Annotated Faculty Research Statement | Fictional Example

Teaching sample only | fictional scientist, institution, projects, and outputs

IMPORTANT: Original editable instructional resource. Replace every bracketed placeholder with your own verified information; remove guidance before submitting. Follow each vacancy's format and length instructions.

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE — Nothing below represents an actual individual, institute, grant, paper or experimental result. Do not present it as your own research record.

Example: Dr. Anika Rao — materials chemistry (fictional)

Opening: the research question and identity

Annotation: Make the intellectual problem legible to a committee member outside the subfield.

"My research asks how consistent preparation and measurement protocols can improve the comparison of catalyst candidates for water-electrolysis studies. During my fictional doctoral and postdoctoral training, I worked on sample preparation, structural characterisation and documentation of analytical uncertainty. My proposed independent programme joins materials characterisation with reproducibility-focused experimental design."

Past work: contribution, not merely activity

Annotation: The applicant distinguishes personal work from the laboratory's collective achievements. No invented numbers or scholarly citations are used.

"In an illustrative study of model oxide samples, I prepared material batches under a controlled protocol and helped compare phase assignments from X-ray diffraction. I personally developed a procedure for logging sample-processing deviations and checked the relationship between preparation conditions and measurement repeatability. This fictional methodological work motivated my interest in research designs that make cross-laboratory comparisons more interpretable."

Independence: a different question

Annotation: Show the new question the candidate will take responsibility for, not simply a continuation of the supervisor's project.

"Rather than extending the earlier laboratory's screening project, I propose to study how uncertainty propagates when catalyst candidates are assessed using different analytical workflows. The programme would develop generalizable evidence-reporting practices and compare their suitability for new sample groups."

Future direction 1: feasible first-stage work

Annotation: A bounded project, a method and a fallback are more credible than promises of specific results.

"The initial project would compare documentation protocols using a small set of non-proprietary model materials. I would define sample tracking requirements, repeat selected measurements and test whether analytical decisions change across reasonable processing choices. If equipment access is constrained, an initial reproducibility analysis of existing measurements could test the documentation approach before new experiments begin."

Future direction 2: independent extension

Annotation: The second direction is connected to the first, with a distinct research objective.

"A second project would examine whether the resulting evidence framework can be adapted to another materials family and an additional characterisation method. The first stage would focus on method transferability. Wider adoption would depend on suitable collaborators, permissions and resources; no partnership or grant is assumed to be secured."

Institutional fit: conditional and verified

Annotation: A real applicant must replace these hypothetical statements with verified department-specific facts.

"For a department with established materials-analysis facilities and a documented commitment to open methods, this programme could offer a route to student research projects in reproducible experimental design. I would confirm relevant access, supervision capacity and institutional priorities before proposing specific collaborations."

Illustrative planning milestones — not promises

Period	Conditional plan
Year 1	Define documentation protocol; check existing datasets and equipment access.
Years 2–3	Test methods, revise criteria and disseminate qualified findings when ready.
Years 3–5	Evaluate extension and trainee projects; seek appropriate funding where eligible.

Revision exercise: responding to a fictional vacancy

Annotation: Do not insert job-advertisement keywords that the candidate cannot substantiate.

Vacancy (fictional): Assistant Professor in Sustainable Materials. Essential: PhD and documented experimental research; preferred: reproducibility practices, supervision and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Too vague: "I have strong materials expertise and will develop breakthrough technologies with significant impact."

More useful: "My proposed first project would compare reproducibility of materials characterisation under documented workflows, drawing on my experience preparing samples and interpreting diffraction results. I would assess access to suitable instruments and scope a student project around a tractable initial dataset."

Final annotations: what to verify in a real application

A compelling statement cannot substitute for accurate evidence.

- Whether a stand-alone statement is requested, and the exact length.
- What the applicant alone contributed versus the wider team.
- Whether citations and outputs can be located and verified.
- Whether future methods, budgets and approvals are credible.
- Which institutional facilities, students and collaborators are truly available.
- Whether any funding is awarded, applied for, or merely a potential route.

This original instructional example is not intended as a model that all disciplines must follow. Humanities, social sciences, computing and teaching-intensive roles often need a different emphasis.