

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

Closeout - [REDACTED]
Page 1 of 2



OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 23, 1998

To: File No. 197070028

From: [REDACTED] Special Agent, Investigations Section

Through: [REDACTED] Special Agent-in-Charge, Investigations Section

Re: Dr. [REDACTED] Case Closeout

Background:

On July 6, 1997, an NSF program officer referred an email message to our office. The message, from Dr. [REDACTED] University of [REDACTED] contained a section in which [REDACTED] admitted spending NSF grant salary ([REDACTED]) while not conducting the work for the project. This continuing grant, awarded in January 1991 to [REDACTED] was transferred to [REDACTED] in March 1994 when [REDACTED] left the University and began working for that company. The grant was then transferred back to [REDACTED] in September 1995, when [REDACTED] returned to the university. The total amount awarded by NSF for this grant was \$[REDACTED]. [REDACTED] email message to NSF, she noted that the time she charged salary without performing work occurred while she was at [REDACTED]

Findings:

We reviewed account summaries and financial information for the NSF grant, which was provided by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We found that while [REDACTED] was at [REDACTED] approximately \$27,000 was charged to the NSF grant.

Our investigation also found that [REDACTED] had submitted an equivalent proposal to the [REDACTED] during the same time she submitted the proposal to NSF. She acknowledged these submissions in both proposals, and stated that if one was funded, the other proposal would be withdrawn.

We found that NSF approved funding for [REDACTED] with the understanding that she would withdraw the [REDACTED] proposal. Although [REDACTED] wrote a letter to [REDACTED] requesting the withdrawal, the agency apparently never took action on this letter. Upon learning that the [REDACTED] proposal had been reviewed, [REDACTED] made the suggested revisions and subsequently received funding from [REDACTED]. A review by disciplinary experts in [REDACTED] field found that the proposals were not entirely duplicative and overlapping. In addition, [REDACTED] had proposed methods to [REDACTED] or changing the scope of the [REDACTED] project.

[REDACTED] stated in a February 1998 interview that she was not able to bring full "closure" to her NSF and [REDACTED] projects. While she admitted that she spent the majority of her last few months at [REDACTED] searching for a new job, she performed some work related to her grants. [REDACTED] also showed us drafts of manuscripts which she said resulted from her work on both projects. These manuscripts were co-authored by [REDACTED] who worked as a post-doctoral fellow for [REDACTED] from September 1994 to January 1995. These manuscripts have not yet been submitted for publication.

Conclusions:

There is no evidence that [REDACTED] used grant salary during a specific time period when she was not doing work on her projects. In addition, there is no evidence that both projects were clearly overlapping. Based on these findings, this case is closed.