Technologist Retention at the Intersections: GET Cities Releases Landmark Report on Equity in Tech with Partner DataKind

GET Cities has released a new report that focuses on issues of race, gender and intersectionality with regard to retention and experience in the tech industry

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, April 12, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- GET (Gender Equality in Tech) Cities released a new report, authored by former Entrepreneur-In-Residence Serwah (Rose) Afriyie, in partnership with DataKind, focused on issues of race and gender with regard to retention in the tech industry, titled "Technologist Retention at the Intersections: Why people across various or multiple racial and gender identities stay in their roles, job hop, or leave the tech industry". The research included cis and trans women, genderqueer and nonbinary people, and technologists from various racial backgrounds. This report is the first of its kind, taking an inclusive and intersectional lens to truly understand the problems and solutions with regard to retention and the lived experience of many groups of historically excluded people in tech.

"Technologist Retention at the Intersections" surveyed over 400 technologists from underestimated groups in Chicago – groups that share similarities with Silicon Valley tech workers but also differ in key ways that can provide insight into how tech roles and teams are evolving beyond the coasts.

Elle Ramel, Director of GET Cities Chicago, stated, "Very often when we talk about tech workers, we think of people who work for one of the big tech companies or startups in Silicon Valley, but that's no longer the reality for a growing number of people in tech, and it gives us an opportunity to shape the industry with equity and inclusion built in as it grows and expands to include more people and places."

Through this research, GET Cities discovered key differences in retention and experience amongst groups of people with varying intersecting identities, so they are calling on organizations and researchers to include this intersectional lens in order to get to the nuanced insights we need to build better solutions to increasing inclusion, belonging and equity in tech for all people.

The survey found that retention rates are different across all combinations of identities, and that Black women in particular have the lowest retention rates. While that finding is unfortunately unsurprising, it was important to discover the rates were distinct from Latina/e women, trans

and genderqueer technologists from all races, for example. Compensation and advancement are leading factors that drive role retention, but nuances exist behind why all of these groups stay. The report also found, for example, that technologists in the surveyed groups who are parents were more satisfied with their compensation than those who were not parents – though there wasn't any indication they were paid more. And across the board retention rates did not correlate directly with an overall satisfaction in their roles.

Serwah Rose Afriyie, the Author of the study, added, "This is the right moment to ask big questions about the role of tech, the benefits of tech, and who is included and impacted. We've known for years that true diversity is key to creating the most beneficial products for the widest possible audiences, not only because it results in revenue growth, which it does, but because we have an opportunity to address wide-ranging concerns and provide solutions for people who have not had power in the field and often do not have many product options relevant to their daily lives."

The biggest takeaway from the research sheds light on the gaps in data and insights from marginalized people that identify with various groups and how that void prohibits us from having enough knowledge to provide actionable solutions. So it is crucial to continue to research intersectional identities to gain the necessary insights needed to positively move the needle on equity in tech.

"At DataKind, we work with communities all over the world, and we know that distribution of data is biased against marginalized groups, particularly when it comes to intersectionality," says Lauren Woodman, CEO of DataKind, "With AI poised to make more decisions on behalf of humans, we must ensure that these models are being designed to represent everyone accurately, and the best way to do that is for these groups to have a voice in how they are designed. We hope this report will support the tech industry in continuing to have that conversation."

While everyone is rightly concerned about the pace and high numbers of layoffs in the tech industry across the country, and while there is growing proof that layoffs are hitting marginalized technologists the hardest, the survey highlights some successes of retention among these groups in Chicago specifically. And the report's findings suggest that the main reasons they stay in their roles are replicable in multiple markets with thoughtful investment. The tech industry is already not known for its diversity, equity and inclusion strengths. And this report, building on existing work around intersectionality, shines light on how the experience of multiple underestimated identities requires even further analysis and more specific attention.

Visit getcities.org/retention-at-the-intersections to check out the report "Technologist Retention at the Intersections: Why people across various or multiple racial and gender identities stay in their roles, job hop, or leave the tech industry"

About GET Cities

GET Cities is an initiative designed to accelerate the representation and leadership of women, trans and nonbinary people in tech through the development of inclusive tech hubs across the United States, currently in Chicago, DC, and Miami. Launched in 2020, GET Cities is led by SecondMuse Foundation and Break Through Tech, in partnership with Pivotal Ventures, the investment and incubation company created by Melinda French Gates.

About DataKind
Since 2012, DataKind has been tackling the world's toughest challenges using data science to improve the capabilities, reach, and scale of social impact organizations. A global organization based in the US, DataKind engages on a wide variety of issues, continually bringing the benefits of AI to new communities.

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