NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A13020027

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During a proactive review, we identified a funded proposal that contained allegedly copied text from four sources without appropriate credit[1]. We contacted the PI[2] regarding the allegation, who stated that she had not authored the proposal, did not sign as the Authorized Organizational Representative despite her electronic signature, and wasn't aware she had been listed as PI until NSF contacted her for supplemental information shortly before the proposal was funded. She identified two other individuals as potential authors of the proposal, both of whom are principals of the grantee organization[3].

Subsequent investigation revealed at least seven additional unfunded proposals[4] containing substantive amount of copied text. Further concerns were identified and investigated during the course of another case[5].

We contacted both of the named individuals, who admitted responsibility for the inclusion of plagiarized text, and described the company policy of using previously submitted proposals and written materials to generate new proposals. All documents prepared by company personnel were considered to be company property. Therefore, original authorship was seldom tracked, leading to repeated failure to attribute verbatim text to the original author. Both individuals also asserted that the grantee organization had implemented procedures to prevent further plagiarized text from appearing in future submissions.

In an effort to resolve the investigative issues identified in this case and the other case, we referred the matter to NSF. As a result, NSF and the company executed an administrative agreement, which included certifications and assurances for two years for the company and its president[6]; a four-year bar from serving as an NSF merit reviewer for the company president; and completion of responsible conduct of research (RCR) training for the company president and two other employees.

Accordingly, this case is *closed*.

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