

# **Bio and Statement Guide for Creatives: Purpose, Best Practices, and Common Mistakes**

## **Bio vs. Statement**

- **Bio:** This can be written in the first or third person, though it is more commonly presented in the third person. Typically, an artist bio explains the type of work you create, the venues where you exhibit or publish, and your credentials, such as awards, publications, and degrees.
- **Statement:** Written in the first person, it reads more like a personal manifesto. It should clarify your creative goals and themes.

*Tip:* Avoid framing yourself only as a student. Craft an introduction that reflects your long-term artistic identity. It's acceptable to mention UChicago, but it shouldn't be the first thing you bring up.

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## **Purpose of Bio**

A bio provides a brief, professional summary of your journey, achievements, and areas of expertise. It is a snapshot of who you are as a creative, offering essential context about your background, education, exhibitions/play sessions, collaborations, and major influences. The bio often functions as a bridge between your projects and your audience, helping people understand your experience and professional trajectory. Unlike a statement, which focuses more on your process and vision, the bio highlights your career accomplishments and positions you within the broader creative community.

### **Why You Need It:**

- **Professional Introduction:** Your bio is often the first impression galleries, curators, potential clients, and your audience will get about you. A formal introduction gives them a concise yet informative overview of your work, credentials, and accomplishments.
- **Establishes Credibility:** A well-written bio helps demonstrate your professionalism and credibility. Whether you've exhibited in galleries, won awards, or collaborated with well-known institutions, your bio showcases this experience, adding value to your work.
- **Versatile Use:** Your bio can be adapted for multiple platforms. You can use it on your website, social media profiles, exhibition catalogs, grant applications, play session applications, or in press materials. Having a solid bio on hand makes it easier to share your professional background across different contexts.

## **Best Practices for Writing an Artist Bio**

- **Personalize it:** Craft a bio that reflects your personality and works for you while following best practices. *Take pride in your bio!*
  - **Keep It Concise:** Aim for about 150-500 words. This allows you to provide essential information without overwhelming the reader.
  - **Write in the Third Person:** While you can write in the first person, third-person narratives tend to sound more professional and are the norm.
  - **Highlight Your Work:** Clearly explain the types of projects you create, including mediums, themes, and any other relevant information, such as game mechanics. This will allow viewers to grasp your creative direction quickly.
  - **Include Exhibition History:** Mention *notable* exhibitions, galleries, play sessions, digital platforms, or publications where your work has been displayed or featured.
  - **Mention Credentials:** Include relevant awards, degrees, or recognitions to establish your professional background and highlight your achievements.
  - **Add Personal Touches:** Briefly share your creative journey, inspirations, or influences to connect with your audience and make your bio more relatable.
  - **Update Regularly:** As your career progresses and your work evolves, ensure your bio reflects your current practice and accomplishments.
  - **Use Clear Language:** Avoid jargon and overly complex phrases. Aim for clarity and simplicity to make your bio is accessible to a broader audience.
  - **Don't Be Too Vague:** Be specific about your ideas and themes.
  - **Don't Use Clichés:** Avoid overused phrases like “\_\_\_\_\_ is my passion.”
  - **Don't Overcomplicate:** Make your statement accessible to a broad audience.
  - **Don't Make It Too Long:** Keep your statement focused and concise.
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## Examples of Good Artist Bios

### Example 1:

Jane Doe is a mixed-media artist based in Brooklyn, New York. Her work explores themes of identity and displacement through the use of reclaimed materials and vibrant color palettes. Jane has exhibited her pieces at notable venues, including the Brooklyn Museum and the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and has received awards from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation. In addition to her studio practice, Jane conducts workshops for at-risk youth, aiming to inspire the next generation of artists.

**Why it's good:** This bio is concise, clearly describes the artist's work and themes, includes exhibition history and credentials, and adds a personal touch by mentioning her outreach efforts

### Example 2:

Avery Quinn is a digital designer and illustrator whose work focuses on the intersection of technology and nature. He has collaborated with clients such as Apple and National Geographic, bringing his unique vision to life through animation and interactive media. Avery earned his MFA in Graphic Design from Yale University and has exhibited his work in various galleries across the United States. His work has been featured in numerous publications, including Creative Review and Wired Magazine.

**Why it's good:** This bio effectively highlights the artist's professional background, showcases collaborations, and mentions education and publications, providing a comprehensive overview of his career.

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### Example 3:

Skyler Morgan is an independent game designer and narrative developer whose work explores the intersections of storytelling, player choice, and cultural mythology. With a background in interactive media and programming, Skyler creates immersive games that blend rich narratives with innovative mechanics, inviting players to engage in complex, morally ambiguous worlds. Their work has been featured at IndieCade and PAX East, and their game *Nebula Knights: Quest for the Celestial Crown* received the "Best Narrative Design" award at the 2023 Digital Arts Showcase.

**Why It's good:** The bio is clear, highlights achievements, and connects to well-known industry spaces, effectively establishing Alex's credibility, focus, and relevance in game design.

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## Examples of Bad Bios

### Example 1:

Hi, I'm Jane, and I've loved art my whole life! I paint pictures of things that I find beautiful. My art has been shown in a few small galleries, and I sometimes sell my work online. I hope people like my art as much as I do!

**Why it's bad:** This bio is vague and lacks specificity about the artist's style, medium, or themes. It uses overly casual language and does not convey professionalism or accomplishments.

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### Example 2:

My work is deep and meaningful, exploring the essence of life through abstract forms. I've won awards and exhibited in various places, but I don't want to brag. I prefer to let my art speak for itself. My process involves a lot of thought and creativity, but I can't really explain it.

**Why it's bad:** This bio is filled with clichés and vague statements that don't provide any concrete information about the artist or their work. It also comes off as self-effacing rather than confident, which detracts from its effectiveness.

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**Example 3:**

Skylar is passionate about games and loves creating them. They work in narrative design and have shown their projects at several events. Skylar hopes to make a difference in the industry someday.

**Why it's bad:** Lacks specificity and distinct achievements, making it unclear what skills Alex brings. Generic goals weaken credibility, and vague language doesn't reflect expertise or stand out.

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## Purpose of a Statement

A statement is a brief text accompanying your work, offering viewers insight into your creative process, inspirations, and conceptual framework. A statement is often required when submitting your work to galleries, exhibitions, grants, residencies, and play sessions. A strong statement can enhance the understanding of your work and build connections with your audience.

### Why You Need It:

1. **Contextualize Your Work:** Explain your work's themes, concepts, and inspirations.
2. **Communicate Your Vision:** Help viewers understand how your work fits into contemporary culture.
3. **Demonstrate Professionalism:** Show you can clearly articulate your ideas.
4. **Guide Your Audience:** Offer a lens through which your work can be understood.

## Best Practices for Writing a Statement

- **Keep It Concise:** Aim for 100-250 words.
- **Use Clear, Direct Language:** Avoid jargon; speak plainly and with intention.
- **Write in First Person:** Make it personal and direct.
- **Explain Your Process:** Be specific about your methods and materials.
- **Relate to Larger Themes:** Ground your work in social issues, technology, or other relevant themes.
- **Update Regularly:** Ensure your statement evolves alongside your creative practice.
- **Don't Be Too Vague:** Be specific about your ideas and themes.
- **Don't Use Clichés:** Avoid overused phrases like "\_\_\_\_\_ is my passion."
- **Don't Overcomplicate:** Make your statement accessible to a broad audience.
- **Don't Make It Too Long:** Keep your statement focused and concise.
  
- **Don't Be Self-Referential:** It's about your work, not just you.

## Good Statement Examples

**Example 1:**

My work explores the tension between the natural and the artificial, using organic materials like wood and metal alongside 3D-printed components. Through a process of layering, disassembly, and reformation, I create sculptures that examine humanity's evolving relationship with the environment. I'm particularly interested in how technology mediates our experience of nature.

**Why it's good:** This statement is clear and connects the artist's materials with larger themes of nature and technology.

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**Example 2:**

As a digital artist, I use generative algorithms and data visualization to create abstract, flowing forms that shift with the viewer's perspective. My work draws from quantum physics, particularly the idea that observation changes reality. Through real-time data inputs, my pieces evolve in response to the environment, turning art into a living, dynamic process.

**Why it's good:** The artist explains technical concepts in an accessible way and ties them to larger philosophical ideas.

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**Example 3:**

In my work, I create worlds where every choice resonates. I design games inviting players to step into spaces of ethical complexity, using player choice to explore cultural myths and personal values. I believe games are uniquely suited to foster empathy, allowing us to inhabit perspectives beyond our own. Through responsive narratives and layered environments, I strive to craft experiences that linger long after the screen fades, challenging players to reflect on their beliefs and motivations.

**Why It's good:** The statement conveys Alex's purpose and design approach, aiming to foster empathy and reflection. This approach engages players and industry professionals alike by emphasizing the desired impact on the audience.

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**Bad Statement Examples****Example 1:**

I have always loved art, and creating it has been a huge part of my life. I believe that art can make the world a better place. My work is colorful and fun, and it's meant to inspire happiness in people.

**Why it's bad:** This statement is vague and filled with clichés. It doesn't offer insight into the artist's process or concepts.

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### Example 2:

The fusion of the existential quandary and the reification of subjective transcendence forms the core of my work. Utilizing subverted constructs, I endeavor to situate the audience within a liminal space of post-deconstructionism, highlighting the dichotomy between reality and perception that challenges their understanding of both.

**Why it's bad:** Overly complex language and jargon make this statement difficult to understand and unapproachable.

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### Example 3:

*My games let players make choices. I think games should be fun but also meaningful. I want my games to be engaging and for players to enjoy them.*

**Why it's bad:** It is overly generic and lacks purpose. It uses broad terms like "fun" and "meaningful" without specific themes or goals, leaving it forgettable and failing to showcase Alex's unique vision or design approach.

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## Final Tips

- **Proofread:** Read your statement aloud and check for typos.
  - **Get Feedback:** Have peers or mentors review your statements and bios.
  - **Tailor for Specific Audiences:** Consider your audience. You may need to adjust your message depending on whether it's for a gallery, grant, exhibition, etc.
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## Examples

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- ★ <https://julianoliver.com/about/>
- ★ <https://ashlynsparrow.com/about-me>
- ★ <https://beccaricks.space/>