



MISS VIRGINIA ORGANIZATION 2022 CONTESTANT PLATFORM CRITERIA

The Miss America Platform concept was officially instituted in 1989 order to showcase the social activism and intelligence of the women who compete in the Miss America programs on the local, state and national levels. Since that time, it has contributed to a positive shift in the public's perception of the Miss Virginia/Miss America Organization and elevated the job of state and local titleholders to that of a role model, spokesperson, and advocate. To ensure that your contestants' platform is effective, consider the following guidelines:

The platform should reflect an issue of concern to the American people. Make sure that the platform reflects an issue that a majority of citizens in this country would agree is important and significant to the public at large. Selecting a platform that is too narrow or esoteric can limit the impact and effectiveness of a local or state titleholder.

Your personal connection to the platform issue should be clearly understood. With increasing frequency, Miss Virginia titleholders are asked why they chose their platform issue - by media, government leaders, legislatures and many others. Therefore, it is critical that you provide a credible reason and sincere explanation for why you are committing your year of service to your issue. Be sure that you select an issue not because it is popular or trendy, but because it reflects who you are, what you've accomplished and where your heart lies.

Choose a platform that you have been personally involved in prior to the Competition. Because contestants must demonstrate that they have achieved significant accomplishments in their platform issue, you should choose one that reflects your volunteer work, professional experience, hours of service and personal involvement - prior to The Miss Virginia competition. You should have a passion for the issue and evidence it in all you say and do.

The platform should be of interest to corporations, the news media and other important audiences. Other important segments of our society can be very helpful in making your year of service successful. For instance, corporations which have an interest in your issue will likely partner with you to create exciting new initiatives. The news media will help you spread the word by writing in-depth articles about your work. Consider whether your platform issue reflects the support of such audiences.

It should be clear that you have researched; thought about and understand the platform and its impact for a broader audience. You should have thoroughly researched your platform so that after the Miss Virginia Pageant you will be able to operate as a knowledgeable advocate for it. The preparation will not only help you compete in the Miss Virginia program but better prepare you to go on to the Miss America Pageant. It will give you the credibility you need when speaking about the platform issue - before, during and after competition.

Be prepared to articulate your position on the issues. To be successful with your platform, make sure you have taken a position on the issues related to it, have considered solutions to platform-related problems, and have a clear but unique point of view about the issue and related matters. Consider what others are saying and thinking, but then make it your own.

Instructions for Typing the Platform Issue Statement

Please remember. This is your opportunity to explain to the judges what your chosen platform is and why it is important for the Miss Virginia Organization to embrace this platform. In addition, it should explain how your platform will further the Miss Virginia Organization “brand” to the public. This ONE (1) PAGE, SINGLE SPACED document combined with your Resume, will comprise your entire application for this job. The judges will receive exactly what you submit, therefore these are VERY important! Any items incorrectly submitted that do not meet the criteria may be submitted to the judges without an opportunity to correct.

1. Go to the word processing program of your computer.
2. Start a “new” document.
3. Set margins for 1” on all four sides. The font style may not be any smaller than “10” and no larger than “12” point type using the Times Roman font style.
4. With the justification set for left, type “Name:” in bold. Following the colon (:) hit the space bar twice. Then, type your name.
5. Double space down. Set your justification to “center”. Then type in **Bold and underline** the title of your Platform.
6. Double space down. Write what you feel is critical for the judges to know about your platform and why it is necessary for you to have the job of Miss Local to promote this issue. What you write will be what the judges know about your platform, your role in successfully dealing with this issue, and the role the Miss Virginia Organization may play in your plan.
7. This essay may include some of the following items (this is not to be meant as an exhaustive list):
 - A clear definition of the platform and the specific issues you wish to address
 - A plan on how you have or will create awareness of the platform
 - The way in which you have or will change attitudes regarding the issue
 - The way in which you have or will change behaviors related to this issue
 - The way in which your platform issue will move the Miss Virginia Organization forward
 - Your media plans
 - Your marketing strategy
 - How you propose to fund your ideas/plans
 - Any significant accomplishments you have made in regard to your issue
8. At the bottom of the page, you MUST set the justification to the right. Type a line of 26 spaces. Below that line, you must type Signature/Date. Once you have printed the document you must **sign and date this document**. If you forget to sign and date, we will need to return the document to you as it cannot be accepted without your signature. Thank you.
9. See sample platform below.

Name: Jane Smith

Celebrating Cultural Diversity and Inclusiveness

It is imperative that this nation face and embrace its cultural diversity. While many people have talked about this issue, I believe that most of them have only paid lip service to the true necessity of what needs to be addressed related to this issue. There is a false truth in merely accepting and tolerating cultural diversity. I intend to prove that in order to accept and understand people of other cultures; one must be willing to step out of a personal cultural comfort zone and identify the origin of their prejudice. I will specifically focus on three areas: Children, Communities, and Businesses.

The title of Miss Local, and perhaps Miss Virginia, combined with the national media already looking at the surface of this issue, will allow me to create the national awareness that must exist. Currently, the term “Cultural Diversity” is well known in the halls of institutions of higher learning and, perhaps, even in the public school classroom because of the need for some to be politically correct. But, in order for us to make a true change in attitudes and behaviors of Americans, we must move beyond talk and into action and policy changes.

My plan is to motivate the media and to partner with the National Conference for Community and Justice. This organization has chapters in every major city in the nation and, in many cases, those chapters have community leaders involved who can, with encouragement and challenging, bring this issue out of hiding and into the public light in each of those communities.

Obviously, the media and the NCCJ already exist. However, what is lacking is a lightning rod to draw attention to this issue. This is where the Miss Virginia Organization steps into the lead. What better role is there for Miss Virginia than to be an agent of change in organizing our nation to accept our differences and to create an environment that values each person on individual characteristics rather than on stereotypes or assumptions?

For years, Miss Virginia was seen as a young woman who cut ribbons and appeared in parades. It is time for “Miss Virginia” to step out of the convertible and *lead the parade*. Our country’s ethnic make-up is changing rapidly, and our citizen’s fear of terrorism can explode already existing, but deeply hidden prejudices. I want to be the leader that this nation needs.

This nation needs this issue addressed now and through the already existing NCCJ and its local and state organizations combined with the power of Miss Virginia, we can make a concrete difference now, which will change the direction and the future of our nation.

/Date



Instructions for Completing the Miss Local Contestant's Resume

Please remember this is your opportunity to demonstrate to the judges why they should consider you for the job of Miss Local. You may list as many or as few items under each category as you desire. Your only restriction is that it must follow the established format and it must fit on one page. This page, combined with the Platform Statement, will comprise your entire application for this job. The judges will receive exactly what is submitted. Any items submitted that do not fit the established criteria will be returned for correction only once. Any items, which do not meet the criteria or are submitted after the deadline, will not be given to the judges. If your resume arrives on the day of the deadline, but does not meet the criteria, there will not be time to return it to you; therefore, it will not be given to the judges. The contestant may explain the lack of judging materials during her interview, if she so chooses.

1. Go to the word processing program of your computer.
2. Start a "new" document.
3. Set margins for 1" on all four sides. The font style may not be any smaller than "10" and no larger than "12" point type, using the Times New Roman font style. Please refer to the attached sample to verify you are following the requested format.
4. With the justification set for left, type **"Name:" in bold**. Following the colon (:), hit the space bar twice. Then, type your name as you wish the judges to know it. (If your name is LaCricia Deborah Smith and you want to be known as "Deborah Smith", please type "Deborah Smith").
5. Then, move to the next line and type **"Hometown:" in bold**. Following the colon (:), hit the space bar once. Then, type your hometown including the city and the state.
6. Move to the next line. Now set your justification to the right. Type **"Date of Birth:" in bold**. Hit the space bar two (2) times, and type the month, day, and year of your birth. (Ex. October 10, 1997)
7. Move Justification to the left. Double space down and type **"Education:" in bold**. Hit the tab bar three times and then type your most recent school first. If it is grad school, indicate it as such. List degree seeking (all on the same line as the name of the school), move to the line underneath that to list your undergraduate school and degree sought/achieved, and below that list your high school.
8. Double space down. Hit the tab bar once. Type **"Platform Issue:" in bold**. Hit the tab bar three times. Type the TITLE of your platform, **MAKING SURE IT LINES UP WITH THE INFORMATION ABOVE IT. DO NOT TYPE ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE TITLE.**
9. Double space down. Hit the tab bar once. Type **"Scholastic/Career Ambition:" in bold**. Hit the Tab bar once, **MAKING SURE IT LINES UP WITH THE OTHERS ABOVE IT**. Then type the type of degree/education you would ultimately like to achieve and beneath that, list your career ambition.
10. Double space down. Hit the tab bar once. Type **"Talent:" in bold**. Hit the tab bar three times. Type the type of talent and specific selection. **MAKE SURE IT LINES UP WITH THE INFORMATION ABOVE IT.** (i.e. Pop Vocal - "Crying", Tap Dance - "Staying Alive", etc.)
11. Double space down. Type **"Scholastic Honors:" in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Each item should be separated by a semi-colon (;).

12. Double space down. Type **“Leadership Roles:” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Each item should be separated by a semi-colon (;).
13. Double space down. Type **“Accomplishments:” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Each item should be separated by a semi-colon (;).
14. Double space down. Type **“Interesting Facts:” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Each item should be separated by a semi-colon (;).
15. Double space down. Type **“Employment:” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Each item should be separated by a semi-colon (;).
16. Double space down. Type **“How has the world you come from shaped your dreams and aspirations?” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Please answer the question in sentence form.
17. Double space down. Type **“Of all the ways you could succeed in your life, why have you chosen to succeed in the Miss Virginia Pageant?” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Please answer the question in sentence form.
18. Double Space down. Type **“What social issue, other than your platform, will have the greatest impact on your generation and why?” in bold**. Hit the space bar twice. Please answer the question in sentence form.

The entire form MUST FIT ON ONE PAGE using the Times New Roman font style. You must leave a 1" margin on all four sides of the page.

Use your best judgment on what is most important for the judges to know about you. Use your space wisely. Attached you will see an example of what it should look like. Any variations from this form **will not** be returned to you and **will not** be considered acceptable. The judges will receive your original work.

This form will be given to the judges along with your platform statement. You will notice there is a **REQUIRED SIGNATURE LINE** at the bottom of the platform statement. When these two pages are put together, they will create your entire application. Your signature will cover the materials listed **ON BOTH PAGES**. Your signature verifies that everything on your forms is true and accurate. If it is proven that any information on these forms is not true, correct, and factual, you risk losing your local/state title.

Some spacing issues may arise. Simply follow the example provided below.

Name: Jane Smith
Hometown: Anytown, America

Date of Birth: December 29, 1996

Education: University of State – sophomore – Bachelor of Science, Liberal Arts
Frederick Douglass High School

Platform Issue: Celebrating Cultural Diversity and Inclusiveness

Scholastic/Career Ambition: Obtain a Masters of Business Administration

Talent: Pop Vocal / “Fallen”

Scholastic Honors: Recipient of National Coca-Cola Scholarship; Recipient of the Metropolitan Urban League National Scholarship; Dean’s List; Member of the President’s Leadership Council at the UCF

Leadership Roles: Created and implemented a comprehensive Cultural Diversity Education Curriculum for grades K-12 in twelve Public Schools; University Student Body Senator; H.S. Sr. Class Pres.; College Sorority President.

Accomplishments: Recipient of the J.C. Penney Golden Rule Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service to Community; Recipient of the National Conference for Community and Justice Humanitarian Award; Performer, Grand Ole Opry in Nashville; Piano Performance scholarship at State University.

Interesting Facts: First person on either side of my family to attend college; Youngest of five children with a 13-year gap between me and my next oldest sister and an almost 20-year gap between the oldest and myself.

Employment: Internship with a Law Firm; Internship with local ABC television affiliate; Student Assistant at State University.

How has the world you come from shaped your dreams and aspirations?

I come from a loving, supportive family that has always taught me to work hard for the things I want to achieve. Growing up, my parents always encouraged us to get involved with our local community and help those who were less fortunate than us. They tried to instill good values in us and to always guide us on the right path. I think it is because of these lessons my parents taught me that I want to make a difference in today’s world. I aspire to be a woman of great influence, preferably working in the non-profit sector, where I can apply my talents for the greater good and help to change people’s lives. One person truly can make a difference, and I am on my way to proving that cliché. I also dream to one day have a loving family of my own, with beautiful children in whom I can instill the same core values that my parents gave to me.

Of all the ways you could succeed in your life, why have you chosen to succeed in the Miss Virginia Organization?

Along with providing the financial assistance for young women to fulfill our educational goals, the Miss America Organization gives us the opportunity to bring national attention to a cause dear to our hearts. If I were to become Miss America, I know that my voice would be heard as a spokesperson for my personal platform, as well as the national platform. Raising awareness of important social and political issues has always been important to me, and Miss America provides the perfect arena for that.

What social issue, other than your platform, will have the greatest impact on your generation and why?

Although I’m not sure I would consider it a social issue, I think technological advancements will have the greatest social impact on my generation. Technology is changing everything – the way we communicate, our lifestyles, access to information – it’s all right at your fingertips! That can be a double-edged sword. I believe we run the risk of losing both interpersonal and language skills due to the ease and speed of communicating electronically. I believe our educators should address this issue immediately, or it may, unfortunately, have the greatest impact on my generation and every generation to follow.