

The Diversity Baseline Survey (3.0)



What is the Diversity Baseline Survey?

The Diversity Baseline Survey (DBS) is a large-scale survey that examines diversity within the book publishing industry. It looks at four aspects of identity among publishing employees: race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. Inspired by similar studies of the tech industry and other fields, the Diversity Baseline Survey offers a picture of who is behind the scenes creating the books we read.

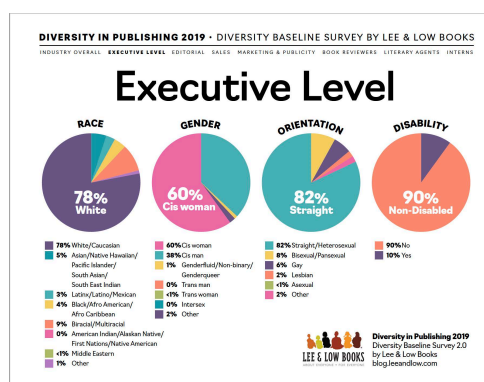
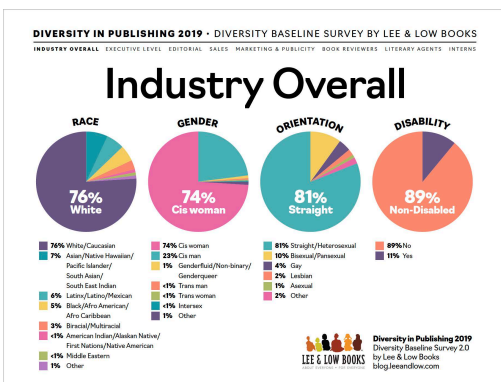
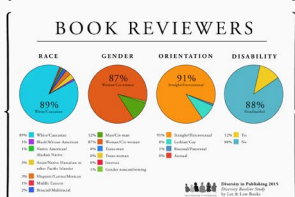
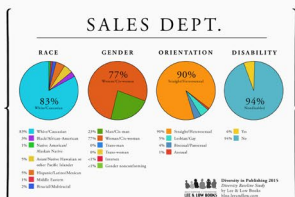
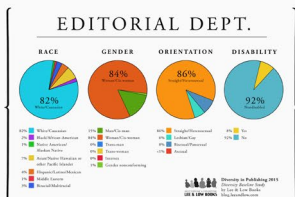
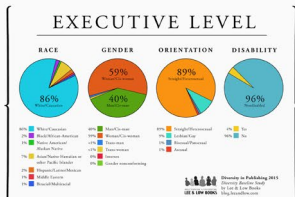
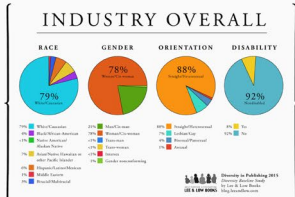
Started by children's book publisher Lee & Low Books, the first Diversity Baseline Survey was deployed in 2014, and administered to over 13,000 publishing employees at thirty-five different publishing companies and eight major review journals. DBS 2.0 was deployed in 2019, and administered to 21,753 publishing employees at 2,609 reviewer employees, 17,100 trade publishing employees, 1,528 university press employees, and 516 literary agents. Four years later, it is time to survey our industry again to see if anything has changed.

Why is the Diversity Baseline Survey Important?

Without data, all our conversations about diversity in the publishing industry would be based on anecdotal evidence alone. The Diversity Baseline Survey allows us to discuss our industry's lack of diversity in a more concrete way, with a true understanding of the scope of the problem. The data also allows us to track progress as our industry grows and evolves.

DIVERSITY IN PUBLISHING

Diversity Baseline Survey (DBS) 2015
 2015
Survey prepared by Lee & Low Books. Published in partnership with the Book, Art & Low Books. Division of Marketing & Publicity. Administrative Period: April 9, 2015, until December 11, 2015.



On the right: selections from the Diversity Baseline Survey, launched in 2015. Above: Selections from the Diversity Baseline Survey 2.0 in 2019.

Why Should We Participate?

High industry participation in the Diversity Baseline Survey sends the message that our industry takes inclusion seriously. In order for the Survey to be a success, we need the participation of as many publishing companies as possible.

By committing to participate, you are demonstrating that your company cares about diversity and is invested in finding solutions. All participating companies will be acknowledged publicly, but you can rest assured that survey data will only be released in aggregate form—never individually or by company. Data will be collected and aggregated by professional outside survey experts and will remain completely anonymous.

Over 150 companies of all sizes participated in the Diversity Baseline Survey in 2019.

Will you join us in 2023?

[CLICK HERE FOR COMPLETE LIST OF COMMITTED PARTICIPANTS](#)

OK, We're In. What Happens Next?

1. Have your company representative or point person for the survey email Jason Low, Publisher of Lee & Low Books, at dbs@leeandlow.com to confirm your company's participation. Individuals need not reply, as we are surveying entire companies.
2. Toward the end of May 2023, your company's designated contact person will receive a survey link to distribute to your staff. Full instructions will be included. We will provide wordage you can include about why the survey matters, encouraging employees to participate and affirming that their answers will remain anonymous. The survey deployment date is June 1, 2023 and the survey will remain live for approximately one month.
3. The survey data will be aggregated in late 2023 by two academics at Boston University and the results will be publicly released at the end of January 2024.

Selected Media Coverage and Citing of the First & Second Diversity Baseline Surveys

Caplan-Bricker, Nora. "New Survey Confirms Straight White Women's Domination of Book Publishing." *Slate*, February 1 2016.

Ho, Jean. "Diversity In Book Publishing Isn't Just About Writers – Marketing Matters, Too." *NPR Code Switch*, August 9 2016.

Flood, Alison. "US publishing remains 'as white today as it was four years ago.'" *The Guardian*, January 30 2020.

McArdle, Molly. "'You Will Be Tokenized': Speaking Out About the State of Diversity in Publishing." *Brooklyn Magazine*, February 24 2016.

Scott, Katy. "Can diversity in children's books tackle prejudice?" *CNN*, October 23 2018.

Rowe, Adam. "Diversity in Publishing Hasn't Improved In the Past 4 Years." *Forbes*, January 31 2020