

Columbia University's Disclosure of Lender Information

The suggested lenders for 2007-2008 were selected as a result of a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process conducted in 2005. Eleven lenders received the RFP and nine responded. The proposals from these lenders were reviewed by a committee of University financial aid officers to determine which lenders offered the best overall comprehensive package of loan products that would benefit our students. The committee paid particular attention to certain criteria including competitive rates and terms, supportive customer service (such as call response time), a flexible application and fund disbursement process, and reputation. Other less important criteria, such as marketing support, were also considered but were not determinative.

Lenders for Grad PLUS loans, which were not available at the time of the 2005 RFP process, were selected because they were chosen as suggested lenders for other federally guaranteed loan products in the 2005 RFP process. One of the suggested lenders did not submit a proposal for a Parent PLUS loan product in its submission as part of the 2005 RFP process. That lender now offers a Parent PLUS loan product, which is listed on the Parent PLUS suggested lender chart.

One of the lenders selected through the RFP process provides additional benefits by making available a limited amount of loans to international students who do not have established credit or a creditworthy U.S. citizen co-borrower. This service, offered to the University by Citibank, was included as a proposed service in Citibank's response to the University's 2005 RFP.

The University urges all students who are considering the loan products offered by the suggested lenders to make sure that the loan terms are right for you and your family. You will not be penalized for using lenders other than the suggested lenders, and you are free to choose any lender.

Since the 2005 RFP process, the New York State Student Lending Accountability, Transparency and Enforcement (SLATE) Act was enacted on May 29, 2007, and took effect on November 25, 2007, and the New York State Office of Attorney General published the College Loan Code of Conduct on April 2, 2007 at <http://www.oag.state.ny.us/>. These standards were not in place during the 2005 RFP process.

Columbia University printed a prior version of the Columbia Comprehensive Educational Financing Plan in March 2007, which listed four suggested lenders for Family Federal Education Loan Program (FFELP) loans, loans regulated and guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Education, whereas the University currently lists three suggested lenders for such loans. One of the prior suggested lenders, Student Loan Xpress, has been removed from the current suggested lender list because Columbia University learned of a potential conflict of interest of a Columbia financial aid officer and Student Loan Xpress. The University terminated the employment of the financial aid officer. Although Student Loan Xpress is no longer on the suggested lender list, students and parents of course remain free to contact Student Loan Xpress, as well as any other lender, and explore loan terms.

Columbia University does not participate in revenue sharing and does not receive any compensation for listing the suggested lenders.

Students and parents have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of their choice, are not required to use any of the suggested lenders, and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not a suggested lender. We encourage students and parents to explore the loan products of lenders that are not included here as suggested lenders. If you find a better rate, please contact the financial aid office of your school.