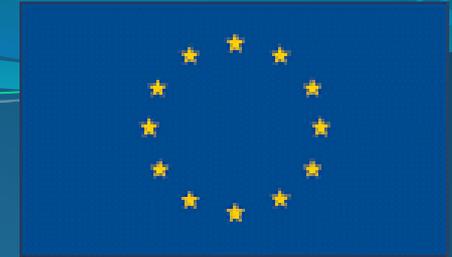




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Narratives of Implicit Gender Biases: How do we address them?

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“The promotion of gender equality in research and innovation is a commitment, enshrined in the core documents establishing Horizon 2020”

What is Unconscious Bias?

Psychologists tell us that our unconscious biases are simply our natural 'people preferences'Put simply, our neurology takes us to the very brink of bias and poor decision making.



Everyone has biases; it's part of being human. It's important not to be ashamed of this basic fact.

YOU are biased.



It matters.

Here's an example of the consequences....



Irish HEA's National Online Survey 2015-16 (>4,800 respondents)

“Organisational culture ...is the most important area to address...”

“Managers need to be shown how to question their own behaviour....much gender discrimination is done on a subconscious level”

“I have witnessed, at a meeting where a senior manager was explicitly stating his commitment to equality, that same manager single out a male professor who attracted funding and ignoring another female academic in the same room who had won a higher level of funding”

“Gender inequality is endemic in the language and culture of higher educational establishments in Ireland. If you say the word ‘professor’ or ‘director’ to anyone they assume it is a ‘he’”

“Mostly male colleagues don’t realise their own attitudes arguing for the best person for the job, failing to recognise that the structures and social inequalities that exist often do not permit the best female candidate to emerging.... Men just prefer to work with men (subconsciously) and that is a problem”

“I attended a course in the university which educated me about unconscious bias. It opened my eyes to it and now I see it everywhere, even occasionally in myself”

“There is also a PR culture that publicly promotes males – I have been made to bring a male colleague on radio or TV with me when I was PI & the male was not even involved in my project but Communications insisted to add weight.”

“University senior management and government have only ‘discovered’ gender bias in Irish HE very recently. I want Irish universities to try to compete with the best universities in the world, but in the area of gender equality we are two to three decades behind.”

“My experience is that the written rules, the formal policies etc. are fine – it is the underlying bias in the norms, values and the way decisions are made and preferment is exercised that is the problem.”

Perceived Outcomes of Implicit (Gender) Biases (in TCD):

“I am dismayed to find myself still at assistant professor level after over twenty years of hard work and I know that view is shared by many eminent international and national academic colleagues..... I suspect ageism and sexism may also be at play.” [Gender/Age]

“In what I perceive to be a more equitable system, I would have been promoted further up the system. I chose to value certain things which are not highly valued in the promotion system....feedback I have received indicates that only frequent publication in a very limited range of sites and the procurement of large research grants would propel me further up the promotional ladder.” [Gender/Discipline]

“...as a non-Irish / EU national I have been passed over by Irish and EU peers who have less achievement than myself“ [Gender/Race/Ethnicity]

What can we conclude from these narratives?

- Paternalistic, authoritarian, male dominated, hierarchical, competitive working environment

“School is highly competitive so the 'lads' jostle and rise in the ranks. Have observed a cavalier attitude towards weaker/less secure staff”

- Sexist

“Females in my section of the department are not treated as the males are. We are always asked to go and do tasks such as pop to the shop, make tea/coffee, order sandwiches etc. male colleagues are never asked to perform these duties”

- Lack of support around maternity

“some Heads regard it as a sabbatical”

Here's one personal herstory.....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8MXCFi0SOw>

Please note: Only about 2 minutes of this video were shown at the conference, predominantly at minute 34 and following

INTEGER: TCD case study

<http://dai.ly/k5Q6R02b3EirG6c8kpZ>