Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

ILLUMINATING PHILANTHROPY

February 13, 2020
MCF Annual Conference

Mala Thao
Mark Hiemenz
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

99.9999996%
UNCONSCIOUS
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Welcome!

What brought you here?
Growth Zone

Each participant has ownership of his or her experience.

Growth Zone: where the greatest learning occurs
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

◊ Share respectfully
◊ Let yourself be real
◊ Self manage your boundaries
◊ Open up to learning

◊ Participate fully
◊ Honor confidentiality
◊ Celebrate differences
◊ Be generous to yourself and others
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Your Trusted Ten
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

We receive 11 million bits of information every moment.

We can only consciously process 40 bits.
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

So, what is unconscious bias?

• The mental shortcuts our brains take to help us make decisions quickly.
• A bias that we are unaware of, which happens outside of our control, automatically, triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

- Awareness
- Acceptance
- Concern
- Replacement
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Awareness, Acceptance, Concern, and Replacement

• Raise *awareness* of unconscious biases
• Help people *accept* that biases affect them, including when working with colleagues, partners, prospects, vendors, clients, and others
• Stress their *concern* about the consequences
• Assure people are willing to learn to *replace* those tendencies with ones that more closely match their values
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Grant applicants

Grantees

Colleagues

Partners

Vendors

Others
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Some questions to consider:

• What stereotypes do you see that are often automatic and unconscious?
• How do stereotypes influence the decisions we make about other people, preventing their ability to contribute to our mission and goals?
• Can you see how some people are judged by their expected potential, while others are judged by their proven accomplishments? How does that create an unconscious, unlevel playing field?
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

We’re encouraging panel members to:

- Deliberately slow down decision making
- Reconsider reasons for decisions
- Question cultural stereotypes
- Monitor each other for unconscious bias

THE ROYAL SOCIETY
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Report back:

• How was your *awareness* raised?
• Can you *accept* that biases affect you?
• How are you *concerned* about the consequences of unconscious bias?
• How can you *replace* those tendencies with ones that more closely match your values?
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

- Awareness
- Acceptance
- Concern
- Replacement
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

What does this mean/next steps:

• Supports great work you’re already doing
• Take back with you a spirit of discovery
• Being attuned to unconscious biases means you can discover them and act on them
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

- Wrap up
- Commitments
- Evaluation
Don’t Let Unconscious Bias Reduce your Grantmaking Effectiveness

Thank you!