

How to Write a Personal Statement



Office of Nationally
Competitive Awards

What is a Personal Statement?

A personal, yet **professional** statement

A way of thinking about **how you approach the world**

Drawn from a **personal moment** and how it has shaped other pursuits (academic or otherwise)

Looking at your personal **growth and development** as a professional or academic

Personal Statement vs. Grant Statement

You as an individual/citizen of the world

Defining moment

Experiences

Future plans

***Life focused**

You as an academic

Defining issue/objective

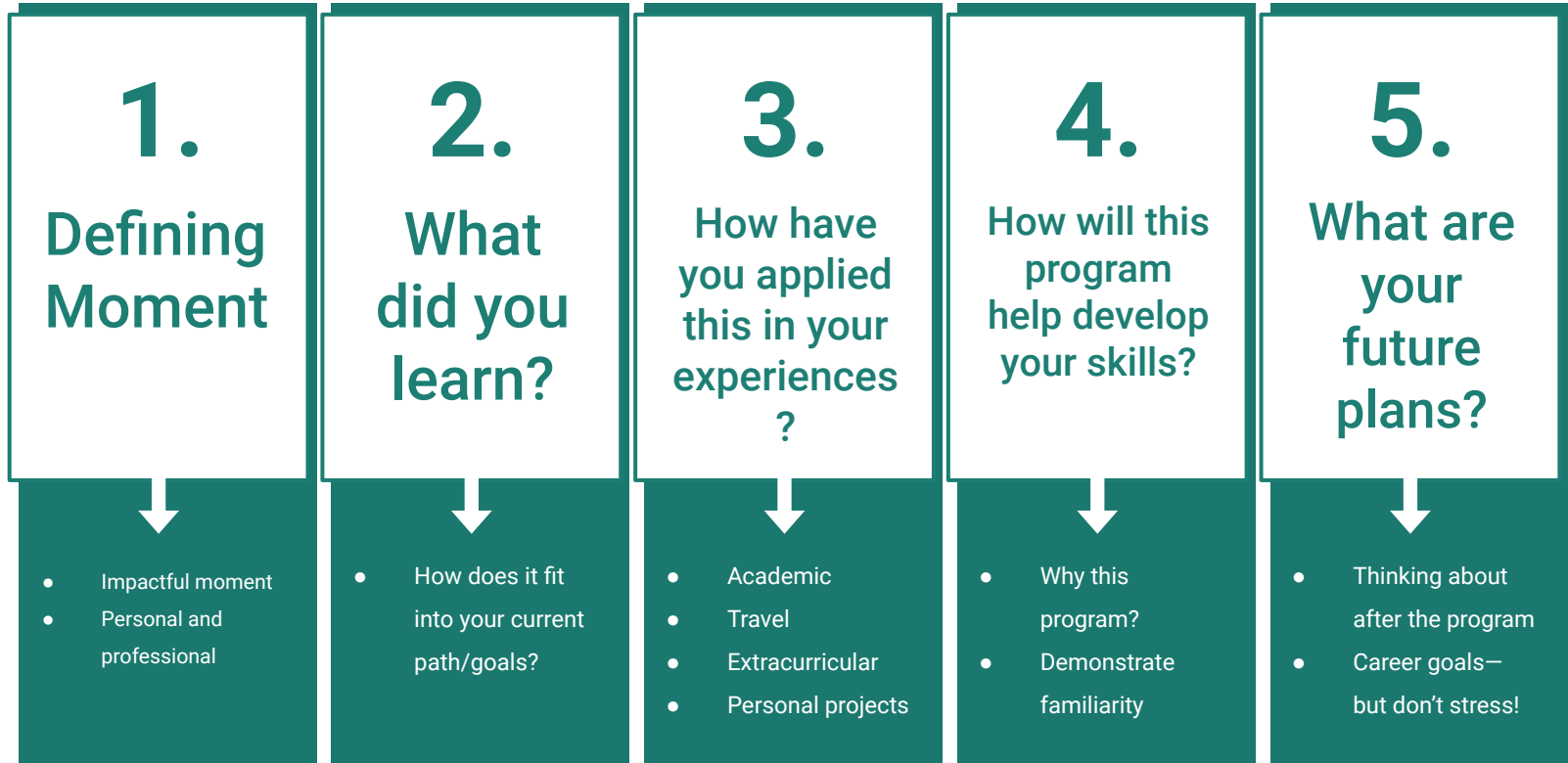
Specific qualifications

Goals and specific actions that you will take to get there

***Resume (ish) focused**

Handout

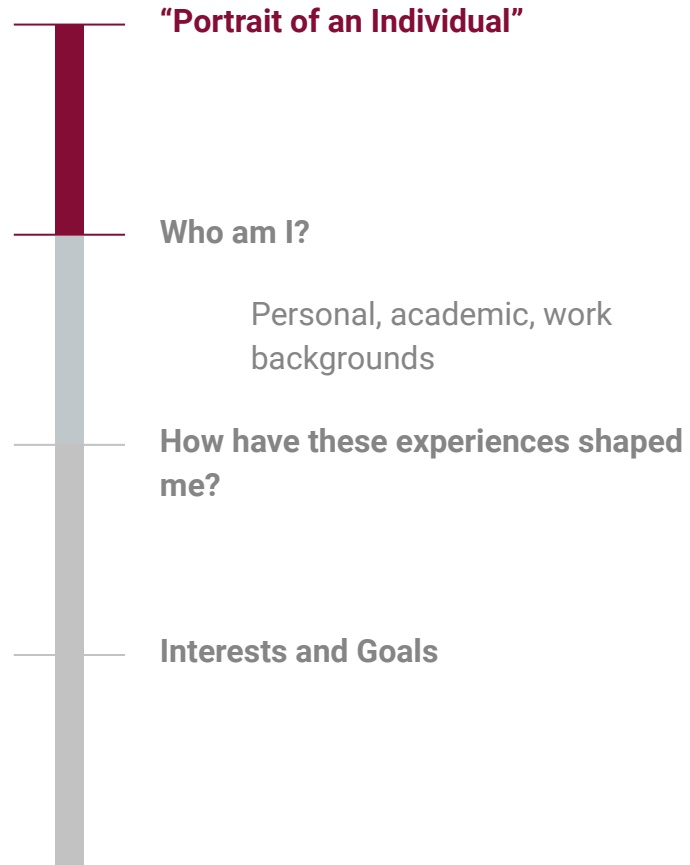
General Structure



Fulbright

- ETA and Open Study/Research
- Very specific
- Adaptability and flexibility

Important: They want to know who you are outside the application and the Statement of Grant Purpose. Here's an opportunity to create a narrative or talk about something that does not "fit" elsewhere on the application.



Fulbright Personal Statement Prompt

“The statement should be a 1 page narrative that provides a **picture of yourself as an individual**. It should deal with your personal history, family background, influences on your intellectual development, the educational, professional, and cultural opportunities (or lack of them) to which you have been exposed, and **the ways in which these experiences have affected you**. Also include your **special interests and abilities, career plans, and life goals**, etc. It should not be a recording of facts already listed on the application or an elaboration of your Statement of Grant Purpose. **It is more of a biography, but specifically related to you and your aspirations relative to the specific Fulbright Program to which you have applied.**”

Sample #1

Fulbright Personal Statement



Grad School

- A combination of a Grant Statement and Personal Statement
- Programs might not always ask for both (like Fulbright)
- Vary by program and/or school
- Specific questions within the statement
- Personal and professional goals

“Please discuss your writing style, literary influences, and goals as a writer; how the College and its program will support these goals; and what you believe you will contribute to the program. 300-500 words.” (MFA)

“A two-page statement of educational goals and interest in a graduate program in English.” (MA)

“A statement of personal goals to be achieved by the applicant during his/her time in the program.” (MS)

“The cover letter is not dead, although a quick Google search may share otherwise. Use this opportunity to write a well-crafted, quick review of your background, why you plan to pursue an MBA at the College, and your career goals post-graduation. There is no word limit.” (MBA)

Sample #2

Graduate School



Questions?

Pop-up Office Hours

**NCA Office
6 Green Way
12-2pm**

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[Website](#)