CLOSEOUT FOR M92070033

OIG received an allegation by telephone on June 5, 1992, subsequently elaborated in letters on [redacted] and [redacted] of that year and on [redacted] concerning possible misrepresentation and data fabrication in a grant proposal submitted to NSF. The complainant, [redacted] of the Department [redacted] at the University [redacted] asked for and was granted confidential informant status. He alleged that the subject [redacted] Director of [redacted] [the foundation]) and Professor [redacted] had misrepresented his grant status in the Current and Pending Support section of his two 1992 proposals [redacted], entitled "[redacted] and [redacted], entitled "[redacted]"). He further alleged in his [redacted] letter that the subject at the time of his proposal had "yet to obtain any meaningful data" using [redacted] and that any assertion to the contrary in his proposals to NSF would constitute fabrication.

In both of his proposals, the subject listed two sources of current support that the complainant questioned. One was a [redacted] project (project #1) funded by the [redacted] (the association) and the [redacted] and the other a [redacted] project (project #2) funded by the foundation he directs. OIG wrote to the subject asking him for documentation of his support from these two projects. The subject has now provided us with letters on official stationery from the president of the association and board of directors of the foundation confirming the existence of these projects and explaining their purposes, funding, and terms of operation. OIG concludes that these letters satisfactorily document the existence of these projects and confirm the subject's statements in his proposal.

OIG asked the complainant to clarify his allegation concerning data fabrication and, in particular, what he meant by "meaningful" data. The complainant informed us that he did not intend to imply that the subject lacked preliminary data of any kind. The complainant also stated that he had no reason to believe that the subject could not have collected preliminary data using equipment other than the instrument he had named in his [redacted] letter. The subject's proposal clearly identifies his data as preliminary and states that it was collected using equipment at the [redacted] OIG thus has no reason to believe that the subject has in any way misrepresented the quality of his data or how they were collected.

The complainant also alleges in his [redacted] letter various financial improprieties with regard to the foundation's bookkeeping and its relation to the university. These alleged improprieties date to [redacted] and have been investigated by the university itself. We have no allegation suggesting that these improprieties involve NSF awards. The foundation played no formal role in the subject's NSF awards, which were always made to the university itself. Our inquiry did not find evidence that NSF has funded the foundation in any way, including ways that do not involve the subject as a principal investigator. Any improprieties in the

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administration of the foundation are thus not within our jurisdiction.

At the subject's request, OIG sent him a letter informing him that we were closing the case and had no reason to believe him guilty of any misconduct involving NSF proposals and awards.

This case is closed and no further action will be taken.

[redacted]

Concurrence:

Donald E. Buzzelli 9/20/93

Donald E. Buzzelli
Deputy Assistant Inspector General,
Oversight

James J. Zwolenik 9/20/93

James J. Zwolenik
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight

Montgomery K. Fisher
Counsel to the Inspector General

cc: Signatories
Inspector General.

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