What is a professional goals statement?

A professional learning goals statement is a writing sample describing your reasons for choosing a Professional Learning Fellowship at this time, your work focus, your professional objectives and the unique ways you can contribute to other professional learning fellows.

A professional goals statement communicates the following:

1. **Writing abilities** – grammar, creativity, organization, etc.
2. **Connections** – between work experience, learning experience and future goals.
3. **Philosophy** – How you plan to make an impact in your work and fields of interest?
4. **Uniqueness** – How you will be an asset and contribute to the critical thinking, collaboration, curiosity of others in your professional learning community?

Professional goals statement structure recommendations:

1. Aim for 1.5 – 2 pages of single-spaced text (500 words)
2. Start your statement with opening sentences that engage your reader (quote, question, vivid description of a scene or experience, etc.)
3. Make sure your transitions between paragraphs are smooth.
4. Your conclusion paragraph should tie back to your introduction paragraph. Make sure to reintroduce your main theme and summarize your main points.

What makes a statement compelling?

1. **Consider your strengths** – Begin by looking at your achievements and good experiences for evidence of your strengths. Ask those you know best for their thoughts.
2. **Know your audience** – This statement will be read by Fellowship Facilitators, Experts-In-Residence and Program Administrators who you hope to collaborate and learn with.
3. **Articulate your vision and beliefs about the Fellowship subject area** – You could write about leadership approaches, reflect on organizational practices, and/or consider key policies relevant to the Fellowship area you wish to explore and the goals you are keen to advance.
4. **Other related educational experience, skills and interests** – This may include previous work experience, training activities, etc. Offer details about yourself that help us know more about you as a person (i.e. travel abroad, conference speaking, community engagement, etc.)

Getting started

Before you write your professional goals statement, take a moment to ask yourself some questions to reflect and prepare. Here are a few questions to help you get started:

1. **Intellectual influences** – who has influenced you? Was it a manager/professor/peer/direct report, a book, an article? What is the single most important concept you have learned in your work?
2. **Encouragement** – Recall and write out the encouragements given to you by influential persons in your life.
3. **Turning points** – Where were you and what is influencing you to participate in a Fellowship?
4. **Experiences** – List volunteer, travel, family, educational and life experiences that inspired you to choose your work and your professional learning interests/focus.
5. **Skills** – What skills have you honed through the experiential and educational choices you have made?