



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-22-0028-O

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It was alleged that two Subjects (Subject 1 and Subject 2) falsified images and data in a declined NSF proposal and a draft manuscript that acknowledged NSF support. A University inquiry determined an investigation was warranted. We referred the investigation to the University.

The University's investigation concluded no research misconduct occurred. It determined the allegations resulted from a failed collaboration, miscommunication, and ineffective data management. It determined Subject 2 manipulated image metadata but concluded the action did not meet the definition of research misconduct. The University took remedial actions against the Subjects, their labs, and collaborating labs, to protect University interests.

We conducted additional review into whether Subject 2's image metadata manipulation constituted research misconduct under NSF's regulation and concurred with the University's conclusions.

We sent a questionable research practice letter to both Subjects and to a collaborating lab director reminding them of their obligations to ensure research integrity and properly maintain their data.

This case is closed with no further action taken.