



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-19-0020

Page 1 of 1

Our office received notification of an Institutional Review Board (IRB) report of noncompliance regarding NSF-funded research when the institution opened an inquiry. Following the inquiry's recommendation, the institution initiated an investigation because the allegations involved PI conduct that might have been covered by the university's definition of research misconduct even though the conduct involved no fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism. The investigation considered several allegations primarily related to poor grant administration and failure to follow all applicable federal regulations. The PI's research was temporarily suspended, and certain research samples were destroyed. The institution reviewed the costs associated with the destroyed samples and returned over \$350,000 to NSF.

The institution concluded that the alleged conduct did not constitute research misconduct and that the poor administration of the NSF-funded research stemmed from the PI's honest errors regarding applicable regulations. The institution accepted this finding and instituted an oversight plan for the PI's future research. We determined that the institution's actions adequately addressed the noncompliance and administrative lapses and would ensure the proper oversight of any future NSF-funded projects with this PI. We sent the PI a warning letter emphasizing PI responsibilities to closely follow approved IRB protocols, to inform NSF of any new vertebrate animal use protocols, and to file accurate and timely reports.

This case is closed with no further action taken.