

Hi, and thank you for agreeing to be a reviewer in one of Sea Grant's competitive processes.

My name is Brooke Carney, and I work in the National Sea Grant Office as the diversity, equity, inclusion, tribal and indigenous lead and liaison to the broader Sea Grant network.

The National Sea Grant College Program values and actively supports diversity, equity, and inclusion in both our organization and the communities we serve.

We have developed bias awareness resources for individuals who participate in review processes hosted by Sea Grant in an effort to reduce bias.

After viewing this short introductory video, please take time to review the resources available on our website as well as any resources provided to you by the review event organizers.

Everyone has bias. Bias is a mental shortcut that helps humans process information quickly and efficiently.

Sometimes, though, our biases cause us to process information through a narrow lens.

Understanding the types of unconscious biases can help you to be more aware of how they affect your decisions.

As the various types of biases are described, consider pausing the video and thinking about how each of the biases could lead to incomplete or unfair assessments and decisions in a merit review process.

Diagnosis bias occurs when you judge someone based on your first impression, and refuse to change your opinion in the face of new evidence.

Value attribution bias happens when you assign something a value and then allow that perception to cloud all subsequent interactions or new information.

Confirmation bias occurs when you only pay attention to information that confirms your pre-existing opinions, discounting anything that would disprove them.

Commitment confirmation bias happens when you grow so attached to an idea that you make bad choices in order to appear consistent.

Anchoring bias takes place when your decision is overly influenced by the first piece of information that you receive about something.

Attentional bias happens when you base a decision on only one thing, to the exclusion of all other relevant evidence.

Primacy bias takes place when you focus only on what happened first, ignoring all other aspects of a situation.

Recency bias happens when you judge something based only on what happened most recently, instead of considering the whole situation.

Again, everyone has bias. Understanding the types of unconscious biases can help you to be more aware of how they affect your decisions.

There are many ways to help individuals and groups minimize bias to ensure fair assessments and decisions.

As an individual, you can do things to manage bias. As you review each application or proposal, ask yourself critical questions such as

Does the proposal remind you of yourself or others?

Have you assigned value to this proposal or application based on details other than its merit?

Have you given this and all applications equal attention and time?

As you participate in interviews or review panel discussions, consider

Are you updating your opinion of the applicant based on new information received?

Are you updating your assessment of the applicant based on merit only?

Are there other details influencing your assessment?

As an organization, we can also work to manage bias by doing things such as

Redacting personal information from applications and proposals that may influence or bias reviewers, including names, addresses, and institutional affiliations;

Utilizing a consistent scoring rubric throughout the process;

Ensuring reviewers are aware of bias, how to recognize it, and how to manage it; and

Reminding reviewers of the evaluation metrics and priorities of the opportunity for which they are reviewing applications or proposals

Thank you for your commitment to the merit review process and to reducing the influence of bias in the process.

Additional bias awareness resources are available on Sea Grant's website at

seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/bias