



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-16-0028-O

Page 1 of 1

We learned that a PI was in violation of the terms of his faculty early career development (CAREER) award. The PI accepted a position at a foreign institute, and the PI's U.S. university granted the PI adjunct status in order to maintain his existing university research program. The PI did not, however, report his change in status to his program officer (PO) or relinquish the award as required by the terms of CAREER awards, which require PIs to be in tenure-track positions at U.S. institutions throughout the life of the award. Without consulting NSF, the U.S. university continued to expend funds from the CAREER award.

The PO became aware of the situation when the PI finally requested a long-term leave of absence from the award, well after the PI's actual change of circumstances. OIG confirmed that the PI had left his tenure-track position at the U.S. university more than 2 years prior to requesting the long-term absence from the award, and that the university had continued to expend funds from the award. When we brought the matter to the attention of university officials, they agreed the award should have been relinquished and returned more than \$50,000 that had been expended after the PI transitioned to adjunct status. NSF then terminated the award and recovered more than \$200,000 of unexpended award funds. We reminded both the university and the PI of the requirements of CAREER awards and warned them both to be mindful of such requirements in the future.

Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.