



## OVERVIEW & RESOURCES

### TOPIC: BIAS

#### Definitions:

- **Bias** is when, rather than being neutral, we have a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people. They can be problematic since they don't allow the person bearing the bias to take all the facts or evidence into account when making a decision.
- **Unconscious bias** refers to a bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. They are automatic and triggered when we have to make quick judgments and assessments of people and their situations. While these attitudes may come from our direct real-world encounters with various groups of people, they often do not; most stem from ideas relayed to us through family/friends, stories, books, movies, media, and culture.
- **Implicit bias** is similar to unconscious bias, but questions the extent to which biases are unconscious as we are increasingly being made aware of them. For example, prior to completing a bias activity or assessment, you may have been unaware or unconscious of your biases; however, once this process exposes you to them, you are no longer unaware.

#### Key Takeaways

- Our view of the world is shaped by our experiences and the information available to us. We make assumptions accordingly.
- Perspective taking is a good exercise to attempt to understand the experience of others.
- Everyone has bias, some we are aware of and some that exist in the subconscious.
- Recognizing and identifying your biases are critical first steps to addressing them

#### Suggested Next Steps

- **Continuing to educate and understand yourself** involves spending time exploring your own biases and where they may come from. Some helpful resources to do so are below.
- **Understanding the nature of bias** is also essential. The mental categorization that gives rise to unconscious bias is a normal aspect of human cognition. Understanding this important concept can help individuals approach their biases in a more informed and open way.
- **Engaging with socially diverse others** can also be beneficial. Personal relationships and experience provide great alternatives to the stereotypical portrayals that lead to biases. Further, sharing your biases can help others feel more secure about exploring their own. It's important to have these conversations in a safe space where individuals are open to alternative perspectives and viewpoints.

#### Bias Resources

- Online resource: [Harvard Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#) on Race
- Video: [BruinX Implicit Bias Series](#) (Preface through Lesson 6, approx. 30 minutes)
- Video: [Verna Myers' TEDx Talk - How to Overcome Our Biases](#) (17.53 minutes)