

Writing Your Diversity Statement

What should you hope to achieve through your diversity statement?

The goal of the diversity statement is to show how your past experiences have made you a diverse candidate, and how you'll apply that diverse perspective at your target institution in your future research and teaching pursuits. You can achieve this goal by showing how you've overcome a struggle in life. For example, if you have a learning disability but still managed to get on the Dean's list. You can also achieve this goal by explaining how you represent a historically under-represented group in your field based on your race, ethnicity, or gender. For example, women in the natural and biological sciences or computer science are rare, as are men in some humanities or social science departments. Many employers and admissions committees seek candidates that **represent those groups** and/or **can work with others from those groups**.

What's a diversity statement for?

Your diversity statement should reveal a qualification that you didn't discuss in your other application materials or that your reader might not have detected. Your application materials are complementary to one another; together, they should give a complete picture of you as an applicant.

Before you write, ask yourself...

- How do I embody an under-represented group in my field? How do my experiences in the classroom, research environment, or field reflect that I'm diverse?
- How have I incorporated what I've experienced as a member of an under-represented group into my teaching or research? Can I give an example?
- How have I incorporated diversity into my classrooms? How will I continue to make my classrooms diverse? How is my approach unique?
- Do I have experience working with other under-represented groups in my field? What groups have I worked with, and in what context have I worked with them?
- How have I handled working with someone whose background is unfamiliar to me? What have I learned from these experiences?
- How do I plan on working with under-represented groups in my field? What skills will help me make our collaboration more productive?
- What groups should be encouraged to remain or become a part of my field? What needs will these groups have? How will I address these needs as a teacher and/or researcher?