



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-24-0017-O

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We conducted an inquiry into an allegation that a proposal submitted to NSF (Target) contained text plagiarized from a funded proposal previously submitted to NSF (Source). The Target had a PI and four co-PIs. We confirmed there was duplicative text in the Target and the Source. We contacted the PI and co-PIs to inquire about the matter.

We learned that an evaluator (Evaluator) recommended by the awardee's Office of Sponsored Projects had previously obtained a confidential copy of the Source. The Evaluator copied verbatim text from the Source and provided the plagiarized text to one of the Target co-PIs as guidance in the preparation of an earlier proposal. The co-PI later gave the plagiarized text to the PI to use in the Target. Neither the PI nor any of the co-PIs knew the text had been plagiarized.

We concluded the PI and three co-PIs were not culpable for the plagiarized text. We also concluded the amount of duplicative text and the role of Evaluator were mitigating factors such that this matter does not warrant further investigation. We sent a warning letter to the Evaluator for using text from a confidential source to prepare a guidance document, and warning letters to the Co-PI and Collaborator for incorporating that text without proper attribution.

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