

Positionality Statement Template

Purpose of a Positionality Statement

A positionality statement explains how who you are shapes how you show up in this work. It names relevant identities, experiences, sources of influence, and limits, and clarifies how these shape your approach to partnership, research, professional learning, and community engagement. This is not a biography, resume, or values statement. It is a reflective practice meant to support transparency, accountability, and trust.

Recommended Length

- 500–800 words (roughly 6–8 short paragraphs)
- Shorter is okay if it still addresses the core elements below

Suggested Structure

- Who you are and what shapes your role
- How power, influence, and limits show up in your work
- Experiences that inform your perspective
- How your positionality shapes your practice
- How you approach the New Mexico context
- A closing reflection on learning, responsibility, or ongoing work

Section-by-Section Guide

1. Opening: Identity, Role, and Power

Purpose:

Name the identities, roles, and affiliations that most shape how you enter this work—especially those that affect how others may experience you.

You might include:

- Professional role (educator, researcher, facilitator, community partner, etc.)
- Institutional or organizational affiliation (if relevant)
- Aspects of identity that meaningfully shape your perspective
- Credentials or experience that carry authority or responsibility

Guiding questions:

- What shapes how people experience me in this work?

- What perspectives or positions do I bring with me?

Optional sentence starters:

- “I come to this work as...”
- “My role in this project is shaped by...”
- “I am aware that my position as ___ carries both access and responsibility...”

2. Power, Limits, and Accountability

Purpose:

Reflect on how your role and social position shape the influence you have in this work—recognizing that power looks different across contexts, and that everyone works within systems with histories.

This section is not about claiming authority. It is about naming:

- where you have influence,
- where you are constrained,
- and how you try to act responsibly within those realities.

You might include:

- Awareness of how educational or institutional systems have caused harm
- Reflection on what you can and cannot influence in your role
- Recognition of limits to your knowledge or perspective
- How you try to act with care, accountability, or attentiveness in relationship with others

Guiding questions:

- Where do I have influence, and where do I not?
- What responsibilities come with my role, even without formal authority?
- How do I try to act with care in systems larger than myself?

Optional sentence starters:

- “I am aware that my role in this work gives me influence in some ways and limits me in others...”
- “Even when I am not in positions of decision-making power, I am mindful that...”
- “I try to be attentive to how my actions participate in larger systems...”
- “I do not assume that my perspective is complete, and I work to learn from...”
- “When harm or misunderstanding occurs, I try to respond by...”

3. Experiences That Shape Your Perspective

Purpose:

Explain *why* you care about this work and how your experiences shape how you see education, learning, or partnership.

You might include:

- Types of communities, schools, or organizations you've worked with
- Teaching, facilitation, or research experiences
- Life experiences that influence your commitments (shared at a level you're comfortable with)

Guiding questions:

- What experiences most shaped how I think about this work?
- How have these experiences challenged or changed me?

Optional sentence starters:

- "Over the course of my career, I have worked with..."
- "These experiences have shaped how I think about..."
- "They have challenged me to reflect on..."

4. How This Shapes Your Practice**Purpose:**

Describe how your positionality influences *how* you teach, research, facilitate, or collaborate.

You might include:

- How you structure learning, research, or collaboration
- How you share or decenter authority
- How you work across difference, disagreement, or uncertainty
- Practices you prioritize because of your positionality

Guiding questions:

- How does who I am shape how I do this work?
- What do I try to do differently because of this?

Optional sentence starters:

- "In my work, I strive to..."
- "I prioritize approaches that..."
- "I believe people learn best when..."

5. Positionality in the New Mexico Context

Purpose:

Acknowledge that New Mexico has specific histories, communities, and sovereignties, and reflect on how you approach this work in this place.

You might include:

- Awareness of colonization and Indigenous sovereignty
- Respect for local, place-based knowledge
- Commitment to partnership rather than prescription

Guiding questions:

- What does it mean for me to do this work in New Mexico?
- How do I locate myself in relationship to local educators and communities?

Optional sentence starters:

- “Within the New Mexico context...”
- “I approach this work as...”
- “I am attentive to...”

6. Closing: Learning, Accountability, and Ongoing Work

Purpose:

Offer a brief reflection on how you understand your positionality as ongoing, relational, or shaped by time and place. There is no single “right” way to conclude.

You might include:

- What you are still learning or grappling with
- How your understanding of this work continues to evolve
- What matters to you in working alongside others

Guiding Questions

- What feels ongoing or unresolved for me in this work?
- What commitments guide how I move forward?

Optional Sentence Starters

- “I understand this work as...”
- “I am still learning how to...”
- “What feels most important for me moving forward is...”
- “This work has reinforced for me that...”