



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-18-0021-O

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Our office received an allegation of plagiarism in one declined and one funded NSF proposal, both with the same PI. Specifically, it was alleged that the PI, without permission, included in these two proposals text and figures that he received from a collaborator on a previously declined proposal the PI submitted. We subsequently received additional allegations against the PI related to acknowledgments of NSF funding in publications, receiving NSF funding for duplicative research, and excessive time and effort commitment.

Regarding the plagiarism, we referred the matter to the PI's University, which concluded the PI did not commit research misconduct. It determined that the PI and his collaborator held different beliefs about data sharing and collaborations, adding that the PI "acted within the boundaries of a normal collaboration." We concurred that the PI's action did not rise to the level of research misconduct because, though non-collegial, his act did not constitute a significant departure from the accepted practices of a standard collaborative relationship.

Regarding the other allegations, we found that three of nine publications that the PI listed on one of his award's final report did not acknowledge NSF funding, in violation of NSF's policy. We also found that the PI did not accurately disclose to NSF all his current and pending support or time and effort commitment. We did not find evidence of duplicative funding.

We sent the PI a questionable research practice letter both reminding him to always acknowledge those who author text used in his proposals and to follow NSF policies related to acknowledgements and reporting his current and pending support. We also reported our findings regarding the inaccurate time and effort reporting to the cognizant NSF program officers. Accordingly, this case is closed.