



# WRITING STRONG LETTERS

*Letters that distinguish a candidate apart others increase their chance of success.*

## ■ TELL A STORY

The narrative that illustrates the applicant's success and their impact on the field. Avoid simply providing a chronological account of their career.

## ■ EMPHASIZE IMPACT

Describe the impact of the applicant's contributions. Consider writing about the candidate's influences on students, peers, and community.

## ■ NOTE DIFFERENCES

Do not focus on productivity alone. What makes this applicant different, unusual, or exceptional? Provide examples: Instead of just stating that a candidate is a strong mentor, highlight how their mentoring helped a student succeed.

## ■ AVOID REPETITION

Avoid listing accomplishments already on the CV. Instead, highlight specific accomplishments to highlight and explain and their significance. This in-depth information goes beyond what's on the CV to add weight to the narrative.

## ■ KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Review committees may or may not be experts in the candidate's field and might not necessarily have detailed context for their contributions. Make sure your narrative is accessible to a broad audience.

## ■ DEMONSTRATE BREADTH

Show how the candidate is well-rounded and impacts a larger community when highlighting noteworthy contributions.

## ■ REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

Review the criteria outlined in the award instructions so that you address how the applicant meets the criteria listed. It can be helpful to use keywords in the instructions to emphasize certain qualities the candidate possesses.

The Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science provides resources for faculty pursuing honorific awards.

MORE INFO



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