



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-16-0016-O

Page 1 of 1

We received an allegation that a full-time federal employee was the Principal Investigator (PI) of an NSF award. Specifically, the PI used his adjunct university position to apply for and receive an NSF award, although he was prohibited from applying for federal awards in any capacity other than his official agency position by his agency's ethics guidance. The PI also violated 18 USC § 205, which prohibits a federal employee from representing a third party (the university) before a Federal agency (NSF).

We substantiated the allegation and further determined the PI provided false information to his agency management, agency Ethics Office, and the university concerning his involvement with the NSF award. We recommended that NSF terminate the award. As a result, NSF safeguarded the remaining award funds. The university subsequently returned previously expended funds, thus making NSF whole. The U.S. Department of Justice declined to prosecute this case, but we referred the matter to the PI's agency for potential administrative action. That agency issued a letter of reprimand related to the NSF award prior to our referral and declined to take additional formal action against the PI after receipt of that referral. The PI will, however, receive additional informal counseling.

This case is **closed** with no further action taken.