International Students

Stipends can be considered taxable income for international students. Every recipient of a University-issued stipend is required to have a unique taxpayer ID number. This number is used by the University to report the payment and withholding of local, state, and federal taxes.

If you have a US Social Security number (SSN), this is your taxpayer ID number. (Note: This is not the 9-digit number assigned by Columbia. An SSN is assigned by the federal government and should never be shared via email.)

If you do not have an SSN and are not eligible to apply for one on the basis of employment, you will need to apply for an Individual Taxpayer ID Number (ITIN). You will need this number to receive your stipend check from the University and to file a US tax return in the spring for US income received during the previous calendar year. (For more information about US tax return requirements for international students, visit the ISSO website.)

NEW Direct Deposit Service: International students who are registered for classes, have a U.S. bank account, and have received at least one stipend payment by paper check can now elect to receive stipend payments through direct deposit. This feature allows you to receive your stipend up to 50% faster than with a paper check, so we encourage you to enroll. To sign up:

- For stipend direct deposit, log in with your UNI and password to myColumbia at https://my.columbia.edu/.
- Once logged in, click on the “Faculty and Staff” link at the top.
- Click on “View Your Direct Deposit Information” to enter your banking information and set up direct deposit.

When your stipend is released for direct deposit, you will receive an automated email from Student Financial Services.

Paper Stipend Checks: You may pick up paper stipend checks at the Cashier's Office. Until you receive your SSN or ITIN card, you must bring a copy of the receipt issued when you applied for an SSN or a copy of IRS Form W-7 (if you applied for an ITIN instead) to receive your check.