

## Expanding Potential 2015-6 Seed Project Awardee Final Report

The purpose of this final report is for readers to understand the motivations, processes, and outcomes for the seed project awardee's programming in order to sustain and scale these efforts.

### **1) Please outline your project. When responding, take into consideration if someone wanted to reproduce your program is reading this answer.**

We established a group of STEM researchers to raise awareness about unconscious bias (UB). We all have UB, and UB creates barriers to women and/or underrepresented minorities (URMs). But with some effort, we can reduce our bias, and we can establish best practices to minimize the effects of unconscious bias.

1) The first goal of our project was to read primary literature about UB in order to build a website, now live at [www.UnconsciousBiasProject.org](http://www.UnconsciousBiasProject.org). The website is still in beta, but we are adding content to it every week!

Using plain English, the website documents UB, tells readers how to reduce their own bias, and explains best practices to reduce the effects of our own biases. We will use cartoons to make the website more fun, and provide examples of situations and advice that are very STEM-specific.

2) When complete, we will place all our awareness flyers on the website to be downloaded, so that folks at any institution can spread the word about UB!

3) We developed two different workshops:

*Workshop 1: Bias Reduction:* this is based off a 2012 study by *Devine et al.* that was found to reduce participants' UB for at least 3 months.

*Workshop 2: Bias Awareness and Intervention:* We developed this workshop ourselves, and it utilizes the cartoons to explain how bias can manifest. We discuss a number of possible scenarios, and provide a range of possible responses in these scenarios.

4) We established a presence on social media, on both

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UnconsciousBiasProject/?fref=ts> and

Twitter [https://twitter.com/UBP\\_STEM](https://twitter.com/UBP_STEM).

### **2) What were your initial goals for your program?**

Our initial goals match up very well with what we have accomplished so far, though the original plans placed more emphasis on website development than workshops. The original idea for workshops was very different, too. Read more in 3).

### **3) How have your goals changed? What motivated these changes?**

Though I had originally thought that the website would be an extremely useful and stand-alone resource, when talking with University of California, Berkeley (hereafter referred to as Cal)

members, I found people were much more excited about short workshops than a website. So, we began to place more emphasis on the website as an advertisement for our workshops, with additional resources, rather than a source we would direct people to on their own.

We became more excited about workshops especially after reading the 2012 paper by *Devine et al.*, when we learned we could give the same workshop that the study participants received. This evidence-based approach very much appeals to STEM researchers, so we went with it!

Our original ideas for events, “Listening Events,” was proposed as a venue for folks with unconscious bias against certain groups to meet members of those groups. But after more reading, we decided “Listening Events” put too much burden on the URMs present. In contrast, the Bystander Intervention workshop is more action oriented, and a safer and more pleasant environment for URMs.

A UBP member connected us with the Bears that Care group, who got us thinking about how UBP could do more about bias awareness and intervention. We had originally been thinking about the project as only focusing on the UB within ourselves, but addressing UB in others is also very important.

By attending a Bias workshop from the Department of Diversity and Inclusion, I met some people in that Department and shared the Bias Reduction workshop with them, too. It sparked a conversation about whether the workshops they provide are actually effective, since they aren’t currently evidence-based. I’m excited to possibly have precipitated a shift in how the university approaches the issue of unconscious bias.

To that effect, I will also be presenting about UBP to folks that are taking the new Diversity and Inclusivity training class. We’re starting discussions about how UB trainings might become mandatory for incoming students, and possibly faculty. I had hoped that our group might eventually consult on such big issues, but we hadn’t planned on it happening so soon! We’re very excited.

Instead of planning rigidly regular events, we’ve also become more amenable to opportunities for special events, like tabling at the [IB/MCB Networking Event](#). We had the chance to mingle with Cal students and spread the word about UBP. We’re working with a group in MCB to develop a table for Cal Day in April now as well.

We had not anticipated that local STEM companies would have such strong interest in our group, but we already have one corporate workshop scheduled. You can view our upcoming events at <http://unconsciousbiasproject.org/events/>

When we were reading about Cal rules for hanging up flyers, we realized we needed to have formal Cal recognition to do so. So, we founded a student organization, which will make it easier to start satellite groups at other institutions, too. It took a while to write up a

Constitution and complete the mandatory trainings, but now we're established and have great access to both additional funding and networking events.

**4) How does your program address diversity and inclusion issues? How is your program enacting change?**

We address diversity and inclusion head on! Unconscious bias holds back URMs at many different levels. Thus our project strives to remove barriers for individuals to enter STEM, make STEM a less hostile environment for those individuals, and remove barriers for those individuals to rise and succeed, helping to seal the leaky pipeline.

Our bias reduction workshops target STEM members that have unconscious bias, while the Bias Awareness and Intervention Workshops provide tools for those at the receiving end to better minimize the effects of bias.

**By the numbers:**

- I gave the bias reduction workshop to >50 people in my department at Cal, Plant and Microbial Biology. This group included students, postdocs and faculty.
- In addition to the Bystander Intervention workshop at the Expanding Potential conference, I gave the workshop to two dozen men and women in Integrative Biology.
- At the IB/MCB Networking event, we reached over a hundred undergrads.
- On Facebook we have 228 likes, reaching a few thousand people a week with our posts.
- On Twitter we currently have 133 followers. Our tweets are often retweeted, further boosting our posts. We have tweeted 116 times, with a few more posts than that on Facebook.
- At Cal Day we anticipate interacting with several hundred attendees. We are working with Monica Albe to develop handouts for parents and teachers as well.
- At the Thriving in Science event in April, we anticipate dozens of attendees.

As the project grows and we give more workshops and promote the website on social media, we imagine reaching thousands of individuals on a weekly basis. The project is definitely snowballing in success!

**5) What partnerships were necessary to successfully launch this project?**

Synberc was pivotal for our project, providing not only financial help, but also guidance and deadlines. Knowing that we were working to have a functional website by the time the report was due helped us stay motivated, and inspired us to hone our focus throughout the year.

**6) How can your program be scaled and applied to different institutions?**

We've written elsewhere how the project can be scaled, by starting satellite groups at other institutions. We hope to make this even easier by starting the process of making UBP a non-profit organization.

I think the general outline of our project could be applied to other topics, such as stereotype threat. A group could build a website to highlight how stereotype threat holds back STEM members, and provide tools to address stereotype threat. Such projects could address issues such as imposter syndrome, being a parent, work-life balance, etc.

### **7) How did the seed project funding help your project?**

We used the funding to pay a professional for the graphic design of our logo. We also paid the first round of money to our cartoonist. A UBP member does our website design work, so we no longer have to pay web developers. Instead, we are paying the cartoonist more. We printed a poster for the Expanding Potential workshop, which hangs in the Koshland building and is seen by many guest scientists.

We didn't have to buy snacks for either of the workshops we've already given, and we don't need to pay for the Thriving in Science lecture either. Thus, we haven't had to use any of the money awarded for the Listening Events. Instead, we will be planning some larger scale workshops for the summer.

The money has also gone towards website domain purchasing and hosting. We now have both [www.unconsciousbiasproject.com](http://www.unconsciousbiasproject.com) and .org. We are in the process of redirecting the .com address to .org.

Before the 2016-2017 academic year starts, we'll buy a tablecloth with our logo. We have ideas for UB themed handouts like stickers and magnets to better boost awareness of the project.

With the leftover funds, and are about to start earning money for giving the workshops to companies, we hope to establish an annual Unconscious Bias Symposium, wherein we invite speakers that are doing the research, and talk about fresh ideas for reducing bias and changing our best practices.

### **8) Describe how feedback from the Expanding Potential Workshop helped inform your project.**

UBP received a LOT of very positive feedback at the Workshop! We know we're on the right track! One comment from the workshop inspired me to make more variations of the bystander awareness workshop. For example, I now want to make an Awareness and Intervention workshop focusing on gender bias, one for racial bias, one for bias against people with disabilities, etc. Tips for speaking out against gender bias might seem condescending when discussing bias against people with disabilities, and so it's worth discussing the different costs and benefits for speaking up against different manifestations of bias.

We also gained two new members, and I received an invitation to give the Bystander and Intervention Workshop at the April lecture for Thriving in Science. We got to use some quotes from the workshop for the testimonials on our website's homepage, too.

**9) What advice would you give to someone initiating this project at another institution?**

If someone is initiating a project like ours, I highly recommend surveying the community. We got some great ideas for flyers and issues from emailing different diversity groups around campus.

Make sure you carefully choose collaborators that can deliver products in a timely fashion.

If someone is planning a very long-term project like mine, be gentle and generous about letting members come and go. In other words, don't freak out when lab work takes over a member's life for a while and they can't commit for a term or two. If you're got a great idea and enthusiasm, more people will keep coming.

Take good notes of all your progress, regularly. You'll forget how much you've done unless you have a good record of everything. Having a running list of tasks to be done helped members contribute to weekly meetings even when they couldn't be present in person. That kind of list is also useful to scan when someone only has a few minutes to spend at a meeting, but want a small task (like creating a Google Group, for example).

**10) Please summarize any additional results that are not mentioned in the above answers.**

N/A

**11) Quote/testimonial**

Mitch: "As a founding member of UBP I was already motivated to shed more light on how our innate prejudices affect our judgments within STEM. Thanks to Synberc's funding, we had the resources to spend more time researching the topic in depth. The overwhelming amounts of scientific evidence to support the existence of UB and the negative outcomes it can lead to were eye opening. Because of Synberc's support, I feel more empowered to leverage this evidence to inform others in our community on actions we can take to make STEM more inclusive!"

Linet: "At the workshop, I met Cat and heard her talk about the Unconscious Bias Project (UBP). I've since joined UBP as an active volunteer and feel more knowledgeable about both overt and unconscious bias. I feel like the work I'm doing at UBP is already making a difference in my life and I know that our website will have a positive impact around the world."

Cat: "Synberc was instrumental in launching the Unconscious Bias Project. Having seed money to bring professionals on board to create our logo and cartoons gave us immediate legitimacy that helped bring in more members. Knowing that we were working toward a finished product for the January Expanding Potential Workshop was also extremely motivating, and helped us to

stay focused on the most important aspects of the project. I also really enjoyed hearing how other Seed Project leaders were approaching their work, because it gave me perspective on how many different approaches there are to the many-faceted issue of diversity in STEM.”