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# Black Women in Tech: A Data Story on Representation, Reality, & Resilience

by Quinisha Cockheran



# Why This Matters

Black women remain the most underrepresented group in the tech industry. Despite talent, ambition, and qualification, their presence remains disproportionately low across tech roles, leadership, and innovation teams.

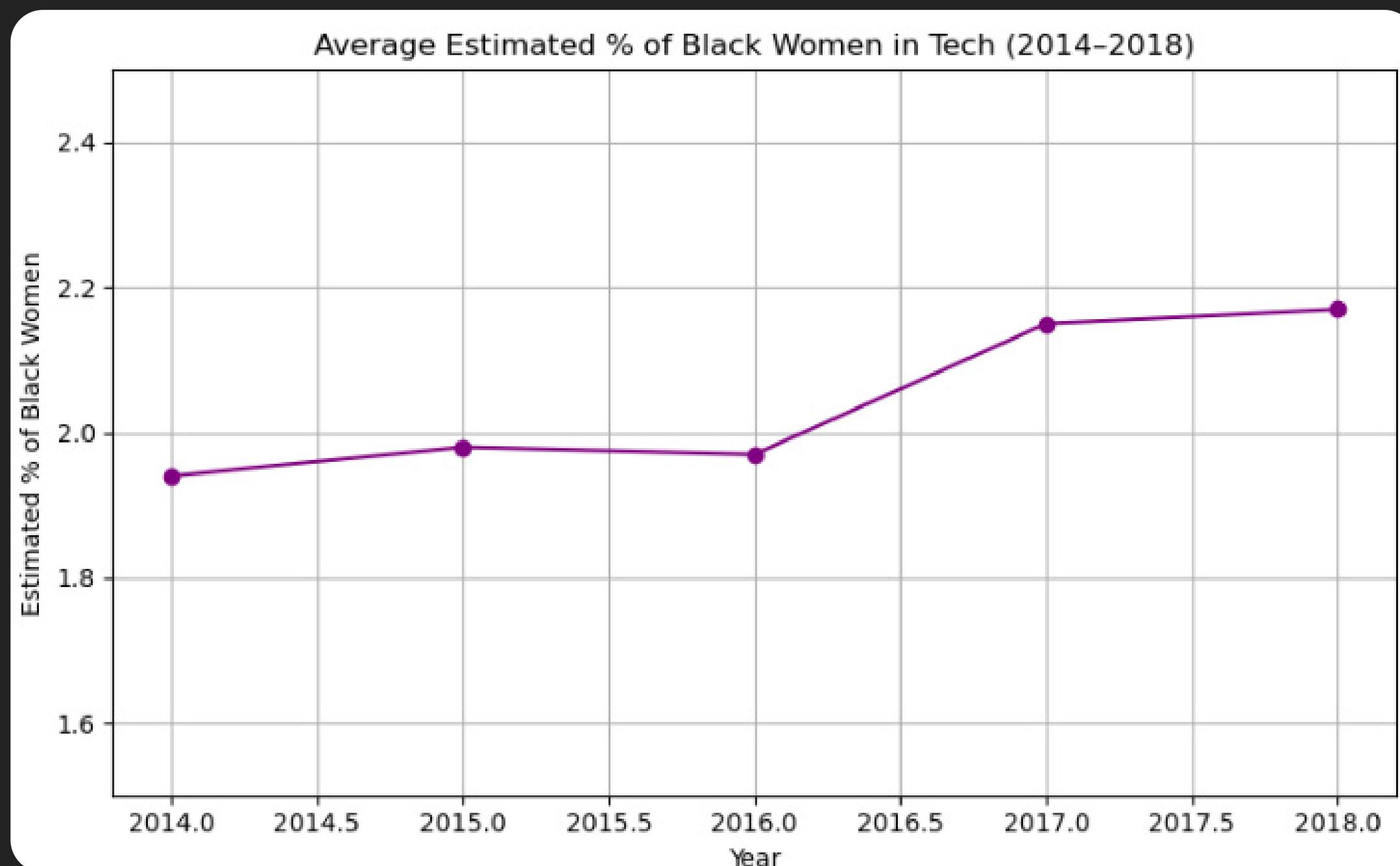


**“It’s not about fixing Black women—it’s about fixing the system that never saw them as fully human in the first place.”**  
—Brittney Cooper, Ph.D.  
*Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower* (2018)

## 2. REPRESENTATION OVER TIME

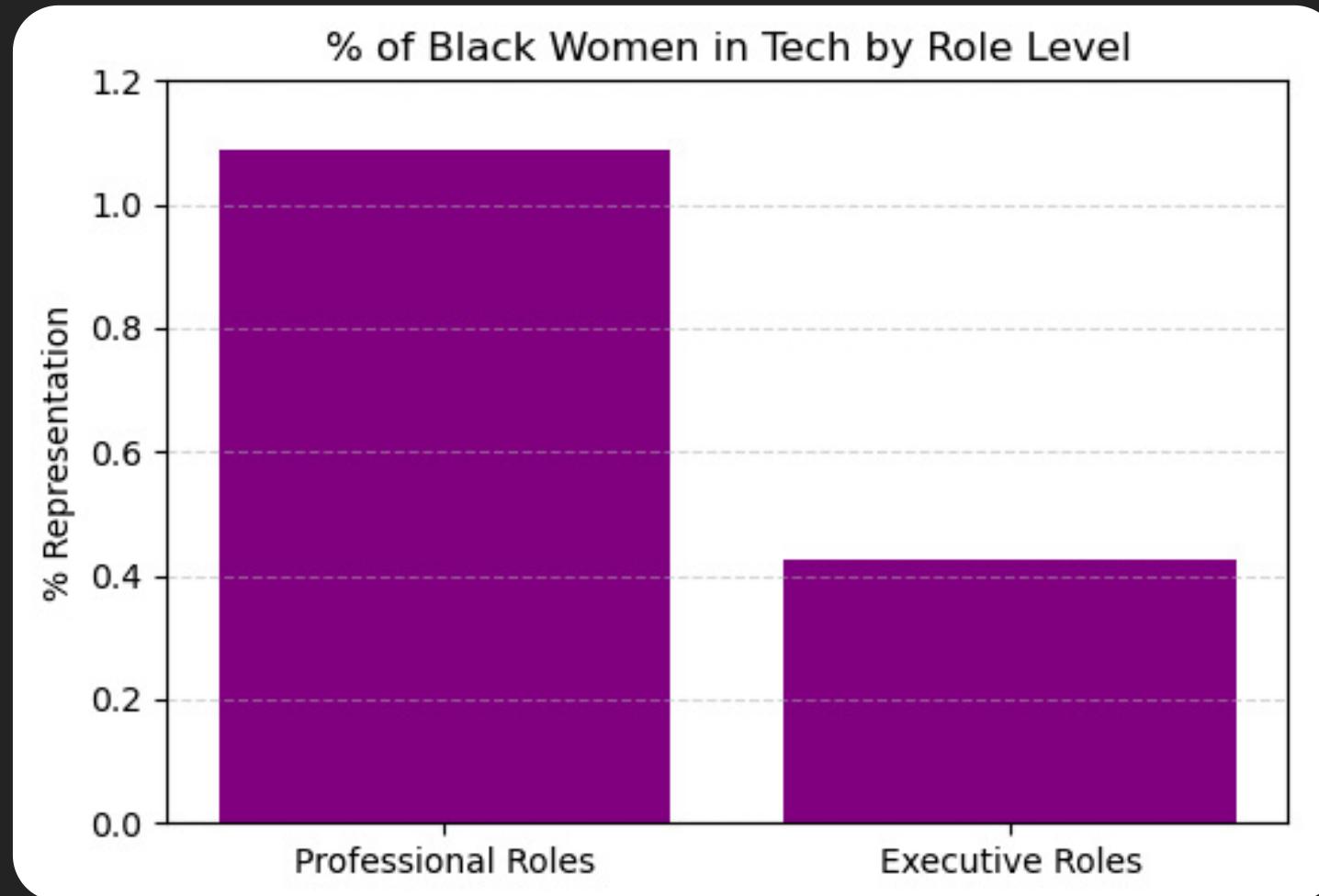
# Between 2014 & 2018,

the estimated average percentage of Black women in tech rose only slightly from 1.94% to 2.17%, according to diversity reporting across major tech firms.



Despite years of DEI initiatives, the data shows minimal growth, revealing a systemic stall in equity efforts.

### 3. THE GAP



# The Opportunity Gap

In professional technical roles, Black women represent just 1.09% of the workforce.

In executive leadership, that number drops to a staggering 0.43%.

→ That's a 60% decline in representation — a visible gap in promotion and power.

# The Weight of Being Overlooked

Being one of the few — or the only — Black woman in tech spaces often leads to:

- Performance anxiety
- Imposter syndrome
- Emotional exhaustion
- Fear of confirming stereotypes

This toll is amplified when representation is low, mentorship is rare, and leadership mirrors exclusion.

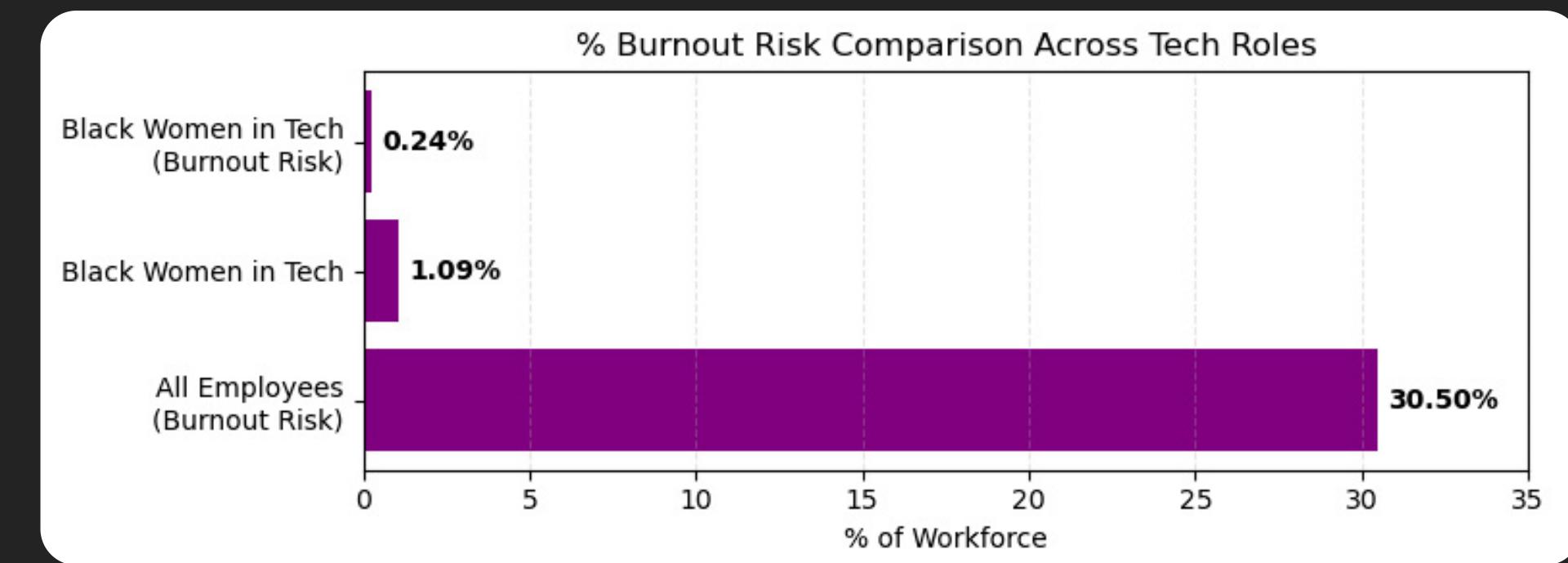


## Sources

- AnitaB.org, *Intersectionality in Tech* (2023)
- Kapor Center, *Women of Color in Computing* (2020)
- LeanIn & McKinsey, *Women in the Workplace* (2023)
- Google & Gallup, *Breaking Down Barriers* (2020)

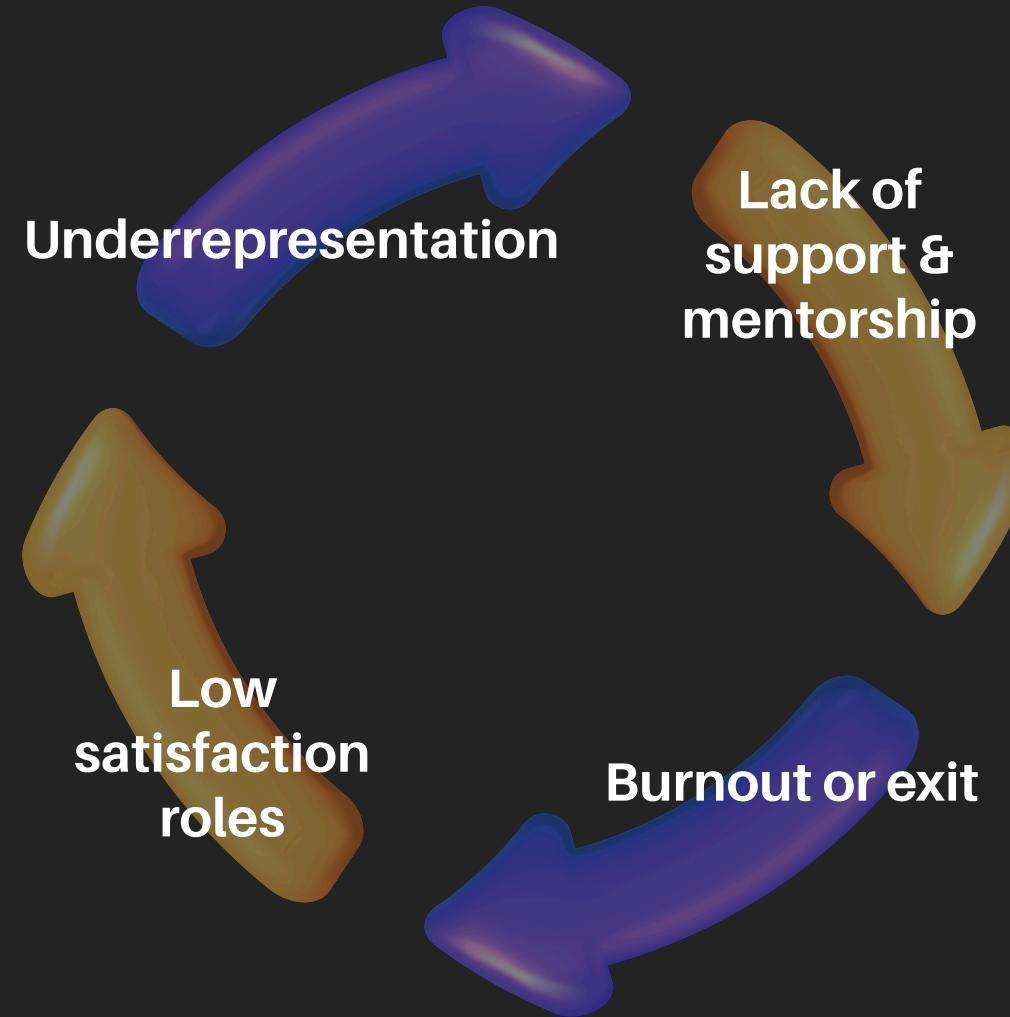
# The Silent Strain: Burnout Risk for Black Women in Tech

30.5% tech employees are at risk of burnout.



**Black women — already only 1.09% of the workforce — face compounding pressures that push an estimated 1 in 4 toward burnout (McKinsey, 2021).**

This reflects not just exhaustion, but the emotional tax of being constantly overlooked, doubted, and unsupported in their roles.



# Exclusion by Design

Satisfaction isn't just a feeling — it's a reflection of how valued, supported, and empowered an employee is.

In tech, Analysts report the lowest satisfaction across all tech roles — a position where Black women are already underrepresented and under-promoted.

## The disparities stack:

- Employment gap
- Pay gap
- Promotion gap
- Degree gap
- Work-life balance gap
- Mentorship gap

All reflect patterns of systemic design — not personal failure.  
→ Without mentorship, advancement, or visibility, dissatisfaction fuels a cycle of turnover.  
This system doesn't just overlook — it pushes out.

*"If you're not intentionally including, you're unintentionally excluding."*  
— Dr. Shirley Davis, Global Workforce Strategist

## Sources

- CIO, Women in Tech (2024)

# The DEI Gap: When Promises Don't Match Progress

DEI was never enough — but now it's being dismantled.

Black women are still excluded from leadership, still under-promoted, still invisible.

And now, even the promise of change is under political attack. We carry the weight of being overlooked — again. And again.



**1.09%**

**0.43%**  
Black women in executive tech leadership.

**33%** DEI roles eliminated in 2023.



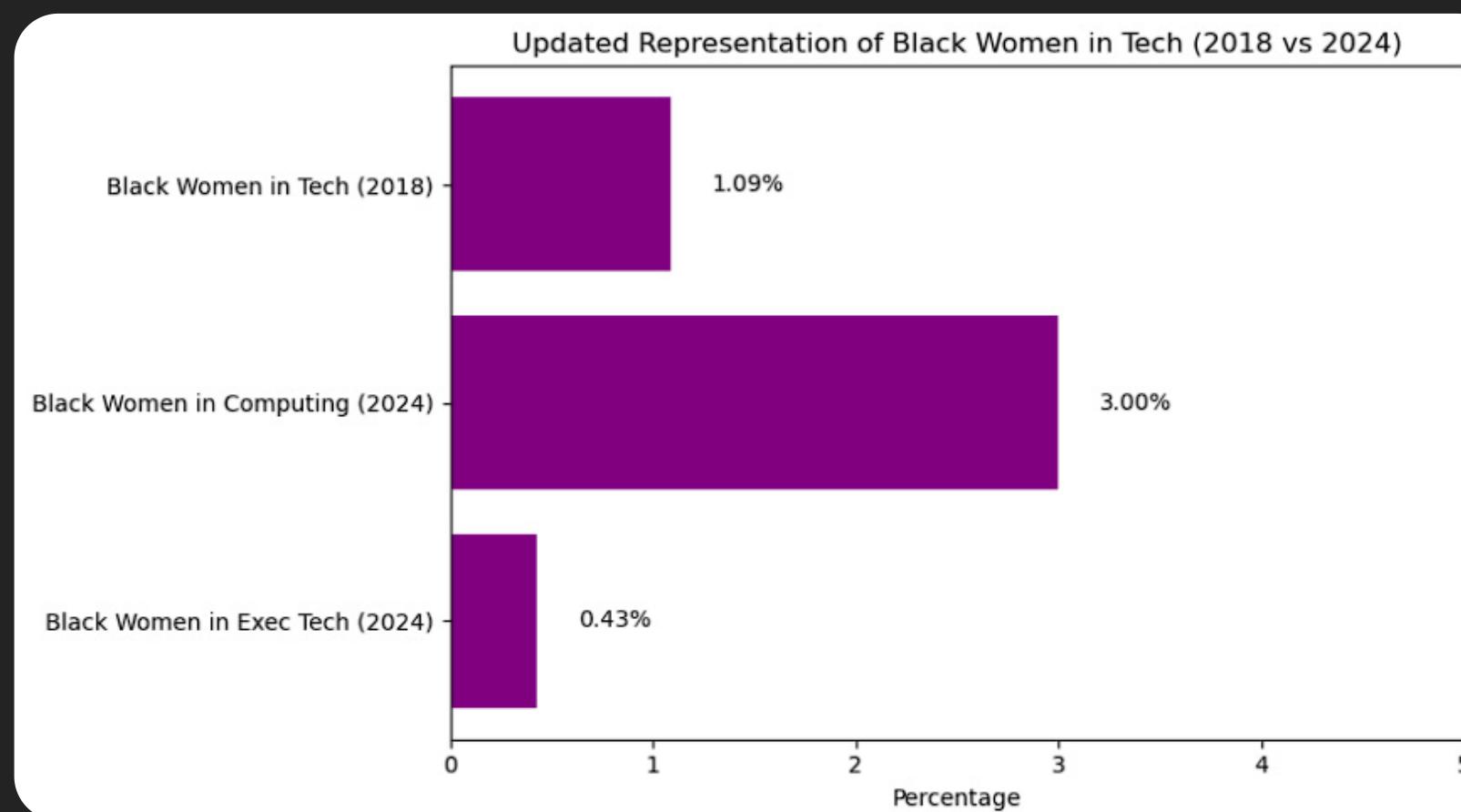
**40%** of employees say DEI efforts haven't changed their experience at work  
(McKinsey, 2021)

## Sources

- *Business Insider, Tech's DEI Pullback (2023)*
- *ISACA, State of Cybersecurity (2022)*
- *Washington Post, DEI Retractions in Big Tech (2023)*

# Numbers Say It All

In **2018**, Black women made up just **1.09% of the tech workforce**. Today, that number is only **3%** — and only **0.43% hold executive leadership roles**. Despite years of DEI promises, representation remains stagnant.



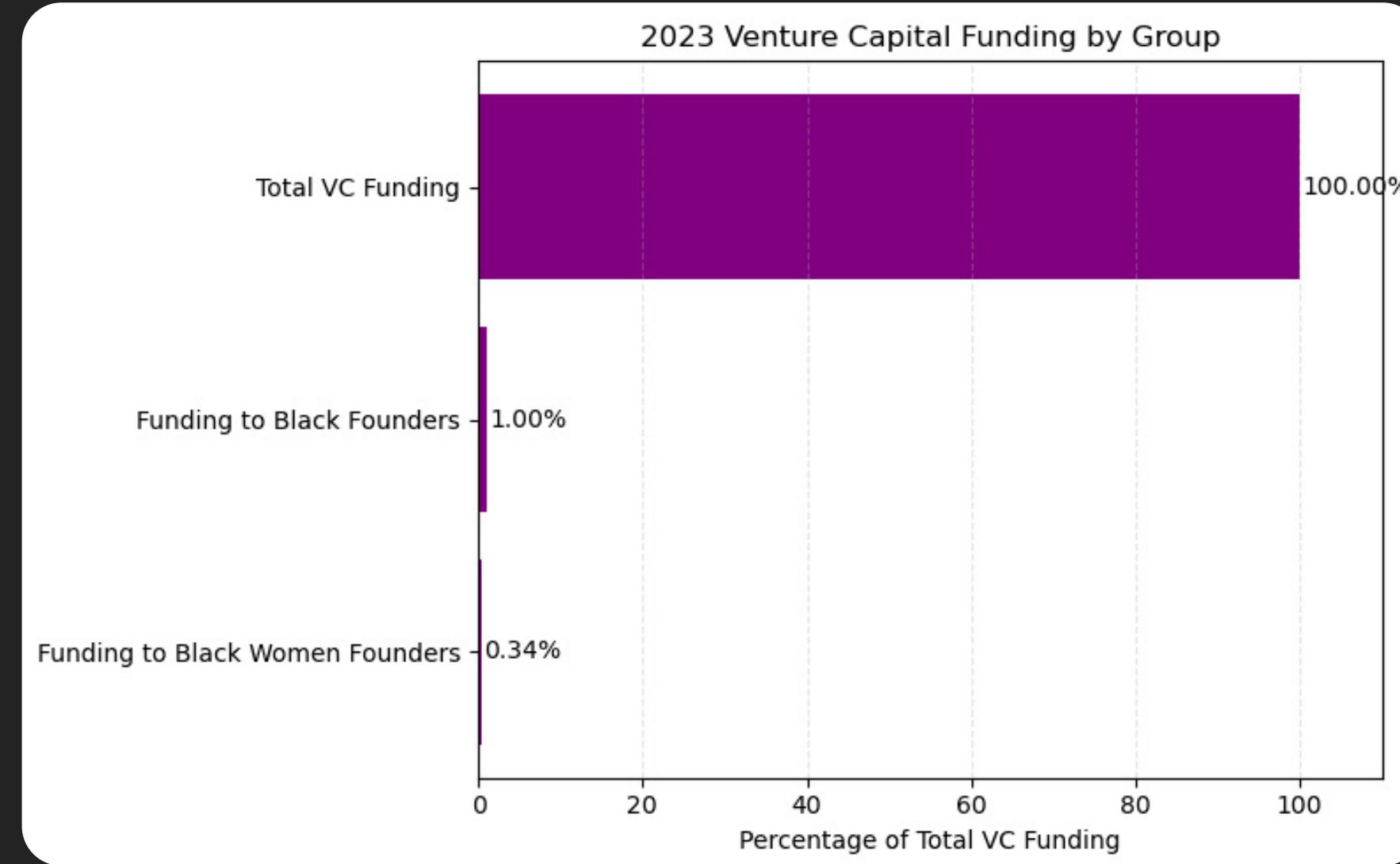
## Real equity requires:

- Sponsorship, not just mentorship
- Promotion pathways, not pipelines
- Listening, not just surveying
- Redistribution of power, not performative pledges

# Reform Isn't Enough

Reform has never saved us — it only reshapes the barriers.

In 2023, Black women received just **0.34%** of all venture capital funding.



Liberation won't come from fitting in — it comes from creating.

But how, when the system denies us visibility, funding, and access?

We're told to "earn our seat," but the table was never built for us.

We don't need another pledge. We need power.

# If Not Us, Then Who?

We didn't break this system. We didn't design it to exclude us. But we've carried the cost of its exclusion. We've lived under its weight — **minimized, erased, underfunded.**

Real progress means **access and autonomy**. It means **sharing and self-made spaces**. It means **innovation shaped by every voice** — not just those who've always had the mic.

And while the system stalls, **Black founders are building**. Not because we should have to — but because we always have.

To those with reach and resources: **this is a call-in**. Not to save us — but to stand with us, invest in us, and **trust what we're already creating**.



# Data Sources

- Kaggle | Diversity in Tech Companies
- Kaggle | Reveal EEO-1 for 2016
- Kaggle | Tech Sector Diversity Demographics (2016)
- Kaggle | HR Dashboard Data
- Kaggle | Distributions Data 2016
- Manually extracted stats from CIO.com (March 8, 2024)  
“Women in tech: The facts about the gender gap” - CIO

# Coding & Analysis Tools

- Jupyter Notebook (Pandas, Matplotlib, Python)
- Adobe Express (Presentation Design)
- GitHub (Project Repository + Code Documentation)



# Visuals & Code Available at:

[https://github.com/quinishacockheran/Independent\\_Projects/tree/main/Black%20Women%20in%20Tech%20Analysis](https://github.com/quinishacockheran/Independent_Projects/tree/main/Black%20Women%20in%20Tech%20Analysis)