

Writing a Research Statement

A research statement is a **statement of purpose** for a research related position. The main goal of a research statement is to **showcase one's research experience and interest** and **how they tie in with the position** being applied for. Always remember to **“Compliment and Complement”**: compliment the work of the research group you are applying for and highlight how you can complement their work with your future plans.

Four key components of a research statement

Background: Scientific interests and foundations	Skills: Research experience
<i>Let your reader know how your interest developed and what you did outside of research to develop it (classes, workshops, books, etc.)</i>	<i>Show the reader your research competency and what skills you bring to the table (write about steps taken to develop interest if you don't have any research experience)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What inspired your interest in the topic? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inspiring class • A persisting curiosity • Answering that one big questions – How did you first get involved in the field? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to a faculty • Participating in a program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Specific research experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects you have participated in – Why was the research significant [in your opinion]? – What did you find? – What was your biggest takeaway [that can be used to build your narrative]?
Interest: Why this position?	Development: Future/Career plans
<i>Inform the reader that you have read up about the position and think that you are a good fit</i>	<i>Convince the reader that their investment in you is worthwhile</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What do you know about the position you are applying for? – What specific aspects are you interested in? and why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research topic • Skills that you can learn • Structure of the program – Use the name of faculty and specific programs you are interested in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How do you plan to use the skills learnt? – How will the experience contribute to your growth as an academic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring academia as a career path • Investigating a specific area to test interest – Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Any specific goals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursuing graduate degree • Doing research in a field

DO's and DON'Ts

DO elaborate and give specific examples, always choose ‘few but specific’ over ‘many but general’

DON'T include too much information outside of research, you are not telling a personal narrative

DO highlight the impact of your work, catch their eye with your achievement however small it is!

DON'T make factual error, or give them any preventable trivial reasons to not want you

DO research the position and mention specific aspects that excite you, this shows your dedication!