



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A04050025

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An allegation was received that the subjects<sup>1</sup> committed plagiarism in their NSF proposal<sup>2</sup> by not specifically citing sources of statistics supporting the need for educational training. There is no separate "References" section in the proposal; facts and statistics in the proposal text are usually accompanied by an in-line citation by name in the text, or a footnoted reference in a figure or table. Such citations or footnotes are often informal and abbreviated, but in no instance were the factual results claimed to be products of the author's original work. In two instances, no citations (even incomplete) were provided for facts and figures that seemed to be drawn from an external reference. However, in both these instances, the source of the facts and figures was identified as the report of the NSF-supported workshop<sup>3</sup> that preceded issuance of the request-for-proposals (RFP), and it is therefore reasonable that the authors of proposals generated in response to the RFP would draw support from that report. The workshop report is not a product of particular authors, but carries a copyright 2002 of an educational association.<sup>4</sup> The un-cited facts mirrored in the proposal appear in the text of the "Introduction" of that workshop report, and could reasonably be considered to be information in the public domain, freely available for use. The copyright notice for the report is accompanied by the statement "photocopying for nonprofit educational purposes is permitted." The copyright notice also cites the on-line availability of the report.

We conclude that the subject's lack of explicit citation to the NSF-supported workshop report does not rise to a level that requires our action.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

<sup>1</sup> Redacted

<sup>2</sup> Redacted

<sup>3</sup> Redacted.

<sup>4</sup> Redacted.