

Writing a Professional Mission Statement

What is a professional mission statement?

A professional mission statement is a way of framing your working life in terms of the communities you want to build and the impact you want to have. It's an ever-evolving statement that can help you make decisions about the work you want to do, and get the most out of the work you're doing now.

I started thinking about professional mission statements after reading [this Twitter thread by Dr. Gabrielle Foreman](#). In the thread, she talks about how easy it is to lose sight of your mission when confronted with institutional metrics of success, like grades, jobs, or tenure. A mission statement can be a source of comfort, conviction, and strength.

Sample Mission Statements

Gabrielle Foreman:

My professional mission statement is to create, sustain, be in, empower, and recover collectives working not just for inclusion and equity but justice. I seek to surround myself in and help create collaborative rather than competitive spaces. I seek to leave a legacy as an amplifier of my various communities' past and present talents, energies, and struggles for justice.

Hannah Alpert-Abrams:

To use technology to work against inequity, improve transparency, and build community.

To advocate for & educate about publicly funded higher education in the humanities.

To build relationships within my local community, spend time with the people I love, and resist professional scope-creep.

Questions to help you compose a professional mission statement

From [Gabrielle Foreman with Monica Coleman](#), revised by HAA 2020.

What motivates you in your academic work and life?

Who are your professional role models? What do you admire about them and their work?

Who do you want your work to be for? What communities do you most want to work with?

What values brought you to the profession that have remained fairly consistent?

What values and commitments have risen to the fore over your career?

What legacy do you want to leave?

What's your mission statement?