



Unconscious bias training for the Creative and Cultural Industries

Institute of
Art, Design +
Technology
Dún Laoghaire

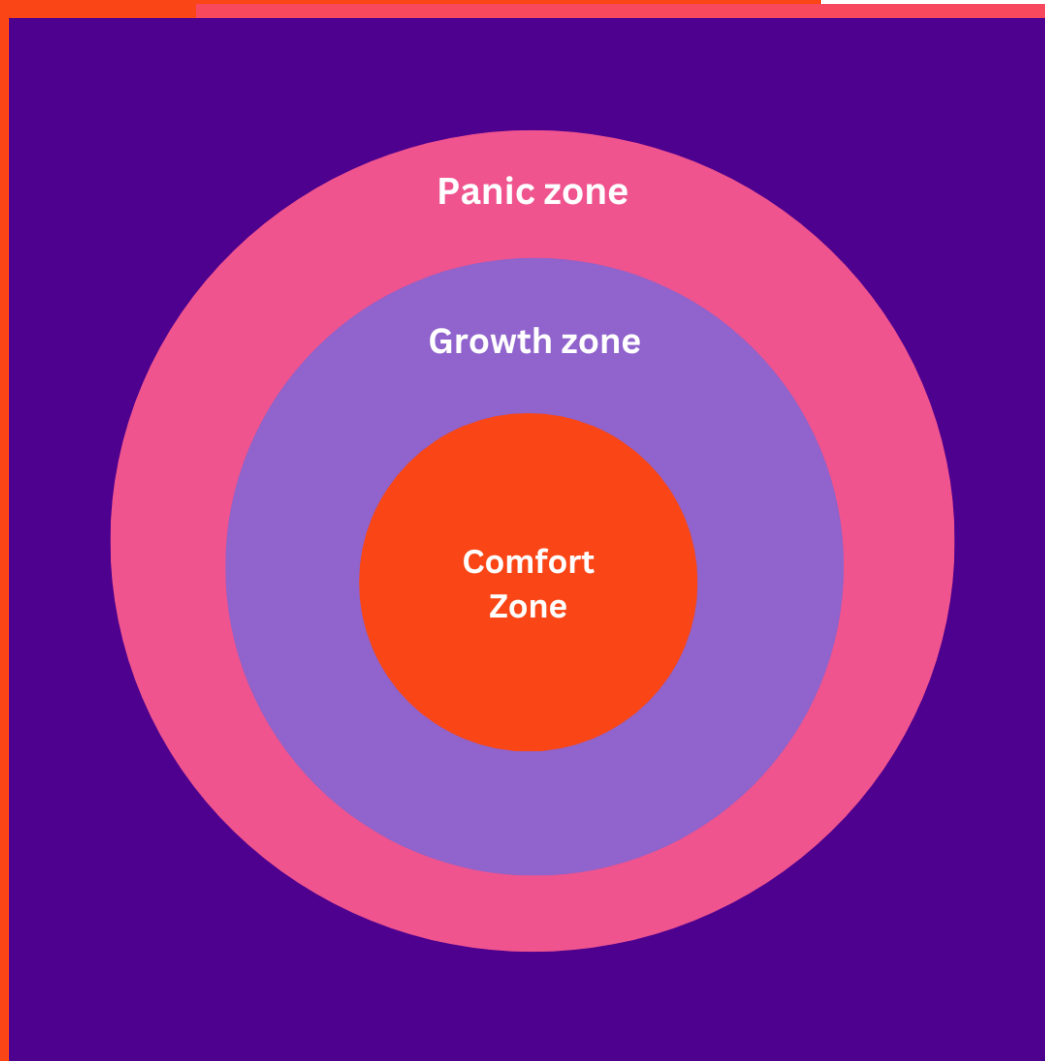
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Dignity & Respect Officer, IADT



Learning objectives

- Understand why bias matters
- Recognize the sources of unconscious bias
- Comprehend impacts of bias on the creative and cultural industries
- Identify bias in our work
- Develop strategies to combat bias



Guiding Principles

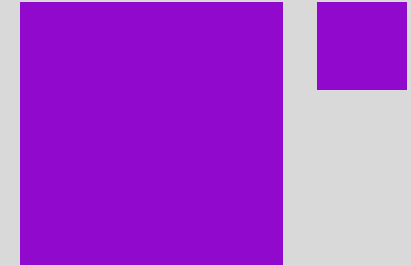
- Respect
- Engage to grow
- What's said stays, what's learned leaves
- Challenge the idea, not the person
- Prioritize your needs
- Time is precious!

What is bias?

A bias is a tendency, inclination, or prejudice toward or against something or someone. Some biases are positive and helpful—like choosing to only eat foods that are considered healthy or staying away from someone who has knowingly caused harm. But biases are often based on stereotypes, rather than actual knowledge of an individual or circumstance.

There are different types of bias

- **Explicit Bias** refers to attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level.
- **Unconscious/Implicit Bias** refers to unintended, subtle, and subconscious thoughts that happen to all of us, all of the time.



Where do Unconscious Biases Come From?

Every person has unconscious biases. Unconscious biases are a way in which the human brain uses associative thinking. Associative thinking serves a function for humans – it helps us to avoid threats to our safety.

However, biases are also something we learn through socialization and media exposure. Our biases are a result of our life experiences and social identity.



Associative thinking and predisposition to bias

Recent research from University College London has shown that human brains are pre-disposed to learn negative stereotypes. The research highlighted that the brain responds more strongly to information about groups who are portrayed negatively, than it does to positive information about a group or community. This is why understanding social identity is important in addressing your implicit biases.



What does social identity mean?

Social identity is the aspect of an individual's self-concept that comes from membership in a specific social group. We all have a social identity, which is comprised of the various aspects of our identity that makes us who we are. This includes our race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, age, religion and so on. People's social identities can be intersecting or multiple. E.g. working-class, White and transgender or middle-class, Black and disabled.

Because social identities refer to our membership of different groups, we are likely to have unconscious biases towards people based on their social identity.

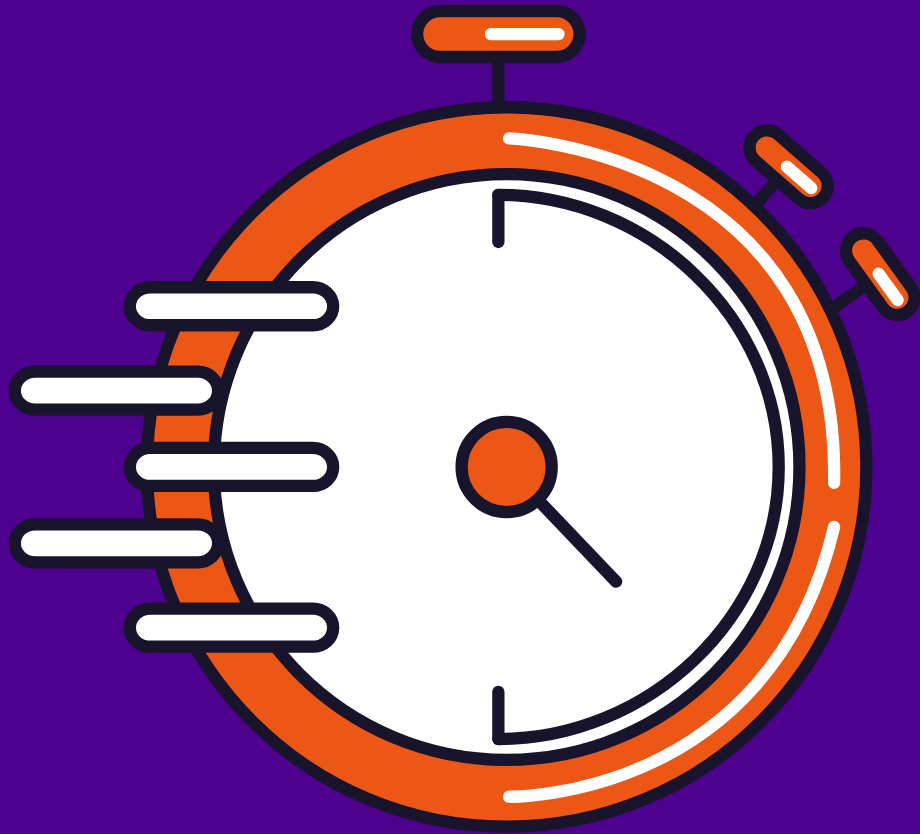


When do Unconscious Biases Occur?

Unconscious biases exist in our brains all the time, whether we are aware of them or not. However, they are most likely to become evident when we are making quick judgements of situations or people, under time pressure, or making split-second decisions.

This means, that even though you consciously do not support biased views, your subconscious may still hold unconscious biases due to its **associative thinking** function.





Quick exercise!

On the next slide you will see a table of words.

When prompted, please say aloud to yourself the **COLOUR** of each word, not what the word says, as fast as you can. You will have 10 seconds.

Try not to read the words, just say what color it is.

Ready?



Orange

Green

Yellow

Pink

Blue

Black



Slower exercise

On the next slide you will see the same table of words.

When prompted, please say aloud to yourself the **COLOUR** of each word, not what the word says. **This time, you will have 20 seconds.**

Try not to read the words, just say what color it is.

Ready?



Orange

Green

Yellow

Pink

Blue

Black

We all have conscious and unconscious biases.





Different types of Unconscious Bias

Types of Unconscious Bias (1)

Affinity Bias

- This bias occurs when we are drawn to people we are like. We are biased in favour of those with whom we share an affinity. That's to say: people like me.

Confirmation Bias

- This bias occurs when we favor information which confirms what we already believe. For example, if we have explicit biases about a group or community, we will be more willing to believe negative things about them.

Types of Unconscious Bias (2)

Halo Effect

- This bias occurs when we allow one specific trait or our overall impression of a person, company or product to positively influence our judgment of their other related traits.

Horns Effect

- This bias occurs when we draw conclusions about a person based only on one personality trait, behavior or negative attitude which obscures the rest of the positive characteristics of a person or group.

How do unconscious biases effect our work in the creative and cultural industries?

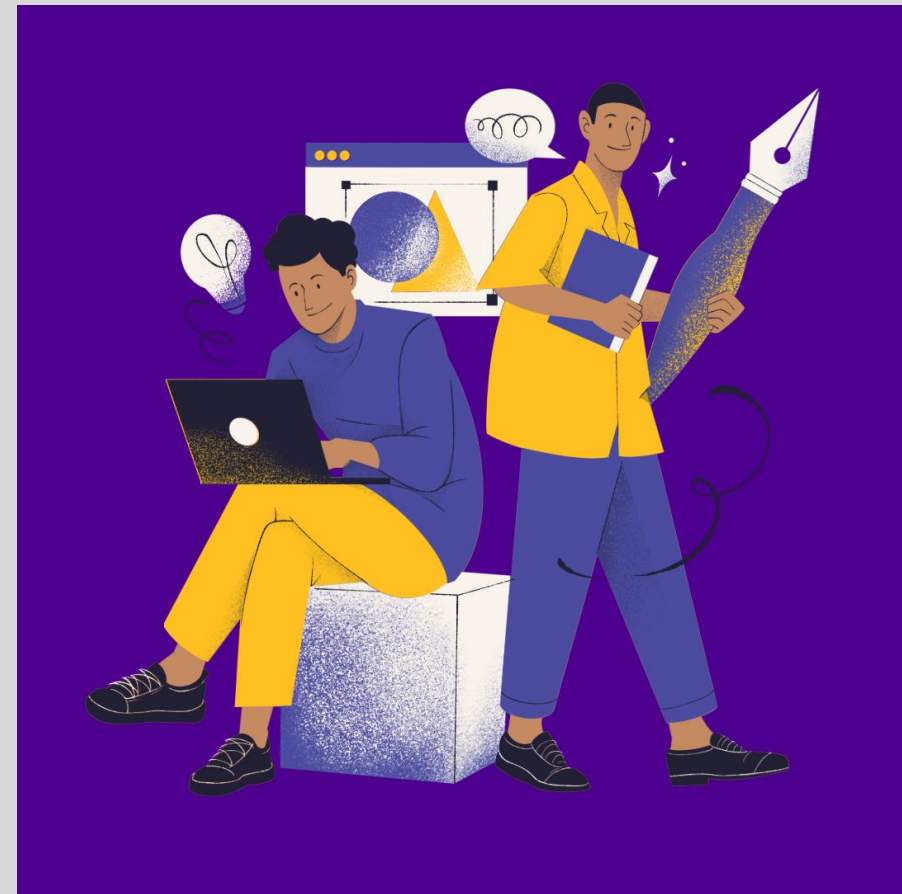


The landscape of the CCIs in Europe

The Creative and Cultural Industries, though exciting and forward-thinking, do not always represent the diversity of our European societies. There are many reasons for this, mostly related to concepts of power and privilege.

Historically, the CCIs were only accessible to middle-class, privileged, White, Europeans. Disparities in terms of socio-economic background, race, gender and ethnicity are still pervasive today.

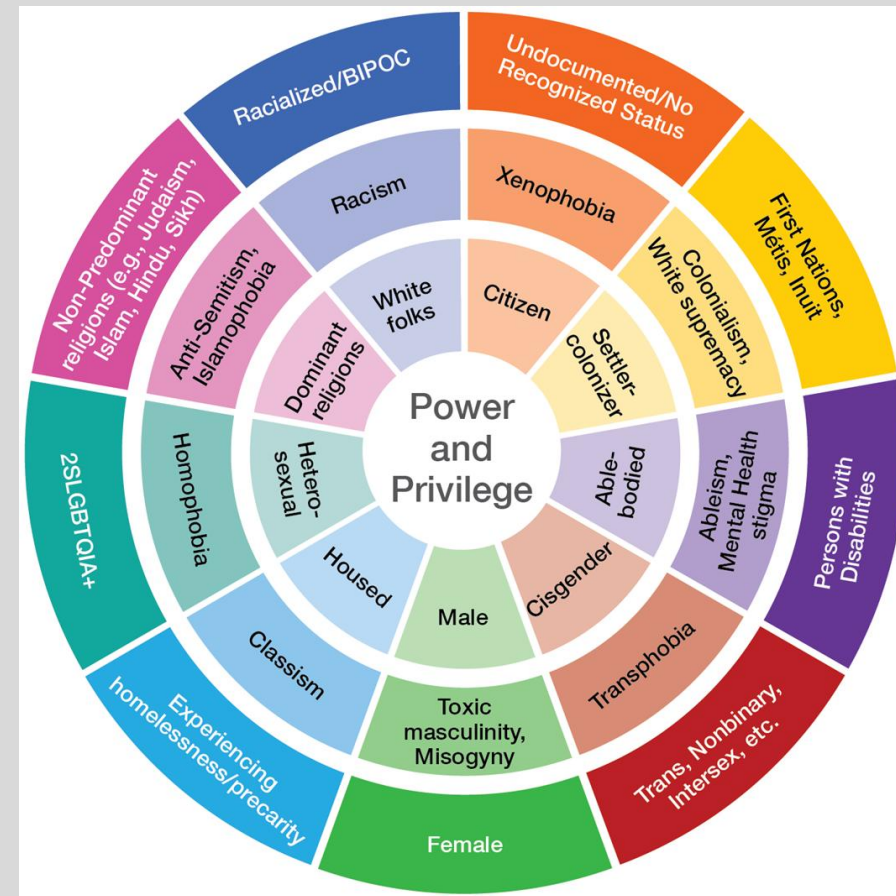
In Ireland, recent research has suggested that ways to mitigate against these disparities include EDI and unconscious bias training for employees of the CCIs.



Power, Privilege and Unconscious Bias

With these disparities and inequalities comes an imbalance of power within the CCI. This means that often those with the most privilege end up in the most powerful positions, making decisions on who gets represented, what stories get told, and what stereotypes get perpetrated.

This is why being aware of our potential biases is extremely important in the CCI. If we examine our biases and challenge ourselves to confront harmful beliefs we may have internalized, we can stop negative stereotypes and inaccurate representations occurring in the media we produce.

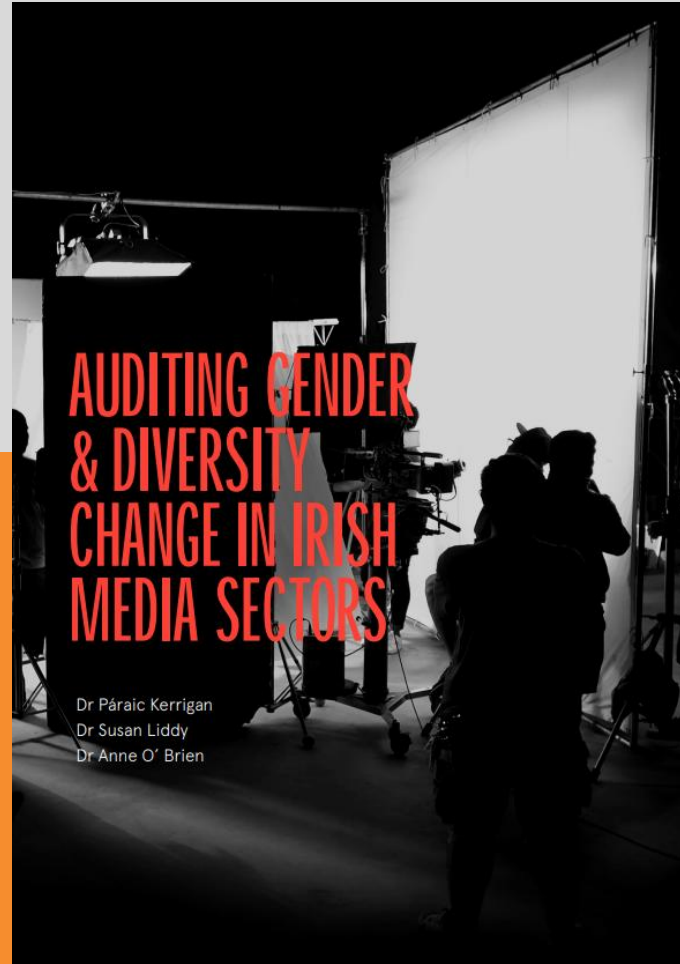


Sectoral Research Reports



SPEAK UP: A CALL FOR CHANGE

TOWARDS CREATING A SAFE
AND RESPECTFUL WORKING
ENVIRONMENT FOR THE ARTS



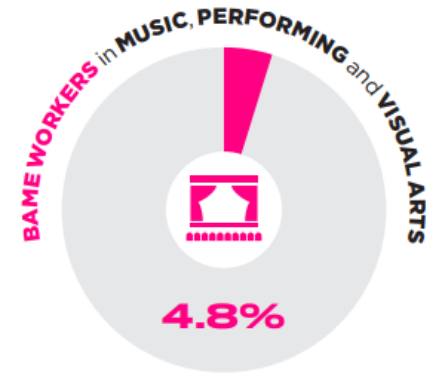
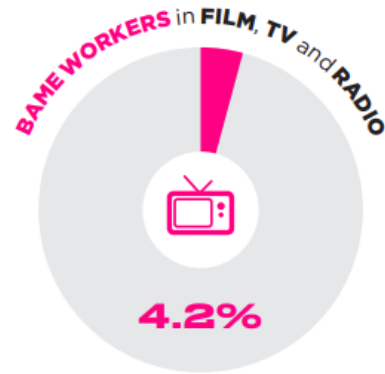
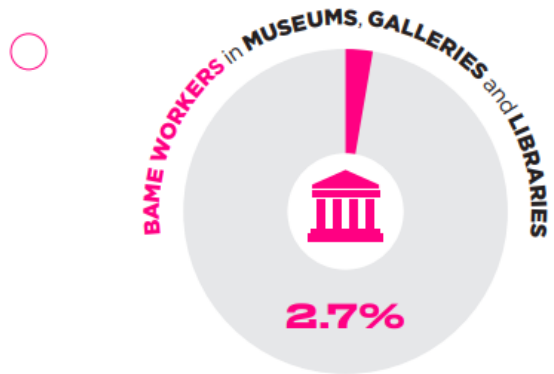
PANIC!

IT'S AN ARTS EMERGENCY

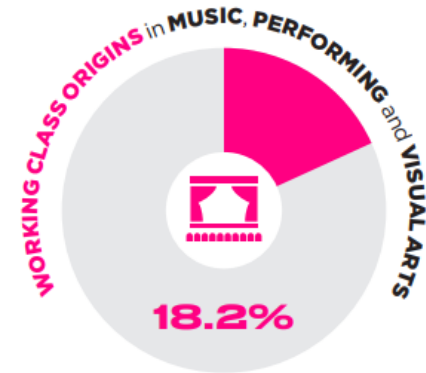
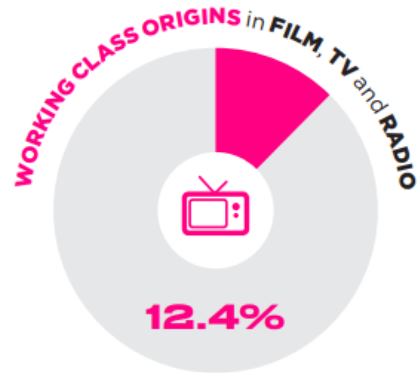
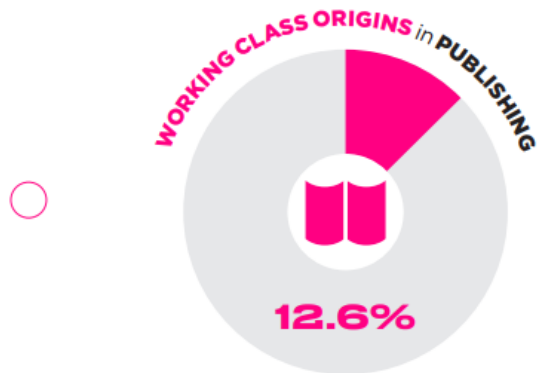
*Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities
in the Creative Industries*

Panic! It's an Arts Emergency!

Ethnicity



Class



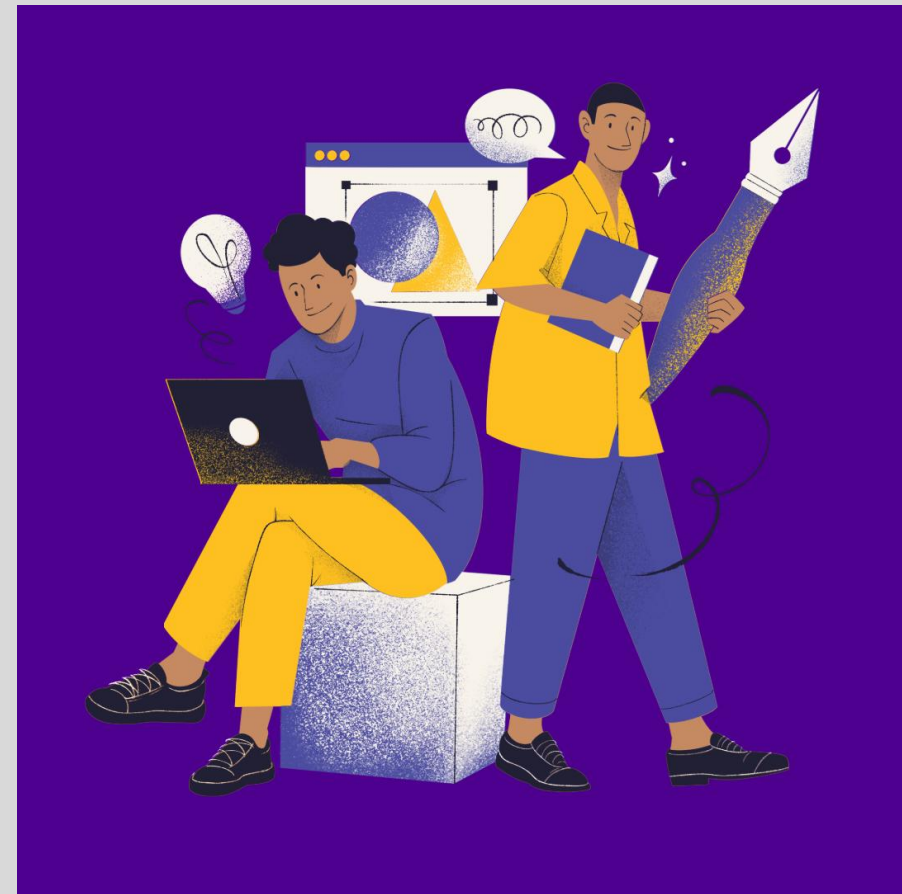
How do unconscious biases effect our workplaces?



Unconscious bias in the workplace

Our unconscious biases can impact our work and the decisions we make during recruitment, production, promotion and delegation of tasks. There are multiple strategies for mitigating harm caused by our unconscious biases in work. These include:

- Blind CV recruitment
- Posting job advertisements in new places
- Division of labour in gender-equal ways
- Changing our language – Global Majority vs. Ethnic Minority
- Intergroup work

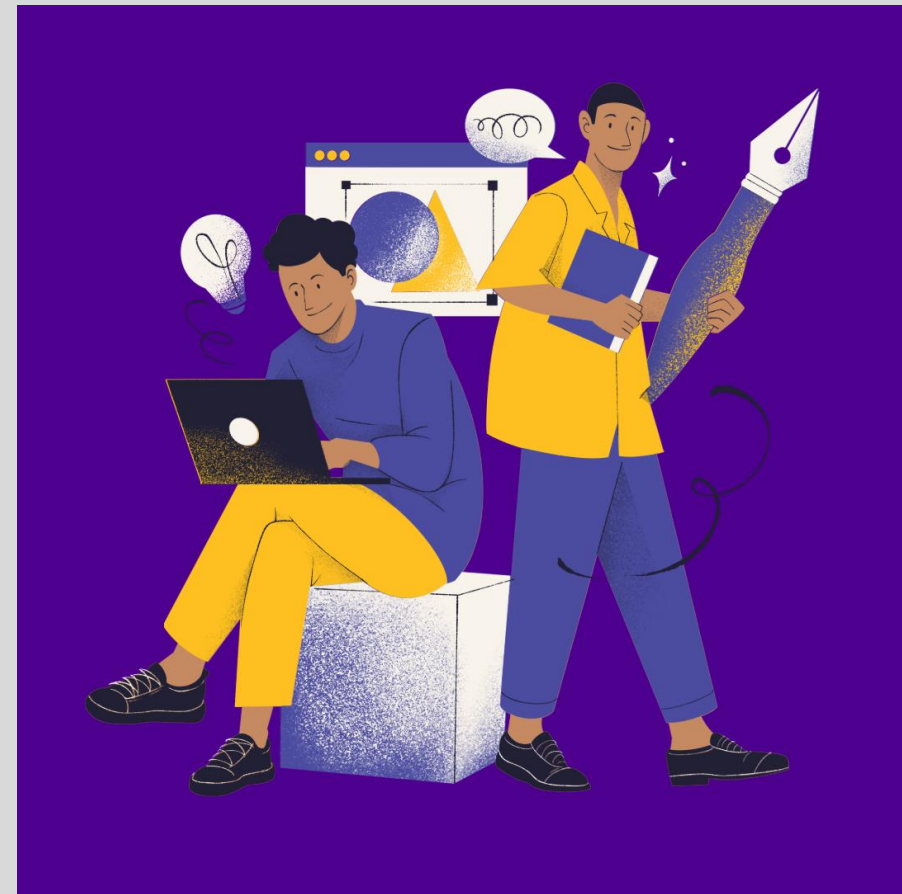


Intergroup work

Because our unconscious biases are formed through associative thinking, by changing our exposure to and time spent with people from different cultures, backgrounds and communities, we can begin to change the associations our brains make about certain social identities.

Research suggests that working in diverse, multi-national teams is a good step towards combatting your own unconscious biases.

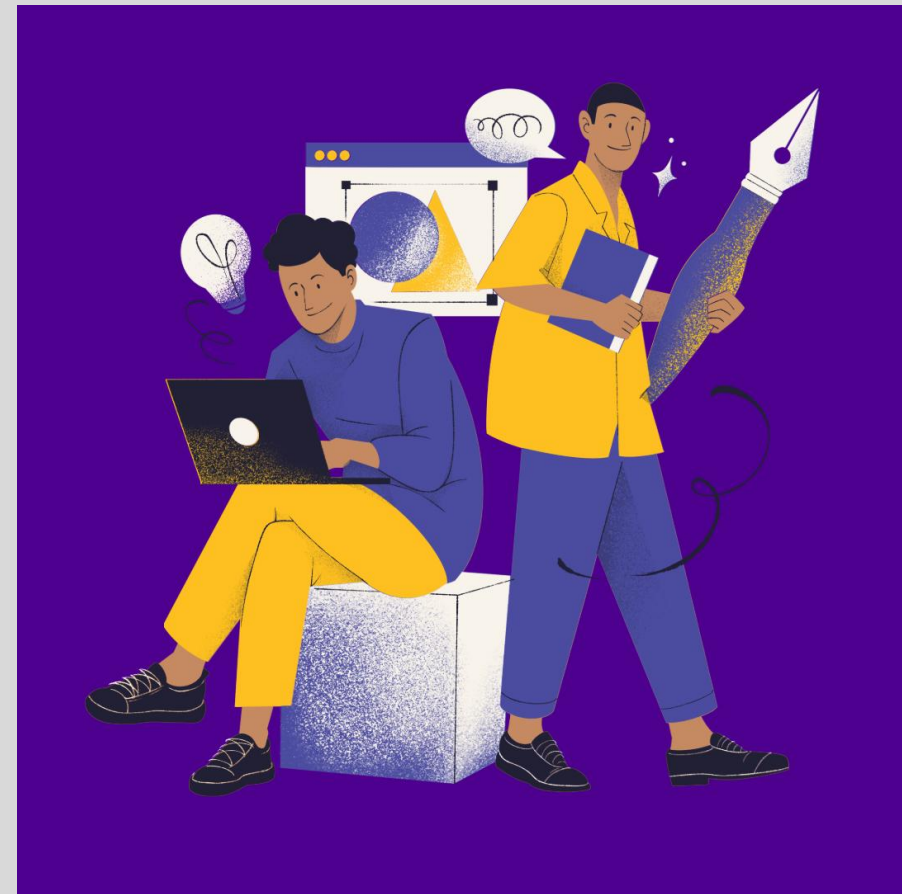
Think about your experience in FilmEU so far; have any of your attitudes towards certain social groups changed since working in intergroup contexts?



Implicit Association Test

An implicit bias test is a tool that measures the strength of associations between concepts and evaluations or stereotypes to reveal an individual's hidden or subconscious biases. The test uses a computer program to show images and words and record how long it takes someone to choose between two things. The test was created by Project Implicit, a research collaboration between scientists at Harvard, the University of Virginia, and the University of Washington.

You can find the link here: <https://www.projectimplicit.net>

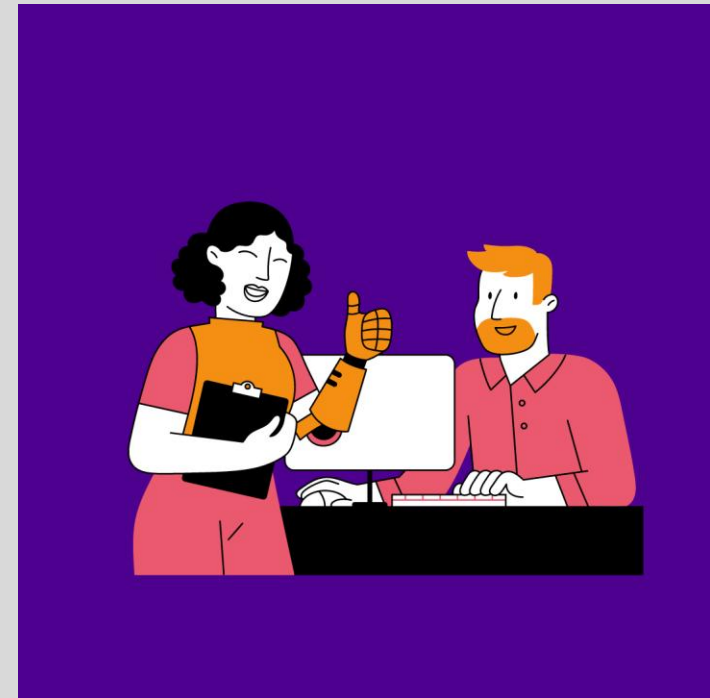


Recap:

We all have unconscious biases. Unconscious biases do not mean that you are a bad person, with harmful beliefs and attitudes that you knowingly display. Unconscious biases just mean that your brain is trying to help you by giving you less work to do.

However, we can train ourselves to become aware of our unconscious biases by actively challenging harmful societal beliefs, taking IATs, taking stock of our social and professional networks, and working within diverse teams.

Unconscious bias is not something that will be solved with one training session. Challenging our unconscious biases should be an ongoing commitment – but we **can** challenge them!





Questions & answers!

Write your questions in to the Q&A box, or raise the hand emoji!



Thank you!

Engaging in unconscious bias training can help you and your organization stay alert to potential biases that lead to issues of inequity and disparity. By taking steps to challenge your own biases, you can make your organization more inclusive.

Additional resources

A resource package will be emailed to you after this session. If you have any further questions, you can contact **equality@iadt.ie** or **emma.balfe@iadt.ie**.

