



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-20-0016-O

Page 1 of 1

We received an allegation that a PI's NSF-funded publications and presentations used ideas that originated with his collaborators, prior to collaboration, without appropriate acknowledgement. The PI argued that the ideas were not new in his field of science, which was different from that of his collaborators. We consulted a technical expert familiar with both fields, who concluded a more formal inquiry into an allegation of intellectual theft was necessary. The PI's university conducted the inquiry and concluded that the matter constituted an authorship dispute, not research misconduct. However, the university told the PI he should include collaborators in the acknowledgements section if co-authorship is unwarranted.

We accepted the university's determination and sent a warning letter to the researcher to emphasize the importance of appropriate credit.

This case is closed with no further action taken.