

Case Closeout – M010300011

On March 27, 2001, our office received an allegation of plagiarism associated with a subsequently declined NSF proposal.¹ The allegation stated that a plant biologist (subject)² had plagiarized material from an earlier declined NASA proposal³ submitted by the subject and two research collaborators.

In response to a letter from our office, the subject confirmed that some material from the declined NSF proposal came from the original declined NASA proposal but stated that as a co-Principal Investigator of the NASA proposal she “can not recall with any certainty exactly who wrote any of these sentences as the proposal in question was a joint project involving three authors. . . [and] did not believe it was inappropriate to use some of the passages in another proposal.”⁴

After considering the plagiarism allegation and the subject’s response, along with a comparison of the NASA and NSF proposals, we conclude there is insufficient evidence to support further investigation into this allegation of misconduct in science. As the subject jointly composed and submitted the original NASA proposal with two research collaborators, the subject was, by community standards, permitted to use the materials and did not commit plagiarism in the NSF proposal. Accordingly, this inquiry is closed and no further action will be taken by our office.

¹ NSF proposal [redacted]

² [redacted].

³ NASA proposal entitled [redacted]

⁴ [redacted] response letter (August 13, 2001), page 2.