

Health Equity Showcase, August 2019

## What's the project?

A subcommittee of the Equity and Grants Work Group created a detailed training guide for grant managers to use with grant reviewers to help reduce bias in the grant review process. The guide is a companion document to a PowerPoint training for grant managers to use with reviewers before they receive applications to review.

## Why is it important?

The purpose of this training is to educate MDH grant reviewers about bias, offer ways for reviewers to reduce their own personal bias in grant reviewing and scoring, and highlight the importance of listening to the voices of community members applying for MDH grants.

## How did you accomplish it? Who were your partners?

The Equity and Grants: Mitigating Bias in the Grant Review Process subgroup held a small focus group in November of 2018. The goal of the focus group was to gather feedback from consumers of MDH Requests for Proposals and grants – especially those from communities that are typically underserved by grant making, including communities experiencing inequities – regarding their perceptions of bias in the process. Using their input as a foundation, the subgroup conducted research on bias in grant making and created a guide and a training.

## Lessons Learned

The group did a lot of research to learn more about implicit and explicit bias and their costs in grant making. The group also made intentional efforts to ask former applicants about their experience in the review process and listen to what they would want reviewers of their applications to know.

## Results and Next Steps

The guide and training are currently going through a final review and then will be released for grant managers throughout MDH to use in their grant review processes. Once released, the guide and training will be available on Grants Central. Grants staff who use the guide and training are encouraged to share their experience and any tips for improving the resources with the Equity and Grants Work Group.

## Team Members

Subgroup Members: Anna Bosch, Betty Hiller and Mariah Wilberg.  
Former Members: Paula Schaefer and Japhet Nyakundi.  
Work Group Chairs: Bridget Roby and Christine Godwin.

### The Cost of Bias in Grant Making (1/2)

The D5 coalition, a five-year coalition founded to advance philanthropy's diversity, equity and inclusion, reported various inequities in distribution of grant dollars from a sample of 1,000 of the largest U.S. foundations\* (FC 1,000). <sup>1</sup>

Diverse Populations (2013)	% of Overall Grant Totals to FC 1,000
Ethnic or Racial Minorities	6.9
Women and Girls	7.7
People with Disabilities	6.0
LGBT	0.3

## Common areas where bias appears in the grant review process:



Size/Age of the Organization



Cultural Factors



Perceived Capacity