

CLOSEOUT FOR M91050024

This case was brought to the attention of OIG by Drs. [REDACTED] (a Program Director in the Division of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (a Program Director in the Division of [REDACTED] on May 22, 1991, and involved an allegation of failure to identify duplicate proposal submissions. The Program Directors informed OIG that each Division had received a proposal authored by the co-PIs, [REDACTED]. Both PIs are faculty members of the Department of [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]. The two proposals ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) were received at NSF within two days of each other and, on comparison, appeared to be identical. The Current and Pending Support for Research and Education in Science and Engineering Form (Form 1239) submitted with each proposal failed to identify the other proposal. Both proposals were declined based on the evaluations of their scientific merit.

OIG contacted the President of the institution and the co-PIs with a request for information regarding this allegation. The institution President responded that the absence of the cross reference to each proposal on the respective Form 1239s was an error caused by haste and oversight by the PIs and the institution's Office of University Research. After submitting the proposal to one NSF Division the PIs realized that the project was also appropriate for submission to a second Division. Because of time constraints the PIs simply copied the proposal and forwarded it to the second Division. They failed to modify the Form 1239 submitted with each proposal. At the time these proposals were reviewed by the Office of University Research, that office was also reviewing an unusually large volume of proposals to other agencies. That office's procedures for checking the information on Form 1239s were informal and the errors were not discovered. The institution President notified NSF that as a result of this allegation these procedures have been formalized. That office now cross checks information on the Form 1239 accompanying a proposal being processed against computer print outs containing submitted proposal and funded grant activity by PI, by College, and university wide, to ensure the accuracy of Form 1239.

OIG determined that the error on Form 1239 submitted with each proposal has been satisfactorily explained. Further, the institution took appropriate action to ensure that similar errors will not occur in the future. OIG closed this case without a finding of misconduct.

[REDACTED]
Staff Scientist, Oversight

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Concurrence:

Donald E. Buzzelli 6/24/93
Donald E. Buzzelli
Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

James J. Zwolenik 6/24/93
James J. Zwolenik
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

Philip L. Sunshine 6/24/93
Philip L. Sunshine
Deputy Inspector General

cc: Assistant Inspector General for Oversight
Inspector General

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