

Writing a Diversity Statement (DS)



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Caveat Lector:
**These are my personal
conjectures and
opinions and may have
zero coupling to reality**

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**As in every other writing task,
ask these two questions first:**

- 1. Who's the audience?
(admissions committee [adcomm])**
- 2. What do they want to know?/What
do I want to tell them?**

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Why would an adcomm ask for one?

**Find out information that they cannot
ask for legally**

- Identify members of minority groups**
- Identify "underrepresented"
applicants (e.g., gender, disability,
economically disadvantaged)**

**Gauge your sensitivity to inclusiveness;
predict how you will interact with others**

**Get another (truer?) measure of your
writing skills**

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Most are marked "optional"

Why would you want to write one?



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Allows you to focus your SOP on physics and research and move personal details into a separate document

Gives you another chance to sell yourself

Gives you another chance to showcase your communication skills that set you apart from the other 692 applicants

May qualify you for special financial support or increase your admit chances

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Seems to be a bifurcation of DSs

How admitting you will increase the department’s diversity

- ethnic background/minority status
- socioeconomic status
- disability status
- gender (if underrepresented)
- first-generation grad student

How you value diversity; will you contribute to inclusiveness?

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Some final advice:

Don’t underestimate the time required

Convey your modesty and sincerity

Provide concrete examples of who you are and what you’ve done

Proofread *everything*—more than once, from a hard copy

End with a bang! Don’t just trail off at the end of your statement....



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