

# Guidelines for Writing a Statement of Contributions to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



As a preeminent national, urban, public university and academic health center, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) will be distinguished by its commitments to inclusion, access and excellence; innovative and trans-formative learning; impactful research; exceptional patient care and beneficial community impact. VCU continually demonstrates a deeply engrained core value of diversity, inclusion and equity that fosters a climate of mutual trust and respect where individuals of differing cultural backgrounds, identities, abilities and life experiences are embraced, engaged and empowered to drive excellence and success.

VCU welcomes our applicants for faculty positions to provide their own unique perspectives on their past, present and future aspirations and contributions to promoting diversity, inclusion and equity in their professional careers. For example; you may have worked with members of communities or local organizations, or with university constituents like students, staff or faculty to further the goals of equity and inclusion.

There are many valuable ways our faculty have contributed to the VCU vision, including:

- Commitment to using a faculty position to be a force of enlightenment and change by opening up opportunities to students who may have never known the many intellectual and life options at our university.
- Creation of programs that provide access and establish a pipeline in disciplines for students in traditionally underrepresented groups.
- Enriching the classroom environment through providing exposure to new perspectives on cultures, beliefs or practices, or the teaching of cultural humility or other aptitudes and skills to enhance the ability of our students to engage with inclusivity in a pluralistic society.



- Exposure to research opportunities for individuals historically excluded from disciplines on the basis of their gender or ethnic identity.
- Leadership in any capacity that tangibly promotes an environment where diversity is welcomed, fostered and celebrated.
- Mentoring students from traditionally underrepresented groups and at-risk students to provide the guidance needed to help ensure their academic experience is a welcoming and positive one, to promote university resources when needed for retention and to serve as transformative role models for those who may not yet understand their real potential in an academic environment.
- Outreach to members of student clubs, private organizations or community groups whose mission includes service, education or extending opportunity to disadvantaged people.
- Recognition of the challenges members of society face when they are members of underrepresented groups, people of color or women; or because of their religious, ethnic or gender identities or orientation.
- Service that promotes inclusion by striving to dismantle barriers to people historically excluded from the opportunities that all have a right to enjoy.
- Production of research that seeks to improve the lives of under-served communities or the promotion of knowledge or understanding through research and scholarship that sheds light on the experiences of oppressed or under-represented communities.

Through your own Statements of Contributions to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity you can tell us how your past, present and future activities have or will contribute to VCU's mission of promoting equity and inclusion or have shaped your perspective on this issue. But don't feel limited to that: if you have creative ideas for future activities that will contribute to VCU, please feel very welcome to share those as well, and specifically how and when you would like to implement them in our university environment.



VCU's commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity is not aimed at producing ideological conformity. The university is also committed to sustaining an academic environment built on the free exchange of ideas and viewpoints. As VCU's policy on Academic Rights and Responsibilities states:

Membership in the academic community imposes on students, faculty members, administrators and members of the Board of Visitors an obligation to respect each other's dignity; to acknowledge each other's right to express differing opinions; to cultivate and to cherish intellectual honesty; and to promote freedom of inquiry and expression on and off the campus.

VCU's commitment to inclusion means that VCU strives for a community in which all members are and feel respected, have a sense of belonging and are able to participate and achieve to their potential, including those with minority, dissenting or unpopular views.

Therefore, VCU's evaluation of a candidate's Statement of Contributions to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be viewpoint-neutral. VCU does not engage in unlawful discrimination in the context of hiring decisions, to include based on the ideological beliefs or viewpoints of the candidate or a perception of such beliefs or viewpoints. VCU is committed to an environment free from unlawful discrimination and that promotes freedom of inquiry and expression.