

FACULTY RESEARCH STATEMENT / PLANNING RECORD

Control the prompt before the prose.

Build a source-backed argument from the exact posting, your demonstrated contributions, a credible future program, and verified institutional context.

No universal template.

Official university guidance varies from 1-2 pages to 3-5 pages and repeatedly notes disciplinary variation. The posting controls; field advice helps only where the posting is silent.

Position, institution, and department

Use the exact wording from the posting.

Posting URL and observation date

Keep the controlling source beside the draft.

Requested document and prompt

Copy every explicit question or topic.

Length, format, and file rules

If a rule is absent, mark it unknown.

Named research area or position priority

Record only what the posting actually says.

Local field convention checked with

Name the source, adviser, or discipline example.

Research identity test

One-sentence throughline

Name the durable problem, why it matters, and the distinctive perspective or capability you bring.

EVIDENCE BEFORE ADJECTIVES

Make each project advance the argument.

Select work for the chain it builds. Do not turn the CV into prose. Repeat the record only for contributions that establish the program you are proposing.

1 Selected contribution	2 Selected contribution	3 Selected contribution
Problem What bounded research problem or gap did this work address? 	Problem What bounded research problem or gap did this work address? 	Problem What bounded research problem or gap did this work address?
Your contribution What intellectual, methodological, empirical, theoretical, creative, or archival contribution was yours? 	Your contribution What intellectual, methodological, empirical, theoretical, creative, or archival contribution was yours? 	Your contribution What intellectual, methodological, empirical, theoretical, creative, or archival contribution was yours?
Evidence Which result or output substantiates the contribution? Record a citation or stable locator. 	Evidence Which result or output substantiates the contribution? Record a citation or stable locator. 	Evidence Which result or output substantiates the contribution? Record a citation or stable locator.
Meaning What did the evidence change, clarify, enable, or challenge? 	Meaning What did the evidence change, clarify, enable, or challenge? 	Meaning What did the evidence change, clarify, enable, or challenge?
Next question Which unresolved question follows, and why does it belong in the future program? 	Next question Which unresolved question follows, and why does it belong in the future program? 	Next question Which unresolved question follows, and why does it belong in the future program?

Continuity check. The next question should emerge from the evidence without pretending that every past project was designed for the same future. A coherent program can include pivots when the intellectual connection is explicit.

PROGRAM LOGIC / NOT A GRANT TEMPLATE

Show what becomes possible next.

Map each direction through question, significance, approach, feasibility, distinct contribution, and boundary. Use as many directions as the prompt and field require; two worksheet records are provided, not prescribed.

DIRECTION 1	DIRECTION 2
Question What is the direction trying to learn, explain, build, recover, or test? 	Question What is the direction trying to learn, explain, build, recover, or test?
Significance Why would a field-adjacent reader care if this succeeds? 	Significance Why would a field-adjacent reader care if this succeeds?
Approach What methods, sources, populations, materials, or analytic strategy make the direction concrete? 	Approach What methods, sources, populations, materials, or analytic strategy make the direction concrete?
Feasibility Which prior result, skill, access route, collaboration, or preliminary observation makes the work credible? 	Feasibility Which prior result, skill, access route, collaboration, or preliminary observation makes the work credible?
Distinct contribution How does the direction extend beyond prior mentors, current projects, or an obvious next experiment? 	Distinct contribution How does the direction extend beyond prior mentors, current projects, or an obvious next experiment?
Boundary What remains uncertain, dependent, or adaptable? Avoid presenting a speculative result as settled. 	Boundary What remains uncertain, dependent, or adaptable? Avoid presenting a speculative result as settled.

Boundary rule. Separate demonstrated capacity from a proposed result. A future plan can be ambitious while still naming dependencies, alternatives, and what the evidence does not yet establish.

POSITION-SPECIFIC EVIDENCE / FINAL AUDIT

Tailor with evidence, not name-dropping.

Record only the institutional context that changes the proposed work, its execution, its student role, or its contribution to the department.

Verified institutional fact	Why it changes or enables the program	Exact source and date

Eight-pass revision record

1

Prompt coverage
Pass: Every explicit requirement in the posting maps to a visible section or sentence.
Repair if: The draft answers a remembered template instead of the actual prompt.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

2

Argument continuity
Pass: Past evidence creates the problem space for the future program without forcing a false chronology.
Repair if: The document reads as disconnected project summaries or a publication list in prose.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

3

Evidence specificity
Pass: Important claims identify a finding, output, contribution, or other checkable evidence.
Repair if: Adjectives such as innovative, rigorous, or impactful substitute for evidence.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

4

Future feasibility
Pass: Each direction names a question, approach, feasibility basis, and honest dependency.
Repair if: The vision is either a grant-methods dump or an aspiration with no execution path.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

5

Independence
Pass: The draft identifies what you will carry forward, what becomes newly yours, and where collaboration is appropriate.
Repair if: The future program could be mistaken for a continuation of a mentor's agenda.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

6

Mixed-audience access
Pass: A reader outside the subdiscipline can recover the problem, contribution, and future direction from headings and opening sentences.
Repair if: Specialized terminology is doing the work that the argument should do.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

7

Fit accuracy
Pass: Every institution-specific claim is current, sourced, and relevant to the proposed program.
Repair if: Names, facilities, or priorities are inserted as flattery or copied between applications.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

8

Document integrity
Pass: The final PDF follows the posting, has readable hierarchy, complete citations, accessible figures, and no clipped or hidden content.
Repair if: Formatting, file naming, or export defects make the evidence harder to evaluate.

☐ ☐
PASS FIX

Final unresolved issue
Name the single largest remaining weakness or write none.

File reviewed and date
Record the exact final filename and review date.

EVIDENCE CHECKED SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

Keep the guidance beside the draft.

This record synthesizes public university guidance without turning any one institution's convention into a universal rule.

A. Application Materials for a Faculty Job Search

MIT Career Advising and Professional Development / Research statement section
Variation in length and structure, distinct research identity, past accomplishments, future plans, methods, and discipline-specific norms.

[Open source](#)

C. Research Statement

Cornell University Graduate School / What Is a Research Statement; Formatting; Organization; Writing; Future Goals
Research accomplishments, current work, future direction, realistic scope, department context, accessibility outside the subdiscipline, and Cornell's own length guidance.

[Open source](#)

E. Research Statements

University of Washington Career and Internship Center / Goals and Purpose; Content
Disciplinary variation, scholarly independence, institutional compatibility, writing quality, field consultation, tailoring, and proofreading.

[Open source](#)

B. Faculty Application: Research Statement

MIT EECS Communication Lab / Structure Diagram; Identify Your Purpose; Analyze Your Audience; Skills

Wide variation across fields, the EECS-specific three-page example, past-to-future continuity, non-specialist departmental readers, posting-specific tailoring, informative headings, and feedback.

[Open source](#)

D. Research Statements

UCLA Career Center / Overview and two sample structures

The UCLA 1-2 page example, discipline variation, research trajectory, future direction, institutional tailoring, and contribution-to-field framing.

[Open source](#)

F. Application Materials for Faculty Positions

UCSF Office of Career and Professional Development / Developing Faculty Application Materials; sample-material boundaries

Research statements as one component of the faculty packet, prompt-specific preparation, the value and limits of examples, and the warning not to copy sample text.

[Open source](#)

Workshop prompts

1. Which sentence states the program rather than a past project?

2. Which contribution lacks checkable evidence?

3. Which future direction lacks a feasibility bridge?

4. Which fit claim would still be true after changing the institution name?

Reuse. Original Manusights architecture and worksheet: CC BY 4.0. Credit Manusights, title, edition, and <https://manusights.com/resources/research-statement-guide>; identify changes. University guidance and all third-party materials retain their own status. A planning and revision framework for faculty-job research statements. It does not set a universal page length, prescribe a discipline-wide structure, evaluate a candidate, or replace the exact posting and local field conventions.

Maintenance. Recheck the six university guidance pages after a material page change and no later than 90 days after this review. The target posting always controls the application.