



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-19-0073-O

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We investigated an allegation from an employee (complainant) of an entity receiving NSF funds (grantee). The complainant alleged that the grantee terminated her in retaliation for her disclosures about internal control weaknesses in the management and oversight of NSF and other federal awards. We interviewed the complainant, an NSF program officer, and grantee personnel. We also reviewed documents provided by the complainant and the grantee.

Our investigation determined that (a) the complainant made protected disclosures to both her direct and second-line supervisors throughout her approximately 6 months of employment with the grantee; (b) within a few days of the complainant's last disclosure, her direct supervisor and second-line supervisor made the decision to terminate her; and (c) the grantee had an explanation for its termination of the complainant, including testimonial evidence that it would have terminated the complainant in the absence of these disclosures, due to concerns about lack of aptitude, leadership skills, communication skills, and professionalism required to perform crucial aspects of her job.

We submitted a report of our findings to NSF management, the grantee, and the complainant. NSF reviewed the report and concluded that the grantee did not subject the employee to a prohibited reprisal. NSF provided its decision to the grantee and complainant.

This case is closed with no further action taken.