



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A-02030021

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On 8 March 2002, we received an allegation of plagiarism in an NSF proposal submitted by subjects 1 and 2.¹ We observed about three pages of substantially similar material in the subjects' proposal that appeared to have been copied from an NSF award.² The similar material was part of the management portions of both the proposal and the award. The subjects' proposed project was significantly different from the award's supported project. We noted that subject 2 had been listed as a participant on an earlier almost identical declined proposal (the earlier proposal) submitted about a year before the award by the same PI and co-PI.³ Finally, we noted that subject 2 and the PI and co-PI of the earlier proposal worked at the same institution when it was submitted.

Subject 2 explained that he had written the sections used in the subjects' proposal for the earlier proposal. He explained that he had given this earlier developed material to subject 1 to use in their proposal. He asked us to contact the PI for confirmation.

The PI told us that subject 2 had been part of a group that had developed the earlier proposal when subject 2 was at his institution. The PI explained that, although he could not be sure who wrote what sections originally, he said it was their working style for each member of the group to write sections and then merge these into a full proposal and rework it together. He said that the subject had been a part of this group that developed the earlier proposal. He also said that subject 2 had informed him that he was going to use the award as a model and, although subject 2 did not say he would use a portion of it verbatim, the PI said he certainly could if he wished.

We determined that subject 2 had participated in the original development of the earlier proposal and, although he should have been more careful in noting the source of the material he copied, he did have the right to use it. This case is closed and no further action will be taken.

¹ NSF received [REDACTED], entitled "[REDACTED]," on [REDACTED], submitted by [REDACTED] (subject 1) and [REDACTED] (subject 2), both in the [REDACTED].

² The apparent source document was NSF award [REDACTED], entitled "[REDACTED]" Awarded on [REDACTED], it was submitted by [REDACTED], both in the [REDACTED].

³ NSF received [REDACTED], entitled "[REDACTED]" in [REDACTED], submitted by [REDACTED], both in the [REDACTED].

	Agent	Attorney	Supervisor	AIGI
Sign / date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>