



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-17-0040-O

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We investigated an allegation that a PI (the Subject) submitted an NSF proposal with plagiarized text. The Subject claimed that a student had written a summary for a separate project on which they were collaborating, and she copied the student's summary into her NSF proposal's background section. The student was not involved in the proposed project.

The Subject's university investigated the matter and established that the PI did not check the document for plagiarism, despite inconsistencies with the student's past writing. The Committee concluded the Subject knowingly plagiarized. The Deciding Official concluded that although the Subject's acts met the definition of scientific misconduct, the intent was careless. The University mandated RCR training for the Subject.

Based on our review of the evidence, we concluded that the Subject recklessly committed plagiarism by copying the text of another person (the student) into her NSF Proposal without review, despite known issues with the student's writing. We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct; require RCR training and 1 year of certifications; and prohibit the Subject from serving as a reviewer, consultant, or advisor for NSF for 1 year.

NSF made a finding and issued a letter of reprimand. In addition, NSF:

- a. Required the Subject to certify completion of her university's training requirement;
- b. Required the Subject to submit certifications and assurances to NSF for 1 year; and
- c. Prohibited the PI from serving as a reviewer, consultant, or advisor for NSF for 1 year.

The Subject appealed the finding and sanctions. NSF upheld all of its decisions.

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