



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A14020008

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Our office received information that a researcher (Subject)¹ was currently the Subject of a University investigation² and that this researcher's publically available dataset³ was used within NSF-funded projects.⁴ We were also told that a currently funded NSF project using the dataset was planning to redo the already completed portions of the project using a different dataset.

A University official⁵ confirmed that the Subject was being investigated for allegedly removing millions of files from a privately-funded University center⁶ and appropriating them without permission for his own personal use, including development of the public dataset. He said the data was not fabricated or falsified, and that the University would not ask researchers to stop using the data.

We spoke with a researcher⁷ on the currently funded NSF project that used the dataset. He said that the NSF project originally proposed creating its own dataset, but switched to the Subject's dataset upon learning it was similar to the one the project proposed. He said that, even before learning of the investigation, they had considered restarting the project because the Subject would not provide them with raw source files. He also stated that he did not suspect the data was fabricated or falsified.

Our review further found that the Subject has never received direct NSF funding.

Based on the above findings, although the allegation of intellectual theft remains open, this matter seems outside of our jurisdiction. Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.

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2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
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