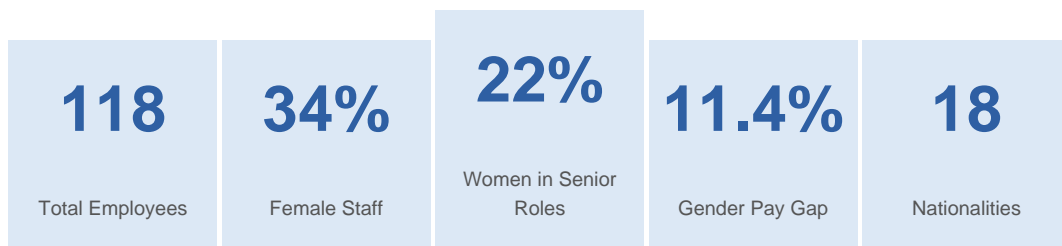
A note on confidentiality: The client name, location, and certain identifying details have been removed from this version of the report at their request. The data, methodology, findings, and recommendations are presented exactly as delivered.

02 · EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Executive Summary

The analysis covers 118 employees across all departments. The headline is this: the company has made real progress on overall gender representation, but that progress has not reached the top. Women make up 34% of the workforce but only 22% of senior management. Pay data tells a similar story. The gap is driven less by within-role inequity and more by who ends up in which roles.

None of this is unusual for a fast-growing tech company. What matters now is whether leadership treats it as a structural problem worth fixing or a communications problem worth managing. The action plan in Section 08 is built on the assumption it is the former.



- Female representation grew from 30% to 34% year on year, mostly at junior levels.
- Only 22% of senior management positions are held by women, against a 34% workforce average.
- The unadjusted gender pay gap is 11.4%, driven mainly by seniority distribution.
- 61% of the workforce is Millennial. Knowledge transfer from Gen X is a growing risk.
- 18 nationalities in the company, but only 8 are represented at senior management level.

03 · WORKFORCE OVERVIEW

# Workforce Overview

As of December 2023, the company employs 118 people across permanent, fixed-term, and contract roles. HR forms include three gender identity options so employees can self-identify accurately. The data below reflects everyone active at the snapshot date.

Employment Type	Total	Female	Male	% Female
Permanent	89	29	60	33%
Contract or Part-Time	22	10	12	45%
Interns and Fixed-Term	7	1	6	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>34%</b>

Table 1: Workforce by employment type and gender, December 2023

The 4-percentage-point increase in female representation from 2022 to 2023 is encouraging. Most of it came from hiring at junior and contract levels. The challenge now is making sure that pipeline translates into leadership over the coming years, which will not happen without deliberate action.

## Gender by Department

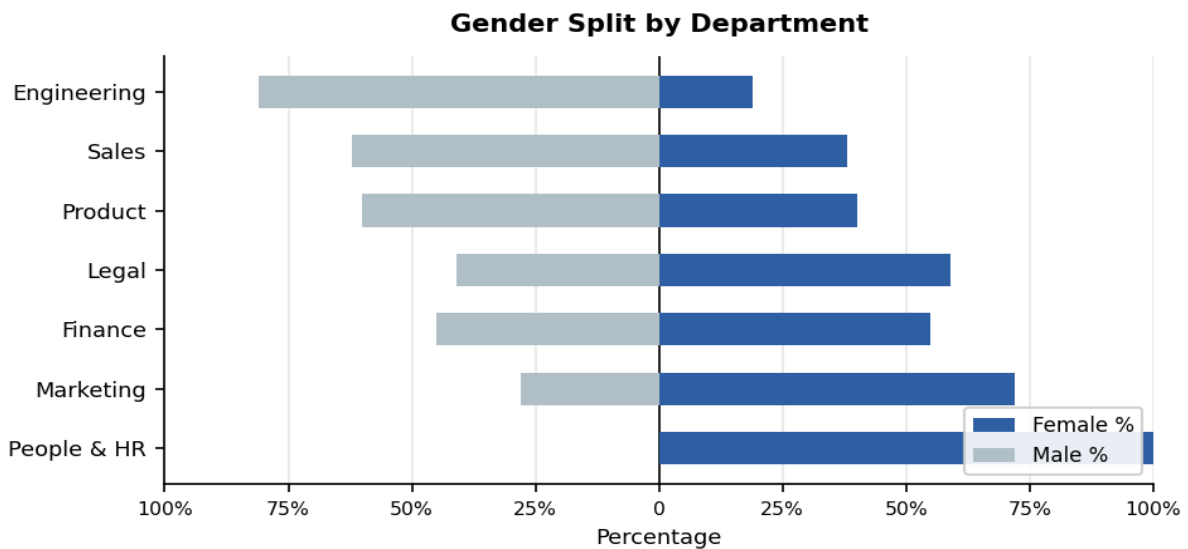


Figure 1: Gender split by department. Engineering is the most male-dominated team at 81%. People and HR is 100% female, which is a skew worth acknowledging in the other direction.

04 · GENDER AND SENIORITY

# Gender and Seniority

This is where the data gets uncomfortable. Women are well-represented at individual contributor level, nearly 39%, but that figure drops to 22% at senior management. The pipeline exists. The problem is what happens to it on the way up.

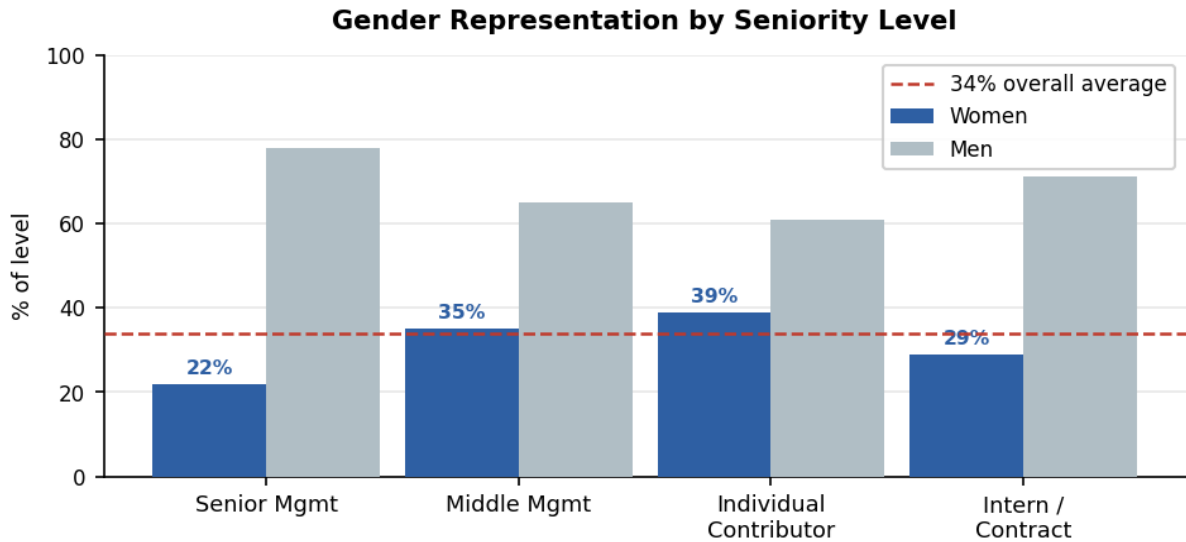


Figure 2: Gender representation at each seniority level. The red dotted line shows the 34% overall average. Senior management is the only level that falls significantly below it.

Level	Total	Women	% Women	vs 34% average
Senior Management	23	5	22%	12pp below average
Middle Management	31	11	35%	Broadly in line
Individual Contributor	57	22	39%	5pp above average
Intern and Contract	7	2	29%	5pp below average

Table 2: Gender by seniority level

Through the employee survey and exit interviews, three themes kept coming up: promotion criteria that are not clearly communicated, a lack of sponsorship for women at mid-level, and a meeting culture that rewards visibility over output, which tends to disadvantage people working flexibly. These are not unusual problems. They are also not inevitable ones. The action plan addresses all three.

05 · PAY EQUITY

# Pay Equity

Two numbers matter here. The unadjusted gap, comparing average male and female salaries directly, is 11.4%. That sounds alarming but is largely explained by who occupies senior roles. The adjusted gap, which controls for role, level, and tenure, is 4.7%. That is smaller, but it is not zero. Both numbers need attention.

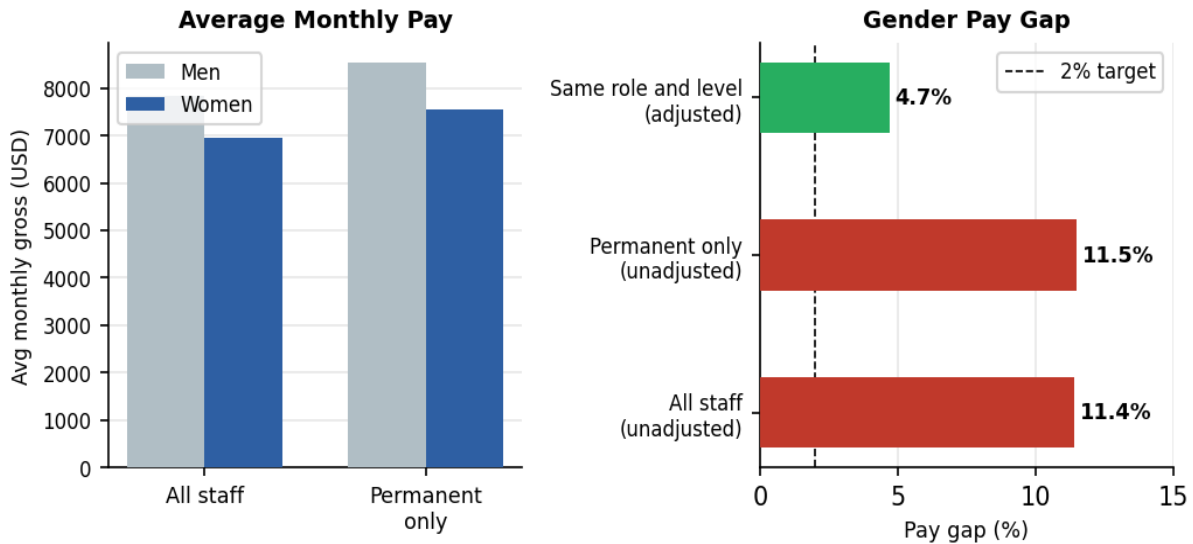


Figure 3: Left shows average monthly gross pay in USD. Right shows the pay gap before and after adjusting for role and seniority. The dotted line marks the 2% target for end of 2025.

Metric	Men	Women	Gap	What it means
Avg monthly gross, all staff	\$7,840	\$6,950	11.4%	Unadjusted, driven by seniority
Avg monthly gross, permanent only	\$8,530	\$7,550	11.5%	Unadjusted
Avg hourly rate, same role and level	\$50.20	\$47.85	4.7%	Adjusted, smaller but still present

Table 3: Pay equity analysis. All figures in USD, normalised to full-time equivalent (40 hours per week).

The 4.7% adjusted gap likely reflects a combination of negotiation dynamics at hire and incremental pay decisions that have accumulated over time without a structured audit process. The recommendation is a full compensation review in Q1 2024, with a target of getting the adjusted gap below 2% by end of 2025.

06 · GENERATIONAL AND NATIONALITY DIVERSITY

# Generational and Nationality Diversity

The workforce is young: 61% Millennial, 21% Gen Z. That is not surprising for a tech company founded in the last decade. But it creates a specific risk. A large portion of institutional knowledge sits with a relatively small Gen X cohort, and when those people leave, a lot goes with them.

Generation	Born	Count	% of staff	In senior management
Baby Boomers	1946 to 1964	4	3%	3
Generation X	1965 to 1980	17	14%	12
Millennials	1981 to 1996	72	61%	8

Gen Z	1997 to 2012	25	21%	0
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*Table 4: Generational breakdown. No Gen Z employees are currently in senior management.*

On nationality: 18 different nationalities across the company is genuinely strong. The gap worth addressing is that only 8 of those 18 are represented in senior management. As the company grows, making sure leadership reflects the diversity of the wider team should be an explicit goal, not an afterthought.

07 · RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

# Recruitment and Promotion Equity

Two questions matter most here: are women getting a fair shot at being hired, and are they getting a fair shot at being promoted once they are in?

## The Hiring Funnel, 2023

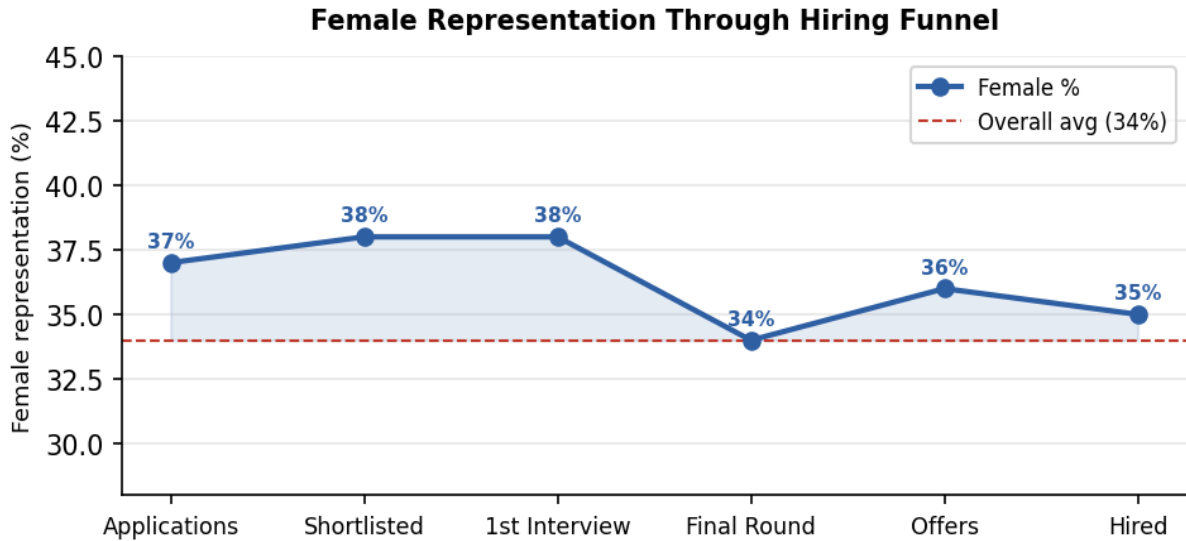


Figure 4: Female representation at each stage of the hiring funnel. The line stays broadly flat, which means the process itself is not creating a significant drop-off.

The funnel holds up well. Women enter at 37% and exit as hires at 35%, with no significant drop at any single stage. The harder problem is that only 37% of applicants identify as female to begin with. That is a sourcing and employer brand challenge, not a screening one. The 2024 sourcing strategy should explicitly target underrepresented candidate pools.

## Promotion Rates by Gender

Promotion path	Women promoted	Men promoted	Female rate	Male rate
IC to Middle Management	3	7	13.6%	18.4%
Middle to Senior Management	1	4	9.1%	20.0%

Table 5: Promotion rates by gender. The gap widens at senior management level (9.1% vs 20.0%), which is where the leadership pipeline breaks down.

08 - ACTION PLAN 2024 TO 2025

# Action Plan 2024 to 2025

Four areas to focus on. These are the direct response to what the data showed, not a general wish list.

## 01 Fix the hiring process

Introduce standardised interview scorecards for all roles. Require diverse panels for every senior hire. Run unconscious bias training with all active hiring managers. Review job descriptions for gender-coded language, which is a small change with a measurable impact on application rates.

Owner  
**Talent Acquisition Lead**

By when  
**Q1 2024**

Success looks like  
 Female shortlist rate for senior roles reaches 40% or above

## 02 Build a real leadership pipeline for women

Launch a 6-month internal sponsorship programme pairing high-potential women at IC and middle management level with senior sponsors. Not a mentoring programme but sponsorship, which means actively advocating for someone's progression, not just advising them.

Owner  
**L and D and Leadership Team**

By when  
**Q2 2024**

Success looks like  
 Women in senior management rises from 22% to 30% by end of 2025

## 03 Audit and correct pay

Do a full role-by-role pay review in Q1 2024. Identify gaps above 5% within the same band and correct them in the next pay cycle. Publish adjusted pay gap figures annually even if they are not perfect yet. Transparency creates accountability.

Owner  
**HR and Finance**

By when  
**Q1 2024**

Success looks like  
 Adjusted pay gap falls from 4.7% to below 2% by end of 2025

**04      Make it safe to raise concerns**

Roll out mandatory harassment prevention training. Set up a confidential reporting channel with an external ombudsperson, not just an internal one. Run an annual culture survey that includes psychological safety questions and share the results at all-hands, not just with leadership.

Owner

**People Operations**

By when

**Q2 2024**

Success looks like

85% or more of employees report feeling safe raising concerns

09 · EMPLOYEE SURVEY

## What Employees Actually Said

The DEI-focused survey ran in October 2023. It was anonymous and voluntary. 74 out of 118 employees responded, giving a 63% response rate, which is solid for a first run.

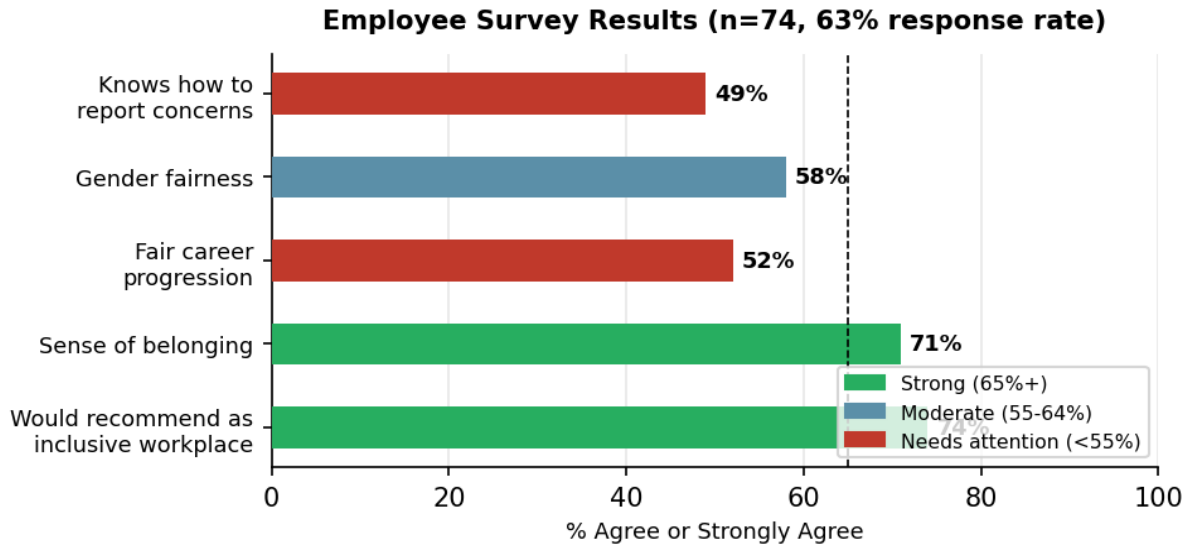


Figure 5: Survey results by statement. Green bars are strong scores (65% or above). Red bars are the priority areas the action plan directly addresses.

Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I feel a strong sense of belonging here.	71%	18%	11%
I think all employees are treated fairly regardless of gender.	58%	24%	18%
I know how to report a concern if I needed to.	49%	27%	24%
My career progression feels equal to that of my peers.	52%	22%	26%
I would describe this as an inclusive place to work.	74%	16%	10%

Table 6: Selected survey results (n=74, 63% response rate).

The belonging and recommendation scores are genuinely positive. The two numbers that stand out are the concerning ones: only 49% of employees know how to raise a concern, and only 52% feel their progression is equitable. Those are fixable process and communication problems, which is actually good news.

10 · METHODOLOGY AND NOTES

### Methodology and Notes

All workforce data was extracted from the company HR system in November 2023 and reflects employees active at that date. Salary figures are in USD, normalised to a full-time equivalent of 40 hours per week. Gender data is based on voluntary self-identification using a three-option format (female, male, diverse). All individual-level data has been aggregated to protect privacy.

This report was prepared by Ghazal Shahid as part of a freelance consulting engagement. The client name and identifying details have been removed from this version. The analysis and recommendations are presented as delivered.