



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-17-0028-O

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NSF OIG received allegations of plagiarism in numerous publications that acknowledged NSF support.<sup>1</sup> Our review determined that the allegations all involved self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism does not constitute plagiarism under 45 CFR Part 689, which defines plagiarism as “the appropriation of *another person’s* ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit” (emphasis added).

We also received allegations that individuals were misusing NSF funds and making false claims, by publishing significantly similar papers that acknowledged NSF support in multiple journals, and by traveling to present non-novel NSF-funded research. Our review determined that neither the publications nor travel constituted misuse of federal funds or false claims.

The source of the allegations further alleged that he had been retaliated against for disclosing the plagiarism and other misconduct to his university. We reviewed the complainant’s allegations regarding the alleged retaliation, and determined that our office did not have jurisdiction to investigate, in large part because the allegations had no nexus to NSF awards or programs, or were internal university matters, or both.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Numerous allegations were received and reviewed. Many allegations were not within NSF OIG jurisdiction, and are therefore not detailed here.