



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A12080055

Page 1 of 1

We received an allegation that the PI¹ on an NSF award² and individuals from a subawardee³ engaged in intellectual theft of the work of a former graduate student⁴ of the PI. Specifically, it was alleged that the PI wrote the NSF proposal, which included the graduate student's work, without the student's knowledge. It was also alleged that the subawardee publicized the graduate student's research as its own, without attribution. The allegation stated that the PI's institution⁵ conducted an inquiry and concluded no investigation was warranted, but raised concerns with the process.

We obtained the institution's inquiry report. It concluded that the contested material in the PI's proposal was from work he and the graduate student co-authored. It also concluded that the subawardee was conducting research into this area before the graduate student's work was published, and that the subawardee attributed the co-authored material to the PI when used.

We independently reviewed materials constituting the research misconduct allegation and the inquiry report, as well as the NSF proposal. We concurred that the PI co-authored the contested material with the graduate student, and as such has the right to reuse the material and ideas. We also concurred that the subawardee was working on this idea prior to the graduate student and PI's publication, and that it generally did adequately cite material from that paper when used. Lastly, our review determined that neither the NSF proposal nor the subawardee's website contained verbatim material from graduate student's thesis.⁶

Based on our review, we conclude that a research misconduct investigation is not warranted. The case is **closed with no further action taken.**

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]

⁶ The graduate student provided a portion of her thesis to our office.