



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-16-0015-O

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NSF OIG received an allegation of fabrication/falsification in NSF-funded work.¹ Specifically, it was alleged that a PI (Subject)² did not report to NSF problems with data management until her final project report, and that the PI reported longitudinal findings in her report that seemed questionable given the data management problems.

We contacted the Subject regarding the allegation. She explained that the project's graduate assistants incorrectly assigned participants their ID numbers, which she did not realize until data analysis began following years of data collection. The assistants assured her they could fix the issue, but the problems persisted when she revisited the data. The Subject explained that the data was not corrupted, compromised or lost, and that she was able to employ a statistical method that social scientists commonly use to produce some results. She said she did not inform NSF of the problems until her final project report because the participant ID issue and its inability to be resolved were discovered at a late point in the project.

We determined the Subject did not falsify or fabricate the NSF-funded data, that the results she presented were produced using a scientifically valid method, and that she informed NSF of the problem in a relatively timely manner. Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.

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