



# U.S. Department of Education Federal Student Aid

**Federal Student Aid**  
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## Request for Information

**ED-FSA-15-R-0008**

**Credit Bureau Data**

**Version Number 0.1**

**January 21, 2015**

A. THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes; it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP. Furthermore, those who respond to this RFI should not anticipate feedback with regard to its submission; other than acknowledgment of receipt - IF a request for an acknowledgement is requested by the submitter. This RFI does not commit the Government to contract for any supply or service. FSA is not at this time seeking proposals. Responders are advised that the U.S. Government will not pay any cost incurred in response to this RFI. All costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested parties' expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP.

Interested companies shall provide (1) answers to the questions identified in Section B and (2) a Capability Statement that addresses the organization's qualifications and ability to perform as a contractor for the work described in Section B via email to Darrick Hardiman at [darrick.hardiman@ed.gov](mailto:darrick.hardiman@ed.gov).

The information provided in this RFI is subject to change and is not binding on the Government. All submissions become the property of the Federal Government, and will not be returned.

B. The Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) is developing statistical models to gauge portfolio risk, predict borrower outcomes at the individual level, and test hypotheses about borrower behavior. FSA will use the results of these models to inform decision making, conduct outreach, conduct scenario/stress testing, and forecast other macro-level outcomes. FSA wishes to augment existing efforts with additional credit, debt, income, and other risk-related information, and seeks further information.

The following questions are presented to assist in planning purposes, but should not be construed as the extent of our interest.

- A. What data on credit scores (or equivalent), debt, employment, income, or payment history are available? What additional data elements can be provided to augment these efforts? What other national databases can be leveraged and integrated into these analyses?
- B. What capabilities exist for providing these data elements at individual or aggregate levels? What constraints exist for supplying this information to FSA at any of those levels?
- C. What kind of flexibility is there in obtaining these data elements at historical points in time? What are the limits in obtaining this retroactive information?
- D. FSA has access to broad demographic characteristics of borrowers from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (a version of which is available [online](#)) and other sources. How might some of this information (for example, information about the parents of applicants) be leveraged for determining applicant risk?
- E. FSA's primary populations of interest (actual or potential students, applicants, and borrowers) can be unrepresentative of the broader population. For example, many customers may have thin (or absent) credit files or income history. What concerns are

there regarding the availability of data for these populations of interest? For any concerns, what solutions are available? What kind of information is traditionally provided to private lenders (such as for private student loans, auto loans, credit cards, etc.) who may at times serve similar populations?

- F. What short-term and long-term strategies are available for sending, receiving, analyzing this data? Is analysis limited to ad hoc testing of cohorts or samples of cohorts? Are continuous or semi-continuous data feeds available? In sharing data, what information is needed from FSA for the purposes of integration or “person matching”?
- G. In gauging performance of predictive models, what benchmarks can be made available?
- H. Since most FSA loans are disbursed independent of borrower risk, what appropriate portfolio benchmarks can be made available?
- I. Please describe any diverse, creative, or unconventional use of credit score data that the retail banking sector has been using to better identify customer segments, better inform decision making, or better manage credit risk which may be helpful for FSA to more effectively and more efficiently accomplish its mission of providing funding to post-secondary student borrowers.
- J. For any products or services (both ad hoc and ongoing) that can be offered, please provide high-level cost ranges.

In addressing the above, note that any data, products, or services made available is not intended for the purpose of denying or determining eligibility for aid, but rather intended to improve FSA’s understanding of borrower behavior.

C. The Government is not obligated to nor will it pay for or reimburse any costs associated with responding to this sources sought synopsis request. This notice shall not be construed as a commitment by the Government to issue a solicitation or ultimately award a contract, nor does it restrict the Government to a particular acquisition approach. The Government will in no way be bound to this information if any solicitation is issued. The North American Classification System (NAICS) codes for this acquisition have been determined to be *NAICS Code 561450 Credit Bureaus*.

Notice to Potential Offerors: All Offerors who provide goods or services to the United States Federal Government must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) located on the web at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). It is desirable that any Offeror to have completed their business Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA). Additionally, any Service Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses or Veteran Owned Businesses who respond to a solicitation on this project must be registered with the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Veterans Enterprise VetBiz Registry located at <http://vip.vetbiz.gov> AND HAVE A SEAL .

D. FSA is requesting that interested Offerors submit answers to the questions in Section B and capability statements by Tuesday, February 10, 2015. Please email the Primary POC any questions.

**Place of Performance:**

Union Center Plaza, RM 91F1  
830 First Street, NE  
Washington, District of Columbia 20202-5405

**Primary Point of Contact:**

Darrick Hardiman  
Contracting Officer  
[darrick.hardiman@ed.gov](mailto:darrick.hardiman@ed.gov)  
Phone: 2023773107

Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Electronic files larger than 5 MB shall be broken down into multiple files with no one file exceeding 5 MB. Each electronic submission shall include:

- The maximum number of pages per submission shall be limited to 30 pages;
- A Point of Contact (POC), phone number and email address of the person (in the body of the email) to be contacted regarding any correspondence between the Government and the Vendor. The POC shall be capable of addressing questions or issues associated with the submission and content of the RFI;
- Company Size (SB, SDVOSB, WOSB, Other than Small etc.);
- Company NAICS Codes; and
- A brief summary of email content, vendor name and the firm's mailing address.

Proprietary information, if any, should be minimized and **MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED**. To aid FSA, please segregate proprietary information. Please be advised that all submissions become the property of the Federal Government, and will not be returned. Responses to this RFI may be evaluated by Government technical experts drawn from staff within FSA. The Government may use selected support contractor personnel to assist in the evaluation. These support contractors will be bound by appropriate non-disclosure agreements to protect proprietary and source selection information.

E. This RFI is only a request for information about potential products / services and no contractual obligation on behalf of FSA whatsoever shall arise from the RFI process. This RFI does not commit the FSA to pay any cost incurred in the preparation or submission of any response to the RFI.