REMOVING BIAS FROM OUR PRODUCTS

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Goal of Presentation

Encourage product teams and managers to conduct an honest assessment of their inclusive development practices.

Promote the creation of a diversity, inclusion, and equity metric in order to incorporate said metric into our practices.

Promote a spirit of continuous learning and growth.

Uncover and escalate inhibitors for creating inclusive products.
What this presentation is not:

**Exhaustive:** This presentation is intended to encourage dialogue and action. It is not a destination, rather a checkpoint in your journey.

**Judgement:** This is intended to be a tool for teams to expose areas where they can grow. No two teams are the same and it is possible your team is already implementing some of these recommendations.
Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. That's our commitment.
Leadership Checkpoint

Leadership and Decision Making functions of the organization need to unlock the following to promote inclusive product development:

Promote a culture shift by regularly incorporating topics of inclusion in team ceremonies, through discussions in meetings, trainings, and by holding ourselves/peers accountable.

Prioritize **Equity and Fairness** as it relates to who and how we design products at the Foundation while developing mechanisms for team-based metrics that actively check for bias.

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Focus Areas:

Why are we building?

Who is building?

How are we building?

How do we move forward?
WHY ARE WE BUILDING?

In the early stages of determining what features we are going to build, we need to be explicit and transparent in determining why we are making changes, or creating something new.
Discuss:

The **Product Management**, **Community Relations Specialist**, **Analytics**, and **Design** functions of the organization should lead the evaluation of these questions.

- Are we enhancing or creating tools for our existing users, if so which existing users are we addressing and in what context?

- Are we trying to create tools to engage voices that are not currently represented?

- Do we have data that indicates what voices are overrepresented/underrepresented and is it possible to collect that data?

- If the answer to the questions above is no, should we/are we meaningfully pursuing processes that will change that?
Tip 1
Have a baseline analysis that incorporates qualitative information of who is being left out. The baseline should evaluate possible inhibitors for readers and contributors as a result of our tooling or lack thereof.

Tip 2
To promote equity, prioritize voices outside of those that opt-in and happen to be the loudest. Understand one-off editors on usertesting.com are not a monolith for junior contributors and leverage other
Our *why* provides the necessary context when determining how equity should be measured.
The word “diverse” is routinely used to describe the makeup of a team, but really we should strive to be representative of the world, at all levels, from the individual contributor to upper management.
Checking Blindspots

Hiring Managers, Recruiters and People Managers should lead the evaluation of this section.

1. Audit
Understand the composition of each team and function to establish a baseline.

2. Gap Analysis
Understand what identity groups are missing from which teams and functions.

3. Mind the Gap
When it is time to hire, managers should explicitly ask recruiters to partner with orgs that serve the groups identified as missing based on the gap analysis. Also leverage specialized contracting firms and intern programs.

4. Hiring Panels
Hiring panels shouldn't be homogenous and there must be transparent accountability measures for hiring managers that introduce discriminatory practices (implicitly or explicitly).

How many BIPOC are Associates vs Seniors vs Managers?
GROW EXISTING TALENT

There will continue to be gaps of underrepresented groups if existing talent isn't retained. Invest in professional development and clear paths for promotion for underrepresented talent.
Although we have a ways to go when it comes to race and ethnicity, this evaluation must be inclusive of all underrepresented identities in tech and have a lens for intersectionality.
HOW ARE WE BUILDING?

Now that we have discussed why we are building for whom, and who is building, we must equip ourselves with equitable processes and practices in order to produce equitable products.
Discuss:

The entire product development team should participate in this conversation.

When entering the building and testing phase, how have we engaged diverse Wikipedian user groups (ex. Women in Red, AfroCrowd) to ensure equitable impact?

How diverse are the regions and languages we get input from (ex. ambassadors)?

If we engage an editor from French Wikipedia, do we consider French speaking Sub-Saharan African countries or have we solely relied on community members from France?

Are we QA testing on devices that are slower than iPhones or modern Androids to consider how our features fare on varied devices and/or in low bandwidth environments?

How do we leverage regional events like WikiIndaba and other departments to get input from diverse communities as we plan our projects?
Discuss:

The entire product development team should answer these questions.

How do we ensure early stage designs are in front of representative audiences in a way that allows them time to weigh in meaningfully?

What is our process for translating tests for underserved/underrepresented languages while actively addressing other accessibility gaps?

What is our process for mitigating risks and accounting for edge cases raised by community members?

How and when do we engage with personas and what is their relation to our existing and aspirational users?

When building, how do we consider ways in which our feature can be exploited for harassment?
Case Study:
The entire product development team should consider this case.

Running vs. Jogging:

Are those most knowledgeable about Ahmaud Arbery's case contributing to this discussion?

What happens when those most knowledgeable about cases like Ahmaud Arbery can’t participate in the creation of his article?

How do we know our tools are not inhibitors for this group’s participation?

What is our role in addressing dehumanizing comments?
Case Study 2: 
The entire product development team should consider this case.

Thanks extension was created to encourage good behavior and give recognition to voices. When originally built users couldn't block someone from thanking them. The lack of ability to block thanking created a situation where even if harassment was reported and the abuser was told to refrain from contact on the reporters talk pages, the reporter could still get bombarded by their abuser thanking them, which is a form of harassment. The mute option was later added to address this challenge.

Discuss:
How could the team, in the early phases of building a feature meant for good intent, account for abuse and harassment? How does our team evaluate feature abuse in order to pivot if necessary?
Next Steps

• Leadership explicitly **prioritizing and providing resources** for combating bias in our projects and products
• **Gain an understanding** of teams' existing practices for building inclusive products and possible growth areas
• Leadership have hiring managers and people managers **conduct an audit** and gap analysis of teams and functions so that we have a baseline for improvement
• Share insights of teams' existing practices and gaps, then support teams' creation of a **metric for inclusive product development** to promote continuous improvement
• Teams provide **routine updates** on their progress towards their respective inclusion metric in the Quarter in Review
• **Iterate**
Keep Learning

- Improve Tech for Marginalized People
- Race, Tech and Algorithmic Bias
- Obstacles and Solutions for Underrepresented Minorities in Tech
- Towards Knowledge Equity through Accessibility
- Making Wikipedia Editing Easier for the Blind
- Is Wikipedia Usable for the Blind
- Impairment Simulator Software
- Why do People Edit