



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-17-0037-O

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We received an allegation that a PI's proposal contained plagiarism. We evaluated his proposal with our software and found copied text and figures. Much of the copied material was from the PI's published papers, so does not meet NSF's definition of plagiarism. We asked the PI about the remaining copied material. He apologized for not making his citations and references clearer and said that he liked to use an original author's words to describe that author's results rather than his own. We confirmed that most of the copied text was describing satisfactorily cited and referenced figures, but the text was not distinguished (by quotation marks, indentation, italicizing, *etc.*) from the PI's original text. We concluded a reader would likely know the source of the description from the citations, but would not know exactly which words were original to the PI. We concluded this failure to distinguish copied text did not rise to the level of research misconduct. We sent the PI a letter advising him to distinguish any copied text from his original text. This case is closed with no further action taken.