

Gender Differences in National Institutes of Health Funding Among Surgical Oncologists from 2013-2023



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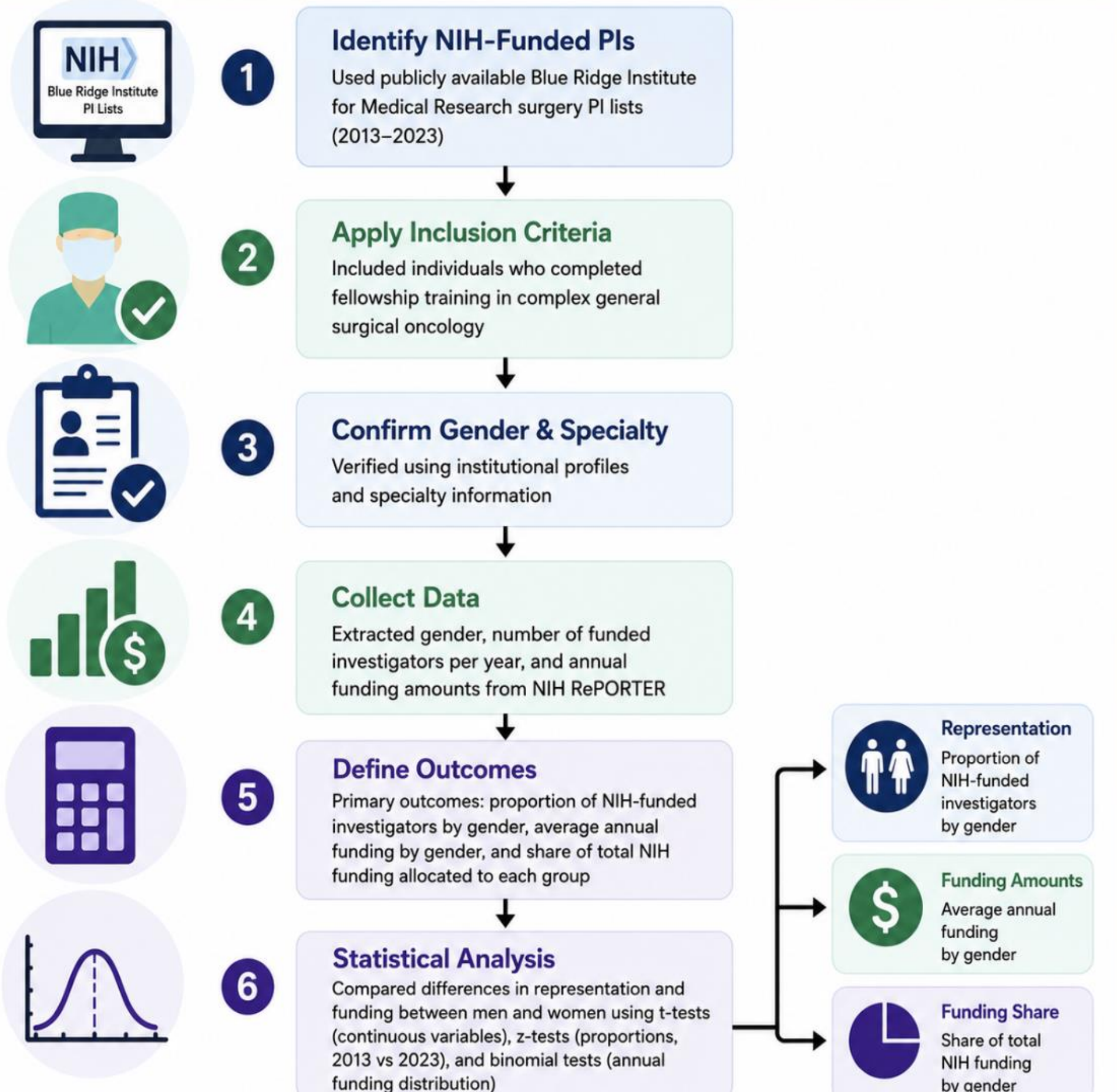
Introduction

- Women are increasingly represented in academic surgery but remain underrepresented in senior leadership.
- NIH funding is a key driver of academic promotion, research independence, and national visibility.
- Across multiple specialties, women receive NIH funding less often and receive smaller awards than men, even after accounting for productivity.
- Although more women are entering surgical oncology training, whether this has translated into equitable NIH funding remains unclear.

Our Objective

- This study evaluates sex-based differences in NIH funding among surgical oncologists.

Methods



PI = Principal Investigator; NIH = National Institutes of Health

Results

Fig 1. Number of NIH Funded Surgical Oncologists from 2013-2023 by Gender

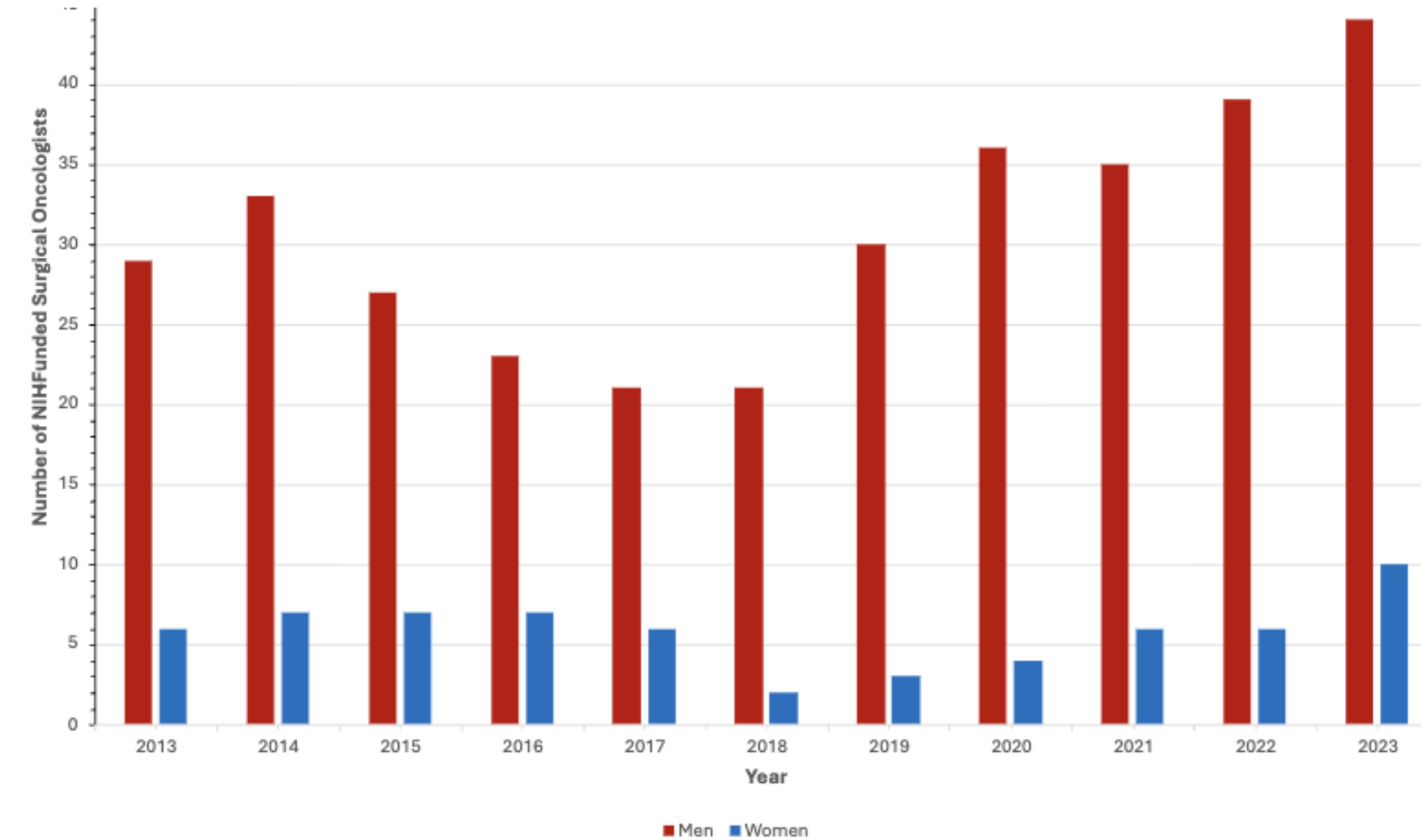


Fig 2. Mean NIH Funding for Surgical Oncologists from 2013-2023 by Gender
 $p = 0.011$

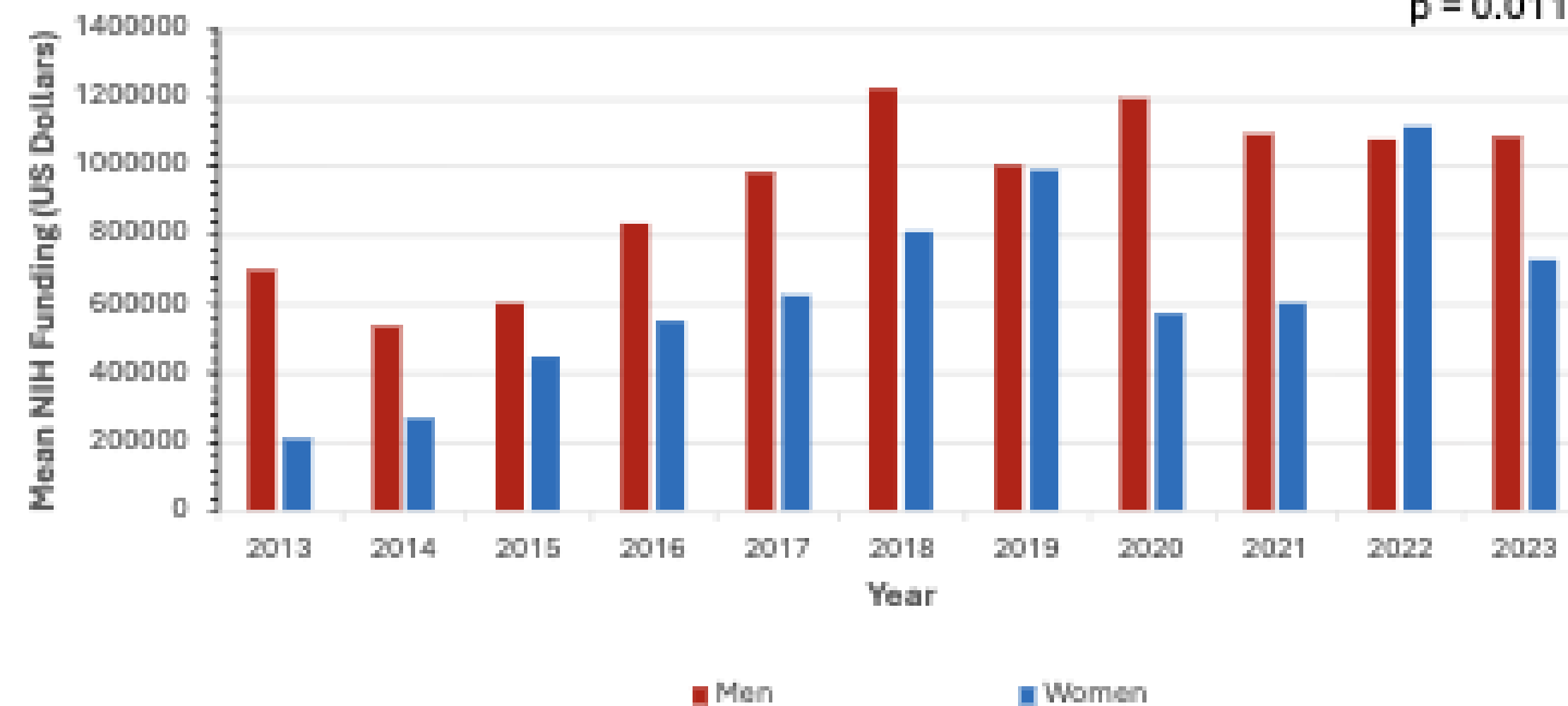
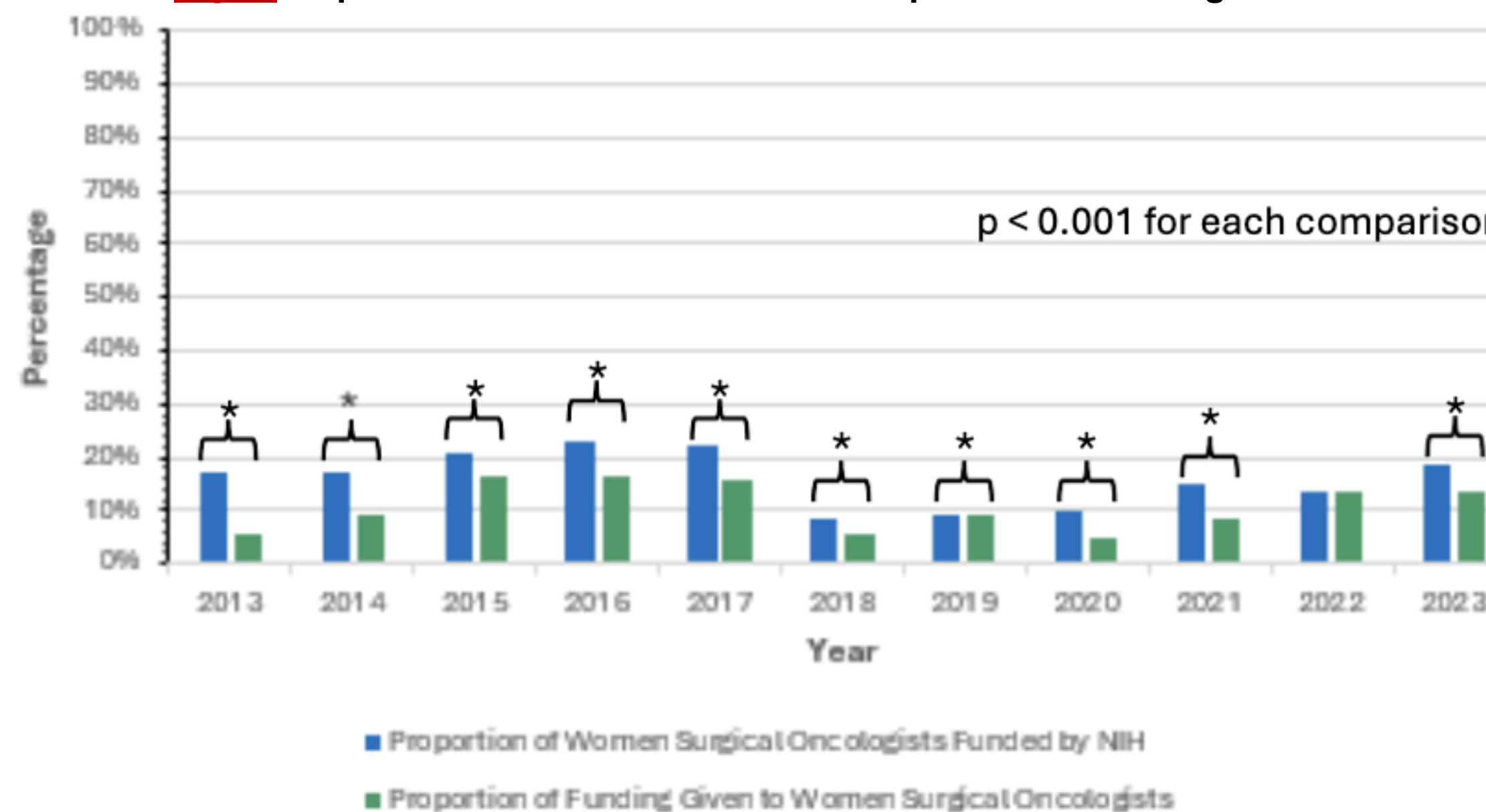


Fig 3. Proportion of Women Funded vs. Proportion of Funding Received



Results Continued

- We identified **88 unique NIH-funded surgical oncologists** from 2013–2023.
- Of these, **17 were women (19.3%)** and **71 were men (80.7%)**.
- Men represented a significantly greater proportion of NIH-funded surgical oncologists across the study period ($p < 0.001$; **Fig. 1**).
- Women accounted for **8.7% to 23.3%** of NIH-funded surgical oncologists annually.
- The proportion of NIH-funded women did **not significantly increase over time** ($p = 0.935$; **Fig. 1**).
- Mean annual NIH funding was significantly higher among men surgical oncologists overall ($p = 0.01$; **Fig. 2**).
- In 2022, mean NIH funding for women slightly exceeded that of men.
- From 2013–2023, women received a disproportionately smaller share of total NIH funding relative to their representation among funded investigators ($p < 0.001$; **Fig. 3**).
- The only exception was 2022, when women’s share of NIH funding was similar to their representation among NIH-funded surgical oncologists.

Conclusion

- NIH funding in surgical oncology increased from 2013–2023.
- Women remained underrepresented among NIH-funded surgical oncologists throughout the study period.
- Women received a disproportionately smaller share of total NIH funding relative to their representation among funded investigators.
- Increased overall NIH funding did not translate into equivalent gains in funding equity for women surgical oncologists.
- These findings highlight the need for continued efforts to improve equity in research support and academic advancement within surgical oncology.

Bibliography

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