



Usability Testing Plan for Family Financial Planning Tool (Task 5)

Testing Plan



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1. Introduction

This document presents the plan for conducting usability testing with expert practitioners and family borrowers under Task 5 of the Family College Planning Tool (FCPT) project (contract # 9531CB20A0005). The aim of this testing is to provide insights and feedback on three draft resources developed to assist family borrowers who are considering or have helped to pay for a student to attend post-secondary education: a life cycle map, considerations widget, and worksheet projecting future costs.

The following testing plan lays out in detail our approach to collecting feedback on three draft resources through

- Two listening sessions, each with 6-12 practitioners to review the life cycle map, considerations widget, and worksheet projecting future costs
- Nine usability testing interviews with potential users to review the life cycle map and considerations widget
- Nine usability testing interviews with potential users to review the worksheet projecting future costs

Section 1.1 provides background to the project and progress to date. Section 2 provides detail about our testing approach, including the testing framework, testing procedures for the interviews and listening sessions, and analysis approach. Section 3 describes recruitment strategy. Appendix A provides the recruitment materials for the interviews and listening sessions. Appendix B provides the draft interview protocols and listening session topics. Appendix C provides guidelines for non-interviewer participants in qualitative data collection settings. The draft tools have been provided under a separate cover.

1.1 Background

At nearly \$1.6 trillion, American student loan debt has become the largest type of unsecured consumer debt.¹ Though students themselves owe the majority of this debt, a growing number of older adults are borrowing to support their child, grandchild, or other family member's education. As of 2018, consumers ages 50 and older owed about \$290 billion in student debt—more than a fivefold increase since 2004.² The majority of their debt is owed for a child's and/or grandchild's education.³ These “family borrowers”⁴ have taken out loans directly or co-signed on a loan

Family borrower: A family borrower is any family member—parent, stepparent, grandparent, uncle, aunt, cousin, sibling—who helps pay for a student's post-secondary educational expenses. This could include borrowing money—taking out debt like a loan in your name, co-signing on a loan with a student, using a credit card, home equity loan, or other—but may also include earning more income by working more hours, or using assets from a retirement fund or savings account. Family contributions can be one-time, repeated, or on an as-needed basis.

¹ Center For Microeconomic Data, “Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit 2020: Q1” (2020). <https://www.newyorkfed.org/microeconomics/hhdc/background.htm>

² Trawinski, Lori, Susanna Montezemolo, and Alicia Williams. *The Student Loan Debt Threat: An Intergenerational Problem*. Washington, DC: AARP Public Policy Institute (2019). <https://doi.org/10.26419/ppi.00064.001>

³ CFPB, Office for Older Americans and Office for Students and Young Consumers, “Snapshot of Older Consumers and Student Loan Debt” (2017). <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/data-research/research-reports/snapshot-older-consumers-and-student-loan-debt/>

with the student as the primary borrower. Up to 40 percent of student loan borrowers receive family assistance with repayment, with the impact of that help being especially pronounced for low-income and older borrowers.⁵

While staggering, these student loan numbers do not cover all of the borrowing that is done by individuals on behalf of family members. CFPB analysis suggests that family borrowers are also using other forms of debt beside student loans, such as home equity loans, credit cards, or other loans, to support their loved one's education.⁶

Although they play a vital role in allowing many younger Americans to attend college, family borrowers can experience serious financial challenges and repercussions as a result of their support. Despite their greater relative wealth (compared to the students they are supporting), family borrowers have fewer working years left in which to accrue savings. Furthermore, unlike the subsidized loans offered to students by the federal government, the loans available to family members begin accruing interest immediately.⁷ Finally, because family borrowers are usually ineligible for many of the protections and income-based repayment plans available to student borrowers, the consequences of rising debts and declining ability to pay can be severe, particularly when borrowers default.⁸ Taken together, these factors may result in economic distress, with family borrowers experiencing large debt burdens and sometimes owing substantially more than their initial balance.⁹ Family borrowers who default on student loans may face dire consequences, such as garnishment of wages, Social Security benefits, or tax refunds. Ultimately, these financial pressures and penalties may force these family borrowers to delay their retirement date or never retire at all.¹⁰

Evidence suggests that family borrowers may not fully understand the long-term costs and financial risks associated with student loan debt.¹¹ As a result, such borrowers may benefit from clear information provided by a trusted consumer resource prior to taking out loans.

1.1.1 Project Aims

The FCPT, once developed, will become part of CFPB's Paying for College suite of tools (including the recently released [Your financial path to graduation](#) tool) and will be geared toward family borrowers. The FCPT will include consumer resources that provide borrowers with relevant information about borrowing costs, options, and the long-term ramifications of taking out a student loan or other form of debt and

⁴ As noted above, we use the term "family borrower" to encompass any form of financial contribution, whether someone has taken on debt or not.

⁵ Farrell, D., Greig, F., & Sullivan, D.M. (2020). Student loan debt: Who is paying it down? JPMorgan Chase & Company Institute. <https://institute.jpmorganchase.com/content/dam/jpmc/jpmorgan-chase-and-co/institute/pdf/household-debt-student-loan-debt.pdf>

⁶ CFPB, 2017.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Looney, A., & Lee, V. (2018). Parents are borrowing more and more to send their kids to college- and many are struggling to repay. Brookings Institute. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/parents-are-borrowing-more-and-more-to-send-their-kids-to-college-and-many-are-struggling-to-repay/>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Prudential, "How Parents' Student Loan Debt Impacts Their Retirement Security" (2019).

¹¹ (CFPB, 2017).

financial contributions for a child, grandchild, or other family member. Some FCPT resources will be static and informational while others will be interactive, allowing family members to customize information.

Equally important, FCPT resources will be designed to build users' skills and abilities in processing and acting on the information presented in ways that further their financial well-being.¹² The information and user interaction the FCPT provides will build family borrowers' capacity to make sound decisions about whether, how, and how much they can contribute to their family member's education.

1.1.2 Project Steps and Progress

The FCPT project involves multiple tasks that culminate in draft content and recommendations for the FCPT. The first two tasks¹³ (completed) provided the empirical foundation for developing the tool. We used the findings from these tasks to inform the development of the conceptual framework (task 3, ongoing). The framework includes principles for the FCPT, user characteristics, and content recommendations.¹⁴ Based on the conceptual framework, and in consultation with CFPB, the Abt team developed three draft resources.¹⁵

Life cycle map This resource consists of a two-page infographic identifying key points in the college financing decision process and providing information for family borrowers to consider at each point along the path. The Abt team is developing an engaging graphic and the associated text prompting considerations for family borrowers at each point along the timeline. The document suggests resources, such as information about 529 savings plans.

Considerations widget This resource returns text based on three user inputs: user's age, the age of their family member who would attend college, and if they are planning for one or multiple children. Based on these inputs the widget returns relevant text including facts (did you know), suggestions for action (take action), suggestions for consideration (think about), and suggestions for discussion (discuss).

Worksheet projecting future costs This resource is an interactive Excel worksheet through which users input information about themselves and the financing method they are considering. Based on these inputs, the worksheet calculates and graphs future borrowing costs. The worksheet also returns customized text based on the inputs and other relevant information, including links to other resources, such as information about 529 plans on CFPB's website.

The next step is to test these draft resources and gather information that will inform further refinement of the conceptual framework, content, and our recommendations for the FCPT.

¹² Abt's prior research for CFPB on financial well-being found that financial skill is a larger driver of financial behavior than knowledge. <https://www.abtassociates.com/financialpathways>

¹³ In task 1 we conducted an environmental scan and literature review to understand the scope of existing resources for and knowledge about family borrower experiences. In task 2 we conducted qualitative research with financial practitioners (such as financial coaches, planners, financial aid counselors) and family borrowers to identify family borrowers' priorities, needs, knowledge and skills, and interests regarding information about paying for a student's post-secondary education.

¹⁴ Abt submitted the second draft of the conceptual framework on July 9th, 2021.

¹⁵ CFPB may choose to develop more resources in the future.

2. The Testing Approach

This section describes our approach to testing the three draft resources. After the overview, we describe the approach to recruiting participants for interviews and listening sessions, the testing format and structure, data collector training, and our data analysis and reporting plans.

2.1 Overview of Approach

Our testing plan involves a total of eighteen interviews and two listening sessions. The approach includes two types of user testing, as follows:

- Testing to gather feedback on **the overall package**:
 - Two listening sessions, each with 6-12 practitioners.
- Testing with family borrowers to gather feedback on **each individual resource**:
 - 9 observational and cognitive interviews to discuss the life cycle map and consideration widget.
 - 9 observational and cognitive interviews to test the worksheet projecting future costs.

The two **listening sessions** will be used to gather feedback on the overall package from practitioners. In these virtual sessions with groups of 6-12 participants, moderators will present and walk participants through the draft content on screen and ask open-ended questions to gather their feedback on their perceptions and reactions to the material across six dimensions: *comprehension, efficiency, appropriateness, contribution, appeal, and perceived effectiveness*. This approach will allow us to hear people's reactions to the draft resources and collect feedback from multiple practitioners who work with a variety of potential users.

The two groups of **observational and cognitive interviews** will be used to gather feedback on each of the three draft resources. Nine interviews will use the life cycle map and the considerations widget¹⁶ and nine interviews will use the worksheet. In one-on-one virtual interviews, moderators will share mockups of resources on-screen with participants and observe as they attempt to complete a series of tasks interacting with a limited functional prototype. The interviewer will observe and record participants' successes and any challenges they encounter. The interviewer will ask participants to voice their thought processes and reactions to the draft content as they go about each task. This approach will provide insight on how users interact with the draft content. The interviewer will also ask questions about users' perceptions and reactions to the materials.

2.2 Recruitment

This section reviews the recruitment strategy for the two groups of users we will recruit: practitioners and family borrowers. As detailed below, we will recruit a purposive sample of practitioners and a convenience sample of family borrowers. We have chosen these recruitment methods for practical purposes, given this project's timeline and resources.

2.2.1 Practitioner Recruitment (Listening Session)

The Abt team will conduct two listening sessions with a purposive sample of 12-24 individuals who work directly with family borrowers (such as high school counselors, college counselors, or financial coaches) and individuals who work at college access non-profits or other organizations that support college-bound

¹⁶ These two resources have overlapping information and will both be tested in the same interview.

families. A list of the types of organizations that we will reach out to is included in Exhibit 1, including examples of each different type of organization.

Given the small number of participants, our sample of practitioners will not be representative of all practitioners. Therefore, to gain insights that can make the tool useful for a wide variety of consumers, we will seek practitioners who (collectively) serve a diversity of clients and have different roles. However, we recognize that with a small sample of purposively chosen practitioners, we do not have a representative sample. Thus, the conclusions that can be drawn from the data will be limited.

We will recruit practitioners through Abt staff and referrals from our consultant Dr. Sonya Lutter and CFPB. We interviewed nine experts during the qualitative research phase (task 2) of this project and will include some of those contacts in our outreach.

In recognition of their time for participating in the listening session, we will provide each practitioner with a \$50 gift card. Although, in our experience, practitioners often decline incentive payments, we anticipate that providing incentives may help in our recruitment effort. We will also draw on professional motivations in our outreach, such as including language about how they can help families. Our objective is to begin recruitment as soon as we receive DIG approval, and to complete the session no later than November 15, 2021.¹⁷

Exhibit 1. Recruitment List for Practitioners

Participant Type	Recruitment	Examples
Practitioners who work directly with family borrowers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abt staff and CFPB staff personal networks Experts interviewed in Task 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school counselors College or university financial aid officers (including those at private and public colleges or universities, and HBCUs) Financial coaches
Practitioners who work at college access non-profits or other relevant organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abt staff and CFPB staff personal networks Experts interviewed in Task 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College Access / Success Organization (e.g. UAspire) Non-profit organizations (e.g. The Institute of Student Loan Advisors) Other organizations that support college-bound families (e.g., Road2College)

2.2.2 Family Borrower Recruitment (Usability Interviews)

Abt will recruit a total of eighteen family borrowers to participate in a usability testing interview.¹⁸ We will use multiple strategies to reach prospective participants (see Exhibit 2). We will reach out to prospective participants through email and online postings. The communications will describe the study and include a link for interested individuals to sign up to be contacted about scheduling an interview based on their availability and our recruitment needs. To encourage participation the communications will use motivational language about being able to help other family members “like yourself” and advertise incentives (\$75). The draft communications are provided in Appendix A.

Exhibit 2. Recruitment for Family Borrowers

Recruitment Channel	Recruitment Approach
Family borrowers who expressed interest in or participated in Task 2 data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email outreach by Abt staff
Recommendations from practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals from practitioners interviewed as part of Task 2 Referrals from practitioners who participate in the listening session, depending on scheduling Referrals from Abt staff and CFPB practitioner contacts

¹⁷ These dates are subject to our ability to obtain approval from CFPB’s DIG by October 1, 2021.

¹⁸ To receive feedback from as many people as possible, we will not invite individuals to participate in an interview and a listening session.

Online outreach ¹⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Facebook groups (e.g., Paying for College 101) • Relevant Sub-reddit (Personal finance)
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We will recruit a total of eighteen family borrowers for usability interviews. We will send reminder emails to follow-up with participants to ensure users understand the technical requirements and ensure they do not forget about the interview. Our objective is to begin recruitment as soon as we receive DIG approval, with the interviews completed no later than November 15, 2021.²⁰

2.3 Interview and Listening Session Format and Structure²¹

2.3.1 Listening Sessions

Listening Sessions will provide the opportunity to gather feedback from practitioners about all three of the draft resources. We will hold two online listening sessions. In both sessions, we will share each of the tools on screen and ask open-ended questions to elicit feedback and spark discussion around six usability dimensions: *comprehension, efficiency, appropriateness, contribution, appeal, and perceived effectiveness*. The complete listening session protocol is included in Appendix B.

We will use the Webex platform to host the listening sessions. Each session will last approximately 90 minutes and will be facilitated by a senior member of the Abt team and supported by a dedicated note-taker, dedicated technology coordinator for troubleshooting and enabling interactive features, and observed by a CFPB Project Manager. With participant’s permission, Abt will record the session so that the team (including CFPB Project Managers) can return to the recordings should the need arise. At the outset of the listening session, and as needed throughout the session, the technology coordinator will help participants ensure they can log in and participate (i.e., see and hear, understand how to mute/unmute themselves). The discussion facilitator will go over general ground rules for smooth participation (i.e., speak one at a time, and keep what is said “in the room”) and online etiquette (i.e., turn on camera, mute when not speaking). Detailed notes taken in real-time will be the basis of our analysis. Listening session participants will be compensated with a \$50 gift card.

2.3.2 Usability Interviews

Usability interviews will provide an opportunity for the team to observe user behavior and gather feedback on the draft tools. We will hold two groups of interviews with nine participants in each group. One group will test the life cycle map and considerations widget and the other group will test the worksheet projecting future costs. Participants will use the tools and answer open-ended questions to provide feedback. The complete testing protocols are included in Appendix B.

Usability interviews will be approximately 45-60 minutes, one-on-one interviews conducted over Webex. Interviewers will share mockups of the resources to be tested on-screen with participants and observe as they attempt to complete a series of tasks interacting with a limited functional prototype. The interviewer will observe and record participants’ successes and any challenges they encounter. The interviewer will

¹⁹ We found these two channels to be particularly productive for recruiting family borrowers in Task 2.

²⁰ These dates are subject to our ability to obtain approval from CFPB’s DIG by October 1, 2021.

²¹ All interviews and listening sessions will be facilitated by the data collection team from Abt, along with a CFPB staff-person who will listen in. At the end of the interview or listening session, the data collection lead will briefly check in with the CFPB staff person who will flag any topics or questions that they would like to better understand. Abt’s IRB has provided guidance for best practices for these observations, which is provided in Appendix C.

ask participants to voice their thought processes and reactions to the draft content as they go about each task. After completing the testing tasks, the interviewer will pose questions to elicit feedback about the user interface design, functionality, and organization of content. Participants will be given a \$75 gift card for participating in the interview.

2.4 Training

Interviews and listening sessions will be conducted by an interviewer and supported by a note-taker who will be responsible for documenting what is said during the interview or listening session. All interviewers have experience conducting semi-structured interviews with practitioners and family borrowers. Prior to the interviews, they will participate in a training session along with the CFPB team who will join the usability testing sessions and interviews. The training will review the protocols and discuss appropriate probing strategies to elicit useful information, as well as any potential areas where rephrasing or clarification may be needed or where cultural differences may be salient.²² Training for the listening sessions will cover both the content of the listening session along with the technology to be used so that the sessions are fully interactive. Training will also address facilitation methods, such as establishing ground rules, eliciting feedback from all participants, graciously handling participants who dominate the discussion, etc.

2.5 Analysis

This section provides detail on the analytic approach to reviewing the data collected during the listening sessions and interviews. We will analyze notes from the listening sessions and interviews and code the information across six usability dimensions (*comprehension, efficiency, appropriateness, contribution, appeal, and perceived effectiveness*) with particular attention to strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and recommendations that participants made for improving the resources.

Exhibit 3 shows the analysis matrix we will use to organize and categorize the information collected. The Abt team will complete one matrix per interview or listening session and divide the information into separate matrices for each resource discussed or tested. Each cell in the matrix will be filled in with corresponding data (notes or quotes) from the listening session or interview. The Abt team will review and consolidate the individual matrices and create three analytic summaries – one for each resource. These summaries will identify overarching themes and recommendations for revisions based on the analysis.

Exhibit 3. Analysis Matrix 1

Usability Dimensions	Strengths	Weaknesses	Gaps	Recommendations
Comprehension				
Efficiency				
Appropriateness				
Contribution				
Appeal				
Perceived effectiveness				

²² For example, there may be cultural differences in the expectations and norms around sharing financial resources.

2.6 Usability Testing Report and Resource Iteration

The Abt team will summarize findings from the usability testing in the final draft of the conceptual framework by December 11, 2021. The document will include an overview of the research methodology, data collection procedures, and the results of the testing, including the strengths and weaknesses of the resources overall and by resource. Abt will discuss these findings with CFPB and identify revisions to make to the draft resources. Abt will revise the content and provide a final version of each resource, by January 28, 2022 (Task 5).

Appendix A. Recruitment Materials

A.1. Practitioner Recruitment Materials

Practitioner – Recruitment E-mail

Dear [practitioner name],

I'm writing to ask for your help as we are working with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to develop a resource for families about paying for college. We define "college" broadly to include two- and four-year schools as well as training and graduate programs. We are reaching out to you because we believe your experience and perspective as a [position] will provide useful insights into the building of these family borrower tools.

Context

Parents, grandparents, and other older family members are increasingly taking on debt to aid young family members in pursuing higher education. CFPB is developing resources to provide family borrowers with relevant information and help them make informed decisions when taking out a student loan or other form of debt for a child, grandchild, or other family member.

Request

We are requesting your help with the development of this tool by participating in a 90-minute virtual listening session with other practitioners to preview and provide feedback on three draft resources.

Practitioners who participate will be compensated \$50 to thank you for your time and contributions.

The CFPB has partnered with Abt Associates, an independent research organization, to conduct the virtual listening session regarding these family college planning tools. The session will be done over WebEx (an online video call system). During the session you and the other practitioners will preview and discuss the CFPB's draft tools.

Your insights will help shape resources aimed at helping families across the U.S. Participants typically reflect that they find the process engaging and informative. We hope that you will be able to participate. If you can help us, **please RSVP to me and I will provide you with further details.** Alternatively, you can reach a member of the Abt team by calling 888-839-8521 or emailing FamilyCollege@abtassoc.com.

Feel free to share this information with your colleagues!

Sincerely,

[Contact]

Privacy Act Statement

5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3)

The information you provide to Abt Associates (Abt) will be used by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) for research recruitment to evaluate and improve the Family College Planning Tool resources.

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

If you choose to participate, the Bureau will obtain personally identifiable information (PII) such as your name, email address, and telephone number to contact you to schedule a session and provide compensation for your participation in the research.

Information collected will be treated in accordance with the System of Records Notice (SORN), CFPB.021 – CFPB Consumer Education and Engagement Records. Although the Bureau does not anticipate further disclosing the information provided, it may be disclosed as indicated in the Routine Uses described in the SORN. Direct identifying information will be kept private except as required by law.

This collection of information is authorized by Pub. L. No. 111-203, Title X, Sections 1013 and 1022, codified at 12 U.S.C. §§ 5493 and 5512.

Participation is voluntary.

Practitioners – Scheduling E-mail

Dear [practitioner name],

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a listening session! Your input will aid our development of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s consumer-facing tools to help families navigate paying for college. We are looking forward to hearing your insights and opinions.

Please indicate days when you are available for a **90-minute listening session** during the weeks of _____ and _____. You will receive **\$50 compensation** as a token of our appreciation for your time and participation. Listening sessions will be held over WebEx. Please select all of the dates that you are available from the list below:

1. (Option 1)
2. (Option 2)
3. (Option 3)

If none of those times work, please suggest a few convenient alternatives during the same timeframe.

We truly appreciate the expertise and perspective you will bring to building the CFPB’s paying for college tools.

Best regards,

[Abt interviewer]

Practitioners – Pre-Session E-mail

Dear [practitioner name],

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a listening session to share insights and background that will help us develop CFPB’s new tool! I’m looking forward to meeting with you on [DAY]. I have sent you a calendar invitation that includes a link for joining the WebEx meeting. You can join this meeting from

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

your phone, computer, or laptop. Please let us know if you need any additional accommodations to participate.

Our team's overall goal is to get your feedback on three draft resources we developed to help families make decisions about paying for college.

We will hold group discussion on these subjects as well as have a chat window that let you provide feedback in multiple ways.

Let me know if you have questions about the listening sessions in general, and thanks again for your participation!

Kind regards,
[Abt Interviewer]

Privacy Notice

The information you provide to Abt Associates (Abt) will contribute to the development of a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) tool to help consumers make decisions about how to finance their child's or family member's education.

With your consent, Abt may capture audio recording of this interview and images of your screen which may include video images. Recordings will not be shared with the Bureau. The Bureau will only receive aggregated and de-identified information. The Bureau will publish summaries of aggregate findings in a public report. Direct identifying information will be kept private except as required by law.

Participation is voluntary.

Practitioner – Family Borrower Recruitment Information

[This document will be provided to practitioners who agree to share information about the study to recruit for user testing interviews.]

Thank you for helping Abt recruit family members who have helped finance or are considering helping to finance their students' education. We seek to hear from many different family borrowers. These may be parents, grandparents, or extended family members contributing to a student's education. Contributing financially to a student's education may take many forms – from co-signing on a student loan, taking out a loan, to a family member using savings or income to pay for college costs.

Participants in the interviews will provide vital insights about how the CFPB can improve its tools to assist family borrowers. To thank participants for their time Abt will give participants a \$75 gift card.

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

We are looking for a range of perspectives to better understand family borrowers' needs and circumstances. You can help by recommending clients who have a variety of:

- Relationships to students (parents, grandparents, extended family);
- Racial and ethnic backgrounds;
- Income and wealth levels;
- Education levels and experiences with college;
- Types of post-secondary education institutions their student plans to attend (trade schools, community colleges, HBCUs, public four-year colleges, private four-year colleges, for-profit colleges, etc.); and
- Stages of college financing (including those who are currently thinking about borrowing, have already made borrowing decisions, are paying back loans, or are in deferment or default on their loans).

During the interviews, participants will be asked to use one or more draft resources and provide feedback and insights on these drafts.

To refer family borrowers, either send the recruitment email you received to possible candidates (which includes the study phone and email) or refer them directly to the study phone 888-839-8521 or email FamilyCollege@abtassoc.com. Should you have any questions, please feel free to be in touch with Sarah Wolff, the project director, at Sarah.Wolff@abtassoc.com

A.2. Family Borrower Recruitment Materials

Family Borrowers– Recruitment E-mail (Task 2 contacts)

Dear [family borrower],

A few months ago, you shared your insights and experiences with paying for college. Thank you so much! Based on that information, our team developed three resources to help families like yours navigate this complicated decision.

I'm now excited to invite you to see what tools we have created and to provide your feedback once again to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). **We'd like you to participate in one-on-one virtual interview lasting about 60 minutes. You'll receive a \$75 gift card in appreciation for your time!**

If you are interested in participating, **please call Abt Associates at 888-839-8521 or email us at FamilyCollege@abtassoc.com to be scheduled for a time.** To ensure the opportunity to provide feedback in the testing, please respond as soon as possible, and no later than [DATE].

Your insights will help shape resources aimed at helping families across the U.S. Participants typically reflect that they find the process engaging and informative. We hope that you will be able to participate.

Sincerely,

[Contact]

Privacy Act Statement 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3)

The information you provide to Abt Associates (Abt) will be used by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) for research recruitment to evaluate and improve the Family College Planning Tool resources.

If you choose to participate, the Bureau will obtain personally identifiable information (PII) such as your name, email address, and telephone number to contact you to schedule a session and provide compensation for your participation in the research.

Information collected will be treated in accordance with the System of Records Notice (SORN), CFPB.021 – CFPB Consumer Education and Engagement Records. Although the Bureau does not anticipate further disclosing the information provided, it may be disclosed as indicated in the Routine Uses described in the SORN. Direct identifying information will be kept private except as required by law.

This collection of information is authorized by Pub. L. No. 111-203, Title X, Sections 1013 and 1022, codified at 12 U.S.C. §§ 5493 and 5512.

Participation is voluntary.

Family Borrowers– Recruitment E-mail (new contacts)

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Dear [family borrower],

Recently the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a federal agency tasked with protecting consumers, developed three tools to help families navigate paying for college. We define “college” broadly to include two- and four-year schools as well as training and graduate programs. I am reaching out today to see if you would be interested in looking at these tools and providing your feedback. The CFPB often relies on consumers like you to help develop a stronger tool. Your insights and opinions will help shape a tool that will help family borrowers across the country.

We’d like to invite you to participate in one-on-one virtual interview for up to 60 minutes. **You’ll receive a \$75 gift card in appreciation for your time!**

If you are interested in participating, **please call Abt Associates at 888-839-8521 or email us at FamilyCollege@abtassoc.com to be scheduled for a time.** To ensure the opportunity to provide feedback in the testing, please respond as soon as possible, and no later than [DATE].

Your insights will help shape resources aimed at helping families across the U.S. Participants typically reflect that they find the process engaging and informative. We hope that you will be able to participate.

Sincerely,

[Contact]

Privacy Act Statement 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3)

The information you provide to Abt Associates (Abt) will be used by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) for research recruitment to evaluate and improve the Family College Planning Tool resources.

If you choose to participate, the Bureau will obtain personally identifiable information (PII) such as your name, email address, and telephone number to contact you to schedule a session and provide compensation for your participation in the research.

Information collected will be treated in accordance with the System of Records Notice (SORN), CFPB.021 – CFPB Consumer Education and Engagement Records. Although the Bureau does not anticipate further disclosing the information provided, it may be disclosed as indicated in the Routine Uses described in the SORN. Direct identifying information will be kept private except as required by law.

This collection of information is authorized by Pub. L. No. 111-203, Title X, Sections 1013 and 1022, codified at 12 U.S.C. §§ 5493 and 5512.

Participation is voluntary.

Family Borrower – Recruitment Online Posting

Let’s talk about paying for college

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Are you a **parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or other family member** who is considering or has helped to **pay for a student's college education** (including two- and four-year programs and training or graduate programs)? The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) wants to hear from you!

CFPB is seeking individuals to provide feedback on draft products designed to help people like you navigate this complicated decision.

Are you able to participate in one-on-one virtual interview for up to 60 minutes? **You'll receive a \$75 gift card in appreciation for your time!**

If you are interested in participating, please call Abt Associates at 888-839-8521 or email us at FamilyCollege@abtassoc.com to be scheduled for a time.

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Participation is voluntary.

Family Borrower Interviews – Scheduling E-mails

Dear [borrower],

Thank you for your interest in participating in an interview and share your experience with saving and paying for college. Your input will aid our development of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's consumer-facing tools to help families navigate this complicated decision. We are looking forward to hearing your insights and opinions.

Please indicate days and times when you are available for a **45-60 minute interview** during the weeks of _____ and _____. The interview will be conducted by an interviewer who may be joined by a

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

notetaker and CFPB subject matter expert. You will receive **\$75 gift card** as a token of our appreciation for your time and participation. Interviews will be held over Webex, a secure video conference platform, which you can use on your computer or phone. Please select all of the options that you are available from the list below:

1. (Option 1)
2. (Option 2)
3. (Option 3)

If none of those times work, please suggest a few convenient alternatives. Please also let us know if you need any additional accommodations in order to participate.

The CFPB often relies on interviews like this to gather input from consumers on its financial education products. We truly appreciate the ‘real person’ perspective you will bring to improving the final product.

Best regards,

[Abt interviewer]

Family Borrower Interviews – Pre-Interview E-mails

Dear [practitioner name],

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview to share your insights that will help us develop the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s new financial education product! I’m looking forward to meeting with you on [DAY]. I have sent you a calendar invitation that includes a link for joining the WebEx meeting. You will need to join this meeting from a laptop or desktop computer with internet access because the resources we will look at together are online and they are not optimized for a smart phone or tablet.

Please let us know if you need any additional accommodations in order to participate.

During the interview, I will be looking for your feedback on one or two draft financial education products we have developed to help families who are making decisions about paying for post-secondary education.

Let me know if you have questions, and thanks again for your participation!

Kind regards,

[Abt Interviewer]

Privacy Notice

The information you provide to Abt Associates (Abt) will contribute to the development of a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) tool to help consumers make decisions about how to finance their child’s or family member’s education.

APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICES FOR CLIENT PARTICIPATION IN QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

With your consent, Abt may capture audio recording of this interview and images of your screen which may include video images. Recordings will not be shared with the Bureau. The Bureau will only receive aggregated and de-identified information. The Bureau will publish summaries of aggregate findings in a public report. Direct identifying information will be kept private except as required by law.

Participation is voluntary.