



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-17-0091-O

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We received an allegation of plagiarism in a collaborative proposal. Our analysis found 52 lines of text copied from 3 sources. We sent inquiry letters to the Subject and the other PI. Both the Subject and the other PI agreed that the Subject was responsible for the copied text. The Subject also noted that the same copied text appeared in two other proposals he had submitted. We referred the investigation to the Subject's university.

The university conducted an inquiry, which evaluated six allegations. Each allegation pertained to a combination of one of the three proposals and one of the three sources. The University determined four merited further investigation. The university investigation then concluded that the Subject's actions were not culpable on the basis that the Subject did not realize he needed to be as thorough with citations in a proposal as he did in a publication. Therefore, the investigation committee did not make research misconduct findings for any of the four allegations.

We found the university's reasoning inconsistent and conducted a *de novo* review of the evidence. We re-evaluated all six original allegations. Because the Subject stated he understood plagiarism but did not exercise the same care with citations in a proposal as in a publication, we concluded the Subject acted culpably when he copied the material into the proposals. Thus, the Subject's actions rose to a level that warrants a finding of research misconduct. We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct and that for 1 year NSF require certifications and assurances and bar the Subject from participation as peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant to NSF. NSF concurred with our recommendations.

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