



Private Financial Aid Licensed Data Set—2015 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, grant, 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 4,733 programs offered by 1847 unique state, corporate, and private sponsors. These represent 1.8 million individual financial aid awards with a total value of over \$11 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. Sponsors of all award programs included in this set were surveyed between December and May via the online *Peterson's Survey of Non-Institutional Financial Awards*. Follow-up efforts were made to collect information for sponsors and awards that did not respond to this survey. If there still was no response to our efforts to update this information, the data collected during the previous cycle via the online survey, Internet research, and/or phone interviews with the sponsoring organizations is used.

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 Scholarships, Grants & Prizes*
- *Peterson's How to Get Money for College: Go Beyond Federal Aid—Get Money from Your School and State*
- *Peterson's Education Supersite (Colleges Scholarships Channel) at <http://www.petersons.com/college-search/college-scholarships.aspx>*