NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO: AIGI	**File Number:** A-01100032	**Date:** 01/29/02
Subject: Case Closeout		Page 1 of 2

On 3 October 2001, the complainant,[1] who received the subject's NSF proposal[2] for review, alleged that the main theme in the subject's proposal was taken from one or both of the complainant's two essentially identical previously submitted NSF proposals.[3] The complainant suspected that the subject, who served as a panelist for many proposals submitted to this particular NSF program, reviewed his proposal and took his basic idea for the project.

Our review noted that the theme and objectives in the complainant's and the subject's proposals were similar, although some aspects of the proposed projects were different. We also noted that three of the four *ad hoc* reviewers of the subject's proposal said that the subject's proposal contained ideas and/or hypotheses that were neither novel nor unique. Similarly, we noted that several *ad hoc* reviewers of the complainant's two proposals said that the project and/or hypotheses were neither novel nor unique. The reviewers of the complainant's proposals considered the selection of location and the consequent conditions to be the unique aspect of the project. Both the location and the resulting conditions were different in the subject's proposal.

We determined that the complainant's and subject's proposals used a theme, associated ideas, and hypotheses that represented a more general scientific approach used by other scientists in this field

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[1] [redacted] the complainant, is a faculty member in the Department of [redacted]

[2] NSF proposal [redacted] entitled [redacted] was submitted by the subject, [redacted] Department of [redacted]

[3] NSF proposal [redacted] entitled [redacted] was submitted by the complainant and co-PIs, [redacted] and NSF proposal [redacted] was submitted by the complainant and co-PIs, [redacted]

	Prepared by:	Cleared by:		
	Agent:	Attorney:	Supervisor:	AIGI
Name:				
Signature & date:				

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of study that was applied to specific study locations and conditions. We concluded that there was no substance to the allegation that the subject stole the complainant's basic idea and used it in his NSF proposal.

This inquiry is closed and no further action will be taken.