CLOSEOUT FOR CASE A-01100036

On 31 October 2001, we received an allegation of misconduct in science from the complainant.[1] He alleged that an NSF proposal[2] he received for review contained ideas and language that were plagiarized from one of his two earlier NSF proposals (proposals 1 or 2)[3] or from his Department of Energy (DoE)[4] proposal. He said that one of the PIs on the NSF proposal (subject 1, 2 or 3),[5] all of whom were from the same institution (the University), must have reviewed one of these proposals either as a reviewer or a panelist. He added that if no faculty member from the University reviewed any of these proposals, then the matter would be the consequence of researchers working on the same topics and, as a result, developing similar ideas.

A review of NSF's computerized proposal and award database showed that none of the subjects either reviewed or served on a panel for either of the complainant's proposals. We requested and received a copy of the DoE proposal and review information from the misconduct official at DoE. We determined that none of the subjects reviewed or participated in the review of the complainant's DoE proposal. Because the Cover Sheet for the complainant's NSF proposal 1 indicated that he submitted a similar proposal to Office of Naval Research (ONR),[6] we requested and received information about the review of this proposal from the misconduct official at ONR. We learned that the complainant's ONR proposal was not sent out for review or reviewed by a panel.

We determined that none of the subjects received a copy of any of the complainant's similar proposals submitted to NSF, DoE, or ONR through the review processes. We conclude there is no substance to the allegation.

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

cc: Investigations, IG

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

[2] NSF proposal (awarded) [redacted] entitled [redacted] with PI (subject 1) [redacted] and co-PIs, [redacted] (subject 2) and [redacted] (subject 3).

[3] The two NSF proposals: Proposal 1 is [redacted], entitled [redacted] submitted by the complainant as the sole PI in [redacted] – and on the cover page of this proposal it states that it was being submitted to ONR and DoE; and Proposal 2 is [redacted] entitled [redacted] by [redacted] s PI and the complainant as co-PI in [redacted] – and on the cover page of this proposal it states that it was being submitted to DoE.

[4] DoE proposal is entitled [redacted] and was submitted by the complainant in [redacted]

[5] Subject 1, [redacted] nd co-PIs, and subjects 2 and 3, [redacted] espectively, are all at the [redacted] University).

[6] ONR proposal is entitled [redacted] and was submitted by the complainant in [redacted]