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Description of document: National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Inspector General (OIG) Closed Investigations in CY2025

Requested date: 24-December-2025

Release date: 23-January-2026

Posted date: 09-February-2026

Source of document: U.S. National Science Foundation
Office of Inspector General
Attn: FOIA Officer
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Alexandria, Virginia 22314
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FOIA.gov

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U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

January 23, 2026

Via E-mail

Re: FOIA Request No. F-26-13

This responds to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of Inspector General (OIG), U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF), dated December 24, 2025, and received in this Office on December 29, 2025. You requested the following records:

- 1) A copy of the final report, closing memo, or equivalent concluding document for each Inspector General investigation closed during CY2025.
- 2) A copy of the list of Inspector General investigations closed during CY2025, including relevant data fields such as the subject or topic of the investigation, the case number, closing date, and opening date.

Typically, this information is readily accessible via the OIG's website, in the section for OIG's publicly available case closeout memos. However, this part of our website is temporarily unavailable due to ongoing technical restoration efforts. As such, we searched for responsive records in the OIG Office of Investigations and located 62 records, totaling 63 pages, including a list of the OIG closed cases closed from January 1 to December 31, 2025, and all associated case closeout memos.

Of these records, I have determined that 61 pages may be disclosed in full, and 3 pages may be disclosed in part, with limited redactions applied to protect the names of third-party individuals pursuant to Exemption 7(C) of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b) (7)(C), which pertains to records compiled for law enforcement purposes, the release of which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties.

This letter confirms that I considered the "foreseeable harm standard" when reviewing the responsive records and applying FOIA exemptions.

If you are not satisfied with the OIG's action on your request, you may administratively appeal by writing to the U.S. National Science Foundation, Attn: Office of General Counsel, Randolph Building, 401 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; or to foia@nsf.gov. You must clearly mark your appeal letter and the envelope or your electronic submission as a "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 days from the date of this response.

Lastly, you may also seek dispute resolution services and assistance with your request from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at 877-684-6448, ogis@nara.gov, or <https://ogis.archives.gov/>. Please note that OGIS mediates disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. However, OGIS does not have the authority to mediate requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974 (request to access one's own records).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Kendrick".

Jennifer A. Kendrick
Associate General Counsel to the IG
& OIG FOIA Public Liaison

Encl.

Record Name: Cases

Exported On: Jan 7, 2026 10:58 AM

Close Date TimeFrame: Jan 1, 2025 - Dec 31, 2025

| Case Number | Case Title | Open Date | Closed Date |
|-------------|--|------------|-------------|
| I-25-0050-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 6/5/2025 | 8/21/2025 |
| I-25-0046-O | RIAI: Allegation of violation of reviewer confidentiality | 5/29/2025 | 6/27/2025 |
| I-25-0044-O | RM: Allegation of duplicated figure, [REDACTED] | 5/21/2025 | 8/21/2025 |
| I-25-0043-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of false statements by PI, [REDACTED] | 5/21/2025 | 12/1/2025 |
| I-25-0040-O | RM: Allegation of Plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 5/1/2025 | 8/22/2025 |
| I-25-0034-O | RIAI: Allegation of use of AI in proposal review, [REDACTED] | 4/8/2025 | 7/29/2025 |
| I-25-0033-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 3/31/2025 | 5/30/2025 |
| I-25-0030-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of outside employment on SBIR award, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] | 2/11/2025 | 4/9/2025 |
| I-25-0027-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 1/28/2025 | 4/2/2025 |
| I-25-0026-O | RIAI: Allegation of violation of reviewer confidentiality/AI use by reviewer, [REDACTED] | 1/28/2025 | 8/5/2025 |
| I-25-0025-O | RIAI: Allegation of Violation of reviewer confidentiality/AI use by reviewers, [REDACTED] | 1/28/2025 | 8/7/2025 |
| I-25-0020-O | RIAI: Use of generative AI in merit review | 12/6/2024 | 8/14/2025 |
| I-25-0012-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of failure to disclose foreign funding and affiliation, [REDACTED] | 11/12/2024 | 8/7/2025 |
| I-25-0009-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 11/5/2024 | 8/19/2025 |
| I-25-0006-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 11/1/2024 | 4/17/2025 |
| I-25-0005-O | RIAI: Use of generative AI in merit review | 11/1/2024 | 8/5/2025 |
| I-25-0004-O | RIAI: Use of generative AI in merit review | 11/1/2024 | 8/14/2025 |
| I-25-0003-O | RIAI: Use of generative AI in merit review | 11/1/2024 | 8/14/2025 |
| I-18-0062-O | PrgmIn: Alleged Failure to Disclose Foreign Affiliation by PI [REDACTED] | 4/9/2018 | 11/21/2025 |
| I-20-0039-O | RM: Retracted publications due to data irregularities | 2/20/2020 | 8/6/2025 |
| I-20-0093-O | RM: Allegations of research misconduct in published scientific papers | 9/16/2020 | 8/6/2025 |
| I-21-0015-O | PrgmIn: Potential Conflicts of Interest and Lobbying [REDACTED] | 12/1/2020 | 12/30/2025 |
| I-21-0051-O | RM: Allegation of Data Fabrication/Falsification | 5/18/2021 | 2/27/2025 |
| I-22-0017-O | RM: Allegation of Plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 1/11/2022 | 12/4/2025 |
| I-22-0023-O | SBIR: Allegation of Violation of PI Primary Employment Requirement [REDACTED] | 2/7/2022 | 2/12/2025 |
| I-22-0034-O | RM: Report of data fabrication, [REDACTED] | 4/12/2022 | 12/4/2025 |
| I-22-0045-O | Admin: Concerns of violation of panel review confidentiality | 6/6/2022 | 1/17/2025 |
| I-22-0051-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of failure to disclose foreign affiliation and research, [REDACTED] | 8/2/2022 | 8/25/2025 |
| I-22-0054-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of forged application for a medical waiver | 8/23/2022 | 8/19/2025 |
| I-23-0014-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 12/20/2022 | 8/19/2025 |
| I-23-0020-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism in papers and proposals | 1/31/2023 | 12/4/2025 |
| I-23-0025-O | SBIR: Allegation of violation of SBIR program requirements, [REDACTED] | 2/10/2023 | 5/23/2025 |
| I-23-0028-O | RM: Allegation of data fabrication, | 2/17/2023 | 12/4/2025 |
| I-23-0034-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 3/14/2023 | 2/7/2025 |
| I-23-0040-O | SBIR: Allegation of ineligibility for SBIR Phase II award, [REDACTED] | 4/4/2023 | 8/20/2025 |
| I-23-0047-O | RM: Allegation of data fabrication and falsification, [REDACTED] | 5/12/2023 | 2/10/2025 |
| I-23-0048-O | RM: Allegation of data falsification | 5/23/2023 | 2/27/2025 |
| I-23-0054-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, [REDACTED] | 6/8/2023 | 2/7/2025 |
| I-23-0069-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of stalking [REDACTED] | 8/15/2023 | 7/1/2025 |
| I-24-0004-O | RIAI: Allegation of manipulated screenshot, [REDACTED] | 11/7/2023 | 9/15/2025 |
| I-24-0007-O | WB: Allegation or retaliation after reporting safety issue | 11/15/2023 | 12/1/2025 |
| I-24-0008-O | RIAI: Allegation of violation of Conflict-of-Interests and Confidentiality Statement, [REDACTED] | 11/27/2023 | 1/16/2025 |
| I-24-0020-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of violation of false claims act, [REDACTED] | 1/16/2024 | 9/11/2025 |
| I-24-0021-O | Prgmin: Allegation of misuse of purchase card, [REDACTED] | 1/22/2024 | 9/11/2025 |
| I-24-0024-O | RIAI: Concern of inappropriate use of NSF-GRFP access, [REDACTED] | 2/6/2024 | 2/10/2025 |
| I-24-0026-O | RIAI: Allegation of fraudulent overclaimed expenses [REDACTED] | 2/6/2024 | 9/17/2025 |

| | | | | |
|-------------|---|--|-----------|-----------|
| I-24-0028-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism | | 2/7/2024 | 2/6/2025 |
| I-24-0029-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism | | 2/13/2024 | 2/27/2025 |
| I-24-0030-O | SBIR: Allegation of violation of SBIR requirements, | | 2/13/2024 | 4/25/2025 |
| I-24-0035-O | RM: Allegation of plagiarism, | | 3/12/2024 | 2/10/2025 |
| I-24-0044-O | RM: Notice of investigation, | | 5/14/2024 | 2/24/2025 |
| I-24-0048-O | RIAI:Allegation of use of AI in review, | | 6/9/2024 | 8/19/2025 |
| I-24-0049-O | RM: Allegation of Plagiarism, | | 6/9/2024 | 2/3/2025 |
| I-24-0050-O | RIAI: Allegation of violation of confidentiality in merit review, | | 6/9/2024 | 9/15/2025 |
| I-24-0052-O | RIAI: Allegation of use of ChatGPT in review, | | 6/28/2024 | 8/19/2025 |
| I-24-0054-O | WB: Allegation of mismanagement and abuse of authority, | | 7/9/2024 | 8/7/2025 |
| I-24-0055-O | WB: Allegation of waste of funds, | | 7/9/2024 | 3/14/2025 |
| I-24-0058-O | WB: Alleged retaliation after report of danger, | | 8/6/2024 | 8/25/2025 |
| I-24-0062-O | SBIR: Allegation of Misuse of SBIR Phase II Funds, | | 8/13/2024 | 5/12/2025 |
| I-24-0063-O | WB: Allegation of retaliation, | | 8/21/2024 | 8/28/2025 |
| I-24-0064-O | PrgmIn: Allegation of Misuse of Award Funds, | | 8/23/2024 | 7/22/2025 |

Total: 61



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-18-0062-O | July 28, 2025

We investigated allegations that a Principal Investigator at an awardee university failed to disclose foreign employment and research funding when applying for NSF grants. We reviewed grant documents, issued subpoenas, executed search warrants, and conducted open-source research, database searches, and interviews. The allegations were substantiated, but the investigation was ultimately declined for criminal and civil prosecution.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-20-0039-O | August 6, 2025

An NSF PI fabricated and falsified data in six NSF-funded publications and three non-NSF-funded publications. The PI's university agreed to conduct the investigation.

The university contracted an investigator to conduct its investigation. The investigator concluded the PI committed significant fabrication and falsification in the nine publications by reporting research that did not occur, duplicating data, presenting estimated results as exact measurements, and using undisclosed formulas. The university agreed with the investigator's findings for eight publications; however, it found the evidentiary record incomplete for one of the NSF-funded publications. The PI resigned from the university.

We concluded that the PI intentionally fabricated and falsified data in each NSF-funded paper, that the PI's actions were a significant departure from the accepted practices of the scientific community, that the PI exhibited a pattern of misconduct, and that his actions impacted the research record, other researchers, and the university.

We submitted a report of investigation in which we recommended NSF issue a letter of reprimand, debar the PI for 3 years and, for 6 years, require certifications and assurances; prohibit the PI from participating as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant; and require a data management plan with annual certifications. We also recommended NSF require compliance with university-imposed requirements.

NSF agreed with our recommendations and issued a letter of reprimand. However, based on the egregiousness of the PI's conduct, NSF increased the debarment period to five years. In addition, NSF determined that the Subject is required for eight years to submit certifications and assurances; prohibited from participating as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant; and required to submit a data management plan with annual certification. The PI must also certify that he has completed training in responsible conduct of research within one year.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-20-0093 | August 6, 2025

We received an allegation that an NSF-funded PI fabricated and/or falsified data in numerous publications. The allegations pertained to research conducted at two universities (University 1 and University 2). Both universities conducted inquiries and determined that investigations were warranted. We referred an investigation to each university.

University 1 found no evidence of data fabrication or falsification but concluded that the PI was negligent in her data management and reporting practices. University 1 recommended that she withdraw one publication and correct another.

University 2 concluded that the PI committed research misconduct in three publications, repository data, and ongoing unpublished research. It terminated the PI's faculty position, returned more than \$700,000 to NSF, and contacted the relevant publishers about its findings.

We conducted a *de novo* review of the evidentiary record. We found that the PI culpably falsified data in a publication and related research records and that her actions were a significant departure from accepted practices. We noted that the PI's data management practices were detrimental to research and that her actions had a significant impact on the research record and the research community.

We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct, issue a letter of reprimand, require completion of responsible and ethical conduct of research training, debar the PI for 3 years and, for 6 years, require certifications and assurances, prohibit her from participating as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant, and require a data management plan with annual certifications.

NSF agreed with our recommendations as listed above, including debarment for a period of 3 years.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-21-0015-O | December 16, 2025

We investigated an allegation that an NSF program officer (PO) had a conflict of interest with a principal investigator (PI) assigned to several NSF awards under the PO's purview. Our investigation found that the PO had a personal relationship with the PI and failed to take action despite being aware that the PI had not made the required disclosures to NSF concerning his foreign affiliations. The PO also failed to make the proper disclosures to NSF concerning foreign gifts he received, and he used NSF resources and his NSF title to conduct non-NSF business. We referred this matter to the United States Office of Government Ethics and to the Department of Justice, which declined to accept the case for criminal prosecution. We also referred the matter to NSF for any appropriate administrative action. No disciplinary action was taken against the PO due to his decision to retire through the Office of Personnel Management's Deferred Resignation Program.

This case is **closed**, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-21-0051-O | February 27, 2025

We examined an allegation that a former graduate student included fabricated and/or falsified data in a figure contained in a paper and his master's thesis. Based on the totality of the circumstances, we determined no further investigatory activity was needed. We sent the graduate student a warning letter reminding him to accurately represent his research results.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0017-O | December 3, 2025

A University completed an inquiry into an allegation that an NSF PI submitted a paper containing plagiarism from another author's paper. The University determined that an investigation was warranted and we referred the investigation to the University.

The University found that the PI committed plagiarism when he co-authored and posted a publication that lacked proper attribution to another paper, and when he published multiple papers that leveraged his prior work without properly attributing the earlier work.

The University made a finding of research misconduct and required the PI to submit plagiarism reports to a University official prior to submitting publications or proposals; complete Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) training; and ensure that the research record was fully corrected for all of the investigated publications.

We concurred with the University that the PI plagiarized when he posted a publication that lacked proper attribution to another paper; however, we found that the reuse of his own prior work did not meet the definition of plagiarism under the NSF Research Misconduct Regulation.

We recommended that NSF make a finding of research misconduct, issue a letter of reprimand, require completion of an RECR course and, for 1 year, require the PI to provide certifications and assurances and prohibit the PI from participating as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant. NSF concurred and partially implemented our recommendations by issuing a letter of reprimand and, for 1 year, requiring the PI to provide certifications and assurances.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0023-O | September 23, 2024

A proactive review of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awards identified a company whose Principal Investigator (PI) was employed with another company in violation of NSF's primary employment requirements. Our investigation substantiated that on 19 occasions, the PI worked more than 19.6 hours a week at another company while concurrently PI on the NSF SBIR award. This investigation was referred and accepted by the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the company entered into a False Claims Act settlement, agreeing to pay back over \$152,000.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0034-O | December 3, 2025

A University conducted an inquiry into an allegation that a former graduate student fabricated data in an NSF-funded publication and his dissertation. The former graduate student admitted his misconduct and the University determined no investigation was warranted. We determined a full investigation was warranted to ascertain the scope of the former graduate student's misconduct and referred an investigation to the University.

The University investigation concluded that the former graduate student committed four distinct acts of data fabrication and/or falsification and one of knowing omission of important information. Specifically, during the investigation, the former graduate student confessed to data falsification in his undergraduate thesis at another institution. The University rescinded his Ph.D.

We concurred with the University that the former graduate student committed research misconduct. We, however, determined that he culpably and intentionally committed three acts of falsification with an NSF nexus.

We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct, send the former graduate student a letter of reprimand, require he take a responsible and ethical conduct of research training, and, for 3 years, require he submit certifications and assurances and prohibit him from serving as a reviewer, advisor, or consultant to NSF. NSF concurred and implemented our recommendations.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0045-O | January 15, 2024

We received an allegation that a proposal submitted to a foreign funding agency contained material plagiarized from a declined NSF proposal. The foreign proposal's Principal Investigator (PI) reviewed the declined NSF proposal. The foreign funding agency determined that the PI plagiarized text and ideas from the declined NSF proposal. We concurred that the PI plagiarized text from the declined proposal and violated the confidentiality of NSF's merit review process. NSF prohibited the foreign proposal's PI from serving as a reviewer, advisor, or consultant for NSF for 3 years.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0051-O | August 21, 2025

We investigated an allegation that a Principal Investigator (PI) failed to disclose foreign organizational affiliations when applying for National Science Foundation (NSF) grants. Our investigation found that the university and PI failed to accurately disclose foreign appointments and foreign funding as required in NSF grant proposals.

As a result of the investigation, the university returned more than \$347,000 to NSF.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-22-0054-O | August 18, 2025

We initiated this investigation after receiving an allegation that an NSF contractor attempted to circumvent NSF's United States Antarctic Program Physical Qualification process by submitting fabricated medical documents, forging signatures, and providing false information to NSF. We reviewed documentation submitted to NSF, interviewed witnesses, including the contractor, and reviewed subpoenaed documents. Our investigation substantiated the allegations, and the contractor was convicted of one count of 18 U.S.C. § 1018 and ordered to serve one year of probation. NSF debarred the contractor for three years.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0014-O

We received an allegation of plagiarism in an NSF proposal. The University conducted an investigation and determined that the Subject committed plagiarism in two NSF proposals and at least one other proposal to another federal agency. The Subject resigned from the University in lieu of a formal hearing.

NSF issued a letter of reprimand, debarred the Subject for one year, required certification of training in responsible and ethical conduct of research, required four years of certifications by the Subject and assurances by the Subject's employer that proposals submitted to NSF do not contain plagiarism, data fabrication, or data falsification, a four year prohibition from serving as an NSF reviewer, advisor, or consultant, and a one year prohibition from serving as a rotator at NSF.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0020-O

We received an allegation that a PI committed plagiarism of text and ideas in his CAREER award proposal (Award), and in a published paper (Paper 1), from a previous CAREER award proposal (Source) the PI obtained from the Source's author in confidence. Our inquiry confirmed the allegation and uncovered additional plagiarism from the Source in another published paper (Paper 2). We referred an investigation to the PI's university.

The university concluded that the PI plagiarized from the Source into all three documents. We conducted a supplemental investigation that found additional plagiarism in six NSF proposals.

We determined, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the Subject culpably committed plagiarism, and the acts were a significant departure from accepted practices. We found the number of plagiarized documents constituted evidence of a pattern of behavior.

We recommended that NSF make a research misconduct finding, issue a letter of reprimand, require the PI to complete interactive Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research training, debar him for 2 years, and, for 4 years, require the PI to submit certifications and assurances, submit a mentoring plan, and prohibit the PI from participating as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant. NSF accepted and implemented our recommendations. The Subject appealed; NSF upheld its initial decision.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0025-O | May 21, 2025

We opened this investigation after an NSF OIG proactive initiative identified evidence that an NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II awardee violated the requirement that all SBIR research and development be conducted in the United States. Specifically, our investigation confirmed that the Principal Investigator (PI) and owner falsely certified to NSF that all research had been performed in the United States, when in fact, the PI was overseas for nearly 11 months during the award's period of performance. The PI also admitted that the company did not properly track employees' time and effort during the award period. The investigation was referred to and accepted by the Department of Justice, and the company entered into a False Claims Act settlement for \$524,947.

This case has been ***closed***, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0028-O | December 4, 2025

A University graduate student admitted he intentionally fabricated data collected for an NSF-funded project.

The University concluded, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the student knowingly and intentionally committed fabrication, deemed a departure from accepted practices of the University's research community. The Subject was allowed to continue at the University with a new advisor who was required to assert both awareness of the Subject's reason for leaving his previous lab and support for the Subject in the new advisor's own lab. The Subject was also required to: have someone witness data entry in his lab notebooks and records; complete RCR training; and send the Advisor a written apology.

Our investigation determined, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the Subject intentionally committed data falsification; the Subject falsified newly collected data to match old data and represented old data as newly collected. We concluded the act was a significant departure from accepted practices of the research community.

We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct; issue a letter of reprimand; debar the Subject for 1 year; require compliance with University-imposed sanctions/requirements; require completion of interactive training in the responsible and ethical conduct of research; and, for 3 years, require certifications and assurances; and prohibit the Subject from participation as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant.

NSF agreed and implemented our recommendations.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I23-0034-O | February 7, 2025

A University notified us that it conducted an investigation of an NSF-supported graduate student who allegedly plagiarized text in a draft manuscript intended for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. The University made a finding of research misconduct against the student. The student, together with his advisor, had to correct the manuscript before publishing it. Because the committee found no other instances of plagiarism, it recommended refresher RCR training, but the student had received his Ph.D. and graduated, so it recommended a letter be added to his graduate academic record.

Our independent review of the evidence confirmed copying from at least two sources. Accordingly, we agree with the University's findings of plagiarism and will send a warning letter to the student. This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0040-O | June 27, 2025

We investigated an NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awardee for allegations that it submitted false claims to NSF concerning its eligibility to receive its SBIR Phase II award. Our investigation confirmed that prior to receiving its Phase II award, the awardee violated the prohibition against small businesses being majority-owned by one or more venture capitalist operating companies (VCOCs). Throughout the lifecycle of the award and in its application for supplements, the awardee falsely certified to its eligibility, including affirmative certifications that the awardee was not more than 50% VCOC owned.

We referred the matter to the Department of Justice where it was accepted by the Civil Division. The SBIR awardee entered into a settlement agreement in which it agreed to pay \$1,500,000, of which \$750,000 was restitution.

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



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0047-O | February 10, 2025

We received an allegation that a PI and his staff scientist fabricated data. We referred the allegation to the University.

The University investigation concluded that the PI and staff scientist knowingly or intentionally committed fabrication, a significant departure from the accepted practices of the relevant research community.

We concurred, but determined, based on the totality of the circumstances, that the matter did not warrant additional investigative activity.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0048-O | February 27, 2025

We received an allegation that a former graduate student included falsified and/or fabricated data and plagiarized material in his NSF-funded dissertation. Specifically, the academic honesty committee at the graduate student's university reviewed the allegation and required the graduate student to remove the plagiarized material from his draft dissertation, suspended him for two semesters, and recommended his experiments be repeated. The graduate student removed the plagiarized material but included the questioned data in his final dissertation.

We contacted the university's research integrity officer, who was unaware of the allegation, and referred the investigation to the university. The university concluded that the graduate student's final dissertation did not contain falsified/fabricated data but did not document its evidence.

We requested evidence from the university. Our independent analysis of the documentation confirmed that the graduate student did not falsify/fabricate data.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0054-O | February 7, 2025

A university conducted an inquiry into allegations that a PI plagiarised a former student's work in a published paper. The former student had received NSF funding. We referred the investigation to the university.

The university found that the paper did not contain NSF-funded research. Therefore, NSF has no jurisdiction in this matter.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-23-0069-O | June 13, 2025

We investigated an allegation that a United States Antarctic Program (USAP) subcontract employee (Subject) stationed at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, stalked a different subcontract employee (Subcontract Employee). We interviewed the Subcontract Employee, several witnesses, and the Subject. We also subpoenaed and reviewed documents provided by the Subcontractor, which had conducted its own investigation into the allegations.

We referred the matter to the Department of Justice, which declined to prosecute.

We submitted a Report of Investigation to NSF and recommended that it take any administrative actions deemed appropriate. NSF found that it was more likely than not that the alleged misconduct occurred, but that the conduct did not rise to the level of a safety concern.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0004-O | September 15, 2025

We received an allegation that a graduate student provided a falsified image purporting to show that he had accepted a Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) award prior to its deadline. We determined the image he provided was altered. When interviewed, the graduate student asserted the image was genuine. Subsequently, he admitted altering the image.

We recommended NSF take appropriate administrative action and inform us of the outcome. NSF debarred the graduate student for one year.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0007-O | June 6, 2025

A former manager in an NSF-funded non-profit organization alleged that the organization retaliated against them for making protected disclosures of a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety related to the organization's NSF award. The manager disclosed these safety concerns to a Deputy Director of the organization, who immediately shared the concerns with upper management. The organization placed the manager on leave and then terminated the manager following an external investigation.

We investigated the matter under the whistleblower protection provisions of 41 U.S.C. § 4712 and reported our findings to NSF. NSF found that the organization subjected the manager to reprisals prohibited under the statute. NSF ordered the organization to take actions consistent with its obligations under § 4712(c)(1), including reinstating the manager to their original position; paying compensatory damages to include back pay, employment benefits, and other terms and conditions original to the manager's employment; and reimbursing the manager all costs and expenses incurred for bringing the complaint of reprisal. The manager and the organization settled the matter pursuant to NSF's orders, and the organization agreed to pay restitution to the manager.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0008-O | January 15, 2025

We received an allegation of a violation of confidentiality by a reviewer (Reviewer) who participated in a site visit of an NSF-funded project. Our investigation found the Reviewer disclosed confidential information he received during the site visit in a proposal he submitted to another Federal agency. We further found the Reviewer used this confidential information for his personal benefit to detail technological challenges that his own proposed work would solve. The Reviewer admitted he copied material from a document he obtained during the site visit into his proposal and that he referred to the site visit in his proposal.

Based on the evidence, we recommended NSF take appropriate administrative action. NSF prohibited the Reviewer from serving as an NSF reviewer, advisor, or consultant for 5 years. NSF also told the Reviewer to disclose to other Federal agencies, for which he is requested to review proposals or participate in site visits during this period, that he is prohibited from serving as a reviewer, advisor, or consultant for NSF.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0020-O | September 08, 2025

We investigated an allegation that two university researchers obtained NSF awards based on proposals supported by at least one publication which included fabricated and/or falsified data. Our investigation substantiated the fact that fabricated and/or falsified data was used in the published research paper but determined that NSF did not significantly rely on the questioned publication in its decision to grant the subsequent awards. The Department of Justice ultimately declined to prosecute the case.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0021-O | September 4, 2025

We investigated an NSF OIG Hotline complaint alleging that an NSF employee misused their Government Purchase Card (GPC) and that the employee, along with the GPC Approving Official (AO), did not follow NSF policy in documenting GPC transactions. Our investigation substantiated that the employees failed to follow NSF GPC policies and procedures. Specifically, both employees failed to rectify a fraudulent charge on the GPC. Additionally, the GPC cardholder failed to properly document GPC transactions, and the AO nevertheless approved those transactions.

Based on our recommendation, NSF issued Letters of Reprimand to both employees.

This case has been ***closed***, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0024-O | February 10, 2025

We received an allegation concerning violation of NSF reviewer confidentiality. We did not substantiate the allegation.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0026-O | September 17, 2025

We received an allegation that an NSF employee submitted false charges on her travel vouchers for baggage and ground transportation charges.

Our investigation determined that the employee submitted false travel vouchers, potentially violating Federal travel regulations, NSF travel policy, and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.

We recommended NSF take appropriate administrative action and inform us of the outcome.

NSF issued the employee a letter of reprimand for improper conduct.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I24-0028-O | November 15, 2024

We investigated an allegation that an NSF employee plagiarized text used in an NSF publication. Since the publication at issue was not part of a research record, we did not consider this an allegation of research misconduct. As “communicating about science” is within the NSF Scientific Integrity Policy (NSF 24-007), we referred this matter to the NSF Scientific Integrity Official for information and action that may be deemed appropriate.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0029-O | February 27, 2025

A university completed an inquiry into allegations of plagiarism against a former graduate student and concluded an investigation was warranted. Specifically, it was alleged that the graduate student used data from an international collaboration without her collaborators' permission in a paper, a poster, and an abstract, which all acknowledged NSF funding. We referred the investigation to the university.

The university found the graduate student committed plagiarism and violated the data-sharing agreements. It noted, however, that in all cases the graduate student acknowledged the international collaboration and the contributions of her former collaborators.

We disagreed that the graduate student committed plagiarism because she acknowledged others' contributions. We concurred that she violated the data-sharing agreements and sent her a warning letter about her actions.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0030-O | April 24, 2025

This case originated after an NSF OIG proactive initiative uncovered evidence that an NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awardee was allegedly performing award-related Research/Research and Development (R/RD) from outside the United States. Our investigation substantiated the allegation that the Principal Investigator (PI) failed to follow NSF award terms and conditions and SBIR Policy Directive by completing award R/RD while abroad. Additionally, we determined that on multiple occasions throughout the award's Period of Performance, the company did not bill PI hours on a proportional or consistent basis as required by award terms and conditions and in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The investigation was referred to the Department of Justice who ultimately declined to prosecute.

Based on our recommendation, NSF withheld the remaining \$181,940 on the closed Award.

This case has been ***closed***, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0035-O | February 10, 2025

We received an allegation that an NSF-funded Student plagiarized content in her dissertation from another dissertation.

We referred the matter to the Student's University for investigation. The University concluded that the student culpably committed plagiarism, which it deemed a significant departure from the accepted practices of her research community.

We determined, based on the totality of the circumstances, that the matter did not warrant additional investigative activity.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0044-O | February 24, 2025

A University notified us it was moving to an investigation, and we deferred our investigation. The University investigated an allegation of plagiarism. Specifically, a former student (Student) alleged his former advisor (Advisor) published a paper that excluded him as a co-author.

The University investigation noted the Student and Advisor jointly prepared a conference paper based on a report the Student wrote for the Advisor's course. The Advisor continued to work on the project after the Student graduated. The Advisor acknowledged the Student in the paper. The University concluded the acknowledgement inaccurately described the Student's contribution, but concluded the Advisor did not commit research misconduct.

We independently assessed the evidence and concluded this was an authorship dispute, which is not research misconduct. This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0048-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write reviews for a recent panel.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0049-O | February 3, 2025

We received an allegation that a Student plagiarized software code (Source Code) and presented the resulting code and data without acknowledging the Source Code's author. The Source Code was funded by an NSF award (Award) that supported the Student.

We referred the matter to the Student's University for investigation. The University concluded that there was a culture of sharing code between students and faculty and the student's actions were therefore not a significant departure from the accepted practices of his research community.

We determined, based on the totality of the circumstances, that the matter did not warrant additional investigative activity.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0050-O | September 15, 2025

We received an allegation that a researcher violated the confidentiality of NSF's merit review process by sharing a proposal with a student. The researcher admitted to sharing the NSF proposal without permission from NSF.

NSF issued a two-year debarment from serving as a reviewer, advisor, or consultant.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0052-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write an ad-hoc proposal.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0054-O | July 1, 2025

We investigated allegations made by a former Distinguished Professor (Complainant) at a university (University) that the University retaliated against him for making protected disclosures regarding gross mismanagement of a Federal grant, gross waste of Federal funds, and abuse of authority related to a Federal grant. Specifically, the Complainant alleged the University recommended he be dismissed, removed him as co-PI on two NSF awards (Awards 2 and Award 3), and threatened to withhold payment for the work he completed on NSF-funded awards (Awards 1-3). At all times relevant, the Complainant was an employee of the University for the purposes of the applicable statute.

Our investigation determined that the Complainant made protected disclosures to University officials, the NSF Program Officers (POs) of the three awards, and NSF OIG. The University provided testimonial and written evidence that it would have removed him from the NSF awards absent of his disclosures. The University recommended he be dismissed because the Complainant suspended his NSF-related course, failed to submit required performance materials, and disengaged from the three NSF awards by missing meetings and failing to perform award-related duties.

We provided our findings to NSF. NSF determined the Complainant's disclosures did not evidence gross mismanagement of a Federal grant, gross waste of Federal funds, abuse of authority or a violation of law, rule, or regulation. NSF also determined that even had the Complainant's actions qualified as a protected disclosure, the University would have taken the same actions in the absence of such disclosures.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0055-O | March 6, 2025

We investigated allegations of retaliation levied against a university (University) by a postdoctoral researcher (Researcher) formerly employed at the University. Per the Researcher, the University retaliated against him after he made protected disclosures regarding violations of laws, rules, or regulations related to NSF awards to the awards' Principal Investigator (PI) and two other University staff members.

During the course of our investigation, we determined that the Researcher's allegations were not related to NSF awards, and thus, we lacked the jurisdiction to continue the investigation.

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



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0058-O | August 11, 2025

We received an allegation of a prohibited whistleblower retaliation from a Complainant who claimed to have been removed from her position with an NSF subcontractor and had her contract prematurely completed after making disclosures about safety concerns at an NSF funded research facility. We investigated the allegation pursuant to our obligation under 41 U.S.C. § 4712 (the Act). We interviewed the Complainant and several employees of the subcontractor. We also subpoenaed and reviewed documents provided by the subcontractor.

We submitted a Report of Investigation. NSF found there was sufficient basis to conclude that subcontractor subjected the complainant to a prohibited reprisal and ordered the subcontractor to take actions consistent with its obligations under the Act.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0062-O | May 8, 2025

We investigated an allegation that an NSF Small Business Innovation Research Phase II awardee misused award funds. Specifically, it was alleged that the awardee could not justify over \$249,000 in expenses and failed to notify NSF that the company dissolved nearly three months after receiving the award.

Our investigation did not substantiate the allegations. All award funds were properly utilized by the awardee. NSF terminated the award upon learning the company had dissolved and no losses were incurred.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0063-O | August 22, 2025

We investigated allegations made by a former Director of Technology Commercialization and New Ventures (Complainant) at a public University (University), claiming the university retaliated against him for making covered disclosures regarding its noncompliance with regulations and laws. Specifically, the Complainant alleged the University terminated his employment because of protected disclosures that were to University leadership in February, August, October, and November 2023. The alleged protected disclosures dealt with the loss of intellectual property (IP) and non-compliance with IP reporting requirements under the Bayh-Dole Act, a lack of financial conflict of interest (FCOI) reporting, and a breach of the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) unrelated business income tax (UBIT) reporting requirements. At all times relevant, the Complainant was an employee of the grantee University for the purposes of the applicable statute.

Our investigation determined that the Complainant made protected disclosures to University officials. The University provided testimonial and written evidence that it would have terminated the Complainant's employment in the absence of the disclosures. The University originally recommended that the Complainant be fired based on performance issues and creating a hostile work environment, but ultimately settled on including them in a mass layoff for budgetary reasons.

We provided our findings to NSF. NSF determined the Complainant's disclosures did not evidence gross mismanagement of a Federal grant, gross waste of Federal funds, abuse of authority, or a violation of law, rule, or regulation. NSF also determined that even if the Complainant's actions qualified as a protected disclosure, the University would have taken the same actions in the absence of such disclosures.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-24-0064-O | June 27, 2025

We investigated allegations that a non-profit research institution awardee's board of directors misappropriated NSF award funds by mispending award funds and also funneling funds to a different global research institution. We interviewed NSF program officers and the institution's board members and analyzed a financial audit and other financial documents provided by the non-profit. Our investigation did not substantiate the allegations. The case was referred to the Department of Justice, who ultimately declined to prosecute.

This case is ***closed***, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0003-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write reviews for a recent panel.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0004-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write an ad-hoc proposal review.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0005-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer self-reported using generative AI during his recent services as an NSF reviewer.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0006-O

Allegation:

We received an allegation of plagiarism in two NSF proposals.

Case Activities:

We concluded that the amount of plagiarism did not constitute a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community and therefore did not warrant a finding of research misconduct under NSF's regulation.

Based on the totality of the circumstances, we determined that the matter did not warrant additional investigative activity.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0009-O

Allegation:

Research Misconduct-Plagiarism

Case Activities:

Our office received an allegation of plagiarism in an NSF proposal. Our review found that the proposal failed to cite text from one source document. We contacted the PI and they agreed there was some overlap in framework language. We sent the PI a warning letter, reminding them about the importance of appropriate citation.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0012-O

We opened this case after receiving an allegation that three professors at a university had not properly disclosed foreign research funding and foreign affiliations when applying for NSF funds.

We subpoenaed and reviewed relevant documents and were able to determine that for one of the professors there was no nexus to NSF awards. Subsequently we interviewed the other professors who provided clarification on their publication history, confirming their accurate disclosures on NSF proposals. Ultimately, we did not substantiate the allegation.

This case is closed with no further action taken



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0020-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write a review for a recent panel.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0025-O

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write a review for a Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) panel.

We sent a Management Advisory to NSF suggesting it clarify the appropriate and acceptable uses of AI in the proposal review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0026-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write a review for a Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) panel.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0027-O

We determined that an NSF PI submitted two proposals containing text copied from an awarded NSF proposal that the PI received under the condition that she not share it further. Based on the totality of the circumstances, we determined no further investigative activity was warranted. We sent the PI a detrimental research practice letter.

Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0030-O

We investigated an NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II awardee to determine if their Principal Investigator (PI) violated the SBIR program's primary employment requirement. Our investigation found that the PI did have other employment during the SBIR Phase II award period, but did not work more than 19.6 hours per week for the other entity. Therefore, the primary employment requirement was not violated.

This case is ***closed***, and no further action will be taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0033-O

Allegation:

Research misconduct-Plagiarism

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that a declined NSF proposal (Proposal) contained material plagiarized from an external article (Source). We reviewed the Proposal and the Source and confirmed there was some attributed overlapping material. The PI was not listed as an author on the Source.

We sent an inquiry letter to the PI about the plagiarism allegation and they responded. The PI acknowledged copying some material from the Source without attribution and accepted responsibility.

We sent a questionable research practice letter to the PI, emphasizing the importance of scholarly writing and appropriate citation in all proposal sections.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0034-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation that an NSF reviewer used generative AI to write reviews for a panel.

A Management Advisory letter was sent to NSF concerning the use of generative AI in proposal reviews and to clarify the appropriate/approved use of tools in the panel/review process.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0040-O

Our office received an allegation of plagiarism (intellectual theft). Upon inquiry, the PI was able to provide an extensive history of this line of research. Our office concluded a full investigation was not warranted.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0043-O

We investigated an allegation that the Principal Investigator on a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Award was working on the Award outside of the United States in violation of NSF's SBIR grant conditions. We reviewed award records, the PI's travel records, and relevant timesheets, and interviewed the PI and the cognizant NSF Program Officer. Our investigation did not substantiate the allegation. The case was referred to the Department of Justice, who declined to prosecute.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0044-O

Case Activities:

Our office received an allegation of data fabrication and/or falsification of a figure in an NSF proposal. We contacted the PI who acknowledged a labeling error. We sent the PI a warning letter, reminding them of the importance of implementing rigorous validation procedures to ensure data accuracy and consistency.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0046-O

Allegation:

RIAI

Case Activities:

We received an allegation of a violation of reviewer confidentiality. Upon inquiry with the subject, it was determined that the relationship with the consultant was part of their broader professional circle and that the information was not gathered from the panel review process. A QRP was sent to subject reminding them of the importance of confidentiality in the peer review process and to further comply with all NSF policies and procedures.

This case is closed with no further action taken.



U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Office of Inspector General

Case Closeout Memorandum

OIG Case Number I-25-0050-O

We received an allegation that a PI copied a figure into their NSF proposal without proper attribution. The subject acknowledged the error.

We issued a Questionable Research Practices (QRP) letter and reminded the PI of proper citation requirements.

This case is closed with no further action taken.