



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-18-0002-PR

Page 1 of 1

We carried out a proactive review of plagiarism investigations to provide insight into plagiarism as it relates to NSF-funded research and to offer prevention strategies to educational institutions. For our review, we selected 134 plagiarism cases involving 137 researchers against whom NSF made findings of research misconduct. We found that these researchers often were employed in junior academic positions, were recent degree recipients, were educated in non-U.S. institutions, and/or committed plagiarism in multiple NSF proposals. We also found that the most common reasons these researchers gave for their plagiarism suggested they:

- did not know what constitutes appropriate citation;
- thought they used appropriate citation when they did not;
- did not understand what kinds of text require citation;
- considered appropriate citation less important in certain document sections;
- recklessly incorporated sources into drafts; and/or rushed through document preparation.

We produced a report of our review titled “Observations from NSF Plagiarism Investigations and Strategies to Prevent Plagiarism” that will be published on OIG’s website. This report suggests that institutions consider implementing the following strategies in the areas of institutional culture, training, support, and document submission:

- foster cultures of research integrity;
- publicize institutional research misconduct policies;
- establish targeted faculty and student training;
- emphasize the consequences of plagiarism;
- provide better support to proposal writers, especially those who are inexperienced or have been previously unsuccessful;
- make plagiarism detection software freely available; and
- consider more substantive pre-submission review for proposals.

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