



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A04050034

Page 1 of 2

We were informed of allegations that a former faculty member<sup>1</sup> of a New England university<sup>2</sup> had not received full payment for work performed under an NSF award.<sup>3</sup> The former faculty member was unable to provide pay stubs or other information for us to confirm how much salary she had received. Shortly thereafter, we learned that a student<sup>4</sup> claimed that he was not reimbursed by the NSF award for improvements he had been employed to make in a web site.

We contacted the PI, who informed us that neither former faculty member nor the student had never worked on the NSF award, but had worked for a nonprofit educational organization. The PI explained that the NSF grant involved collaboration between educators at several universities. In order to avoid misunderstandings the collaborators engaged the nonprofit educational organization<sup>5</sup> as the grant's "bookkeeper."

At the PI's recommendation, we contacted the director of the educational organization for further information. The Director<sup>6</sup> of the nonprofit educational organization confirmed that his organization served as the "bookkeeper" for the NSF award. Separately, the nonprofit receives state and other foundation or nonprofit funds to conduct its own educational projects. He told us that his organization had employed the former faculty member and that employment was through discretionary funds and not derived from any federal award. The Director also stated that the student had never been employed by or been contracted to do work for the nonprofit educational organization.

According to the Director, the funder of the web work required that the student hired to perform it be a university student. At the time the student allegedly conducted the work he was attending high school. The Director explained that the former faculty member might have engaged the student, who is also her son, to conduct some work for her, but if that were so, it was without the knowledge, permission, or consent of the nonprofit educational organization.

Because neither the former faculty member nor the student worked for the NSF award, we

<sup>1</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>2</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>3</sup> The award is Cooperative Agreement [REDACTED] entitled, [REDACTED]

<sup>4</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>5</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>6</sup> [REDACTED]



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A04050034

Page 2 of 2

could find no support for the allegations. In the absence of NSF support, any allegation that these individuals were not paid for work at the nonprofit educational organization would not be within NSF-OIG's jurisdiction.

Subsequently, we learned that the faculty member's idea for a talent search may have been used without acknowledgement in the NSF proposal. We have been unable to find support for this allegation, and not received information from the faculty member to support the allegation. In the absence of evidence, this allegation will not be pursued. If OIG receives information supporting this allegation, this case will be reopened.

Accordingly, this case is closed.