

Private Financial Aid Licensed Data Set—2008 Database Overview

INTRODUCTION:

Peterson's Private Financial Aid Database contains extensive information about sources of financial assistance for both undergraduate and graduate level higher education. Students are not required to be enrolled at, or use the award toward attendance at, any one specific college or university to be eligible for these awards. These sources are located throughout North America, as well as internationally, to some degree. Available information for each award includes the name of the award and a description of the program, the sponsoring organization's name and description, and which type of award it is (scholarship, prize, fellowship, or forgivable loan). Also included are special characteristics and award requirements/restrictions, academic year of study for which the award is intended, the dollar value per applicant of the award and the total dollar value of the awards distributed last year, and how many are available and the total number awarded last year. Contact information for the person to whom application and award inquiries should be directed is also provided.

This Overview is designed to give you a broad sense of the database. A Data Dictionary, comprised of detailed descriptions of the tables and fields in the database is available in a separate document.

UNIVERSE:

The Private Financial Aid Database includes 5,351 programs offered by 2,133 unique state, corporate, and private sponsors. These represent over 500,000 individual financial aid awards with a total value of nearly \$2.6 billion. Information on sponsors is drawn from a variety of sources. In addition to the lists maintained by Peterson's, regular reviews are made of a wide variety of sources to ensure that as much complete information as possible is included in the database.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA VERIFICATION:

Research was done prior to the start of data collection to develop and grow the universe of sponsors and awards. Data on the award programs included in this set were collected by a third-party data provider between January and April via an online survey, Internet research, and/or phone interviews with the sponsoring organizations. Follow-up efforts were made to collect information for programs that did not respond to the online survey in order to maximize the number of sponsors and awards included in the database. Database updates occur in conjunction with the release of updated guides and electronic products.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE:

As noted above, the Private Financial Aid Database includes donors throughout North America. The database reflects a certain degree of international representation, as well.

DATABASE VERSATILITY AND EXTENT OF USE:

Peterson's Private Financial Aid Database is an important part of several products and services. These include:

- *Peterson's College Money Handbook*
- *Peterson's Scholarships, Grants, and Prizes*
- Undergraduate, Graduate, and International Scholarship Search on Peterson's Education Supersite at <http://www.petersons.com>
- EducationUSA Web site at <http://www.petersons.com/educationusa/>