CLOSEOUT FOR M-95040014

On April 3, 1995, [redacted] program officer in [redacted] brought an allegation of misconduct in science to OIG's attention. The complainant, [redacted] explained that he had received two proposals for review, both involving the subject, [redacted] (the first institution). The complainant alleged that the subject's Biographical Sketches in two proposals, submitted simultaneously, contained conflicting information about his present academic position and that one of them must be a misrepresentation. He said that the Biographical Sketch in NSF proposal [redacted] indicated that the subject was currently affiliated with only the first institution, while the Biographical Sketch in [redacted] (a foreign foundation proposal) stated that the subject was currently affiliated with only [redacted] (the second institution). In addition, the complainant alleged that the subject's two simultaneously submitted proposals were essentially equivalent, a fact the he failed to indicate, as required, in his NSF proposal.

OIG wrote to the subject, who provided us with a description of his employment status. The subject explained that he held joint appointments at the first and second institutions, but that only one supported him at any given time. He said that a complete description of his employment status would have been lengthy and confusing. OIG confirmed with the first institution that the joint-appointment situation described by the subject was correct.

The subject's NSF Biographical Sketch correctly represented his position at the first institution, but did not reflect his continued joint affiliation with the second institution. OIG requested a program officer's opinion regarding the seriousness of this misrepresentation. The program officer stated, and OIG agreed, that the incorrect information presented by the subject in his Biographical Sketch provided him no advantage in the review process and the misrepresentation was not a serious deviation from accepted practice. The program officer described the matter as "a serious incidence of stupidity." OIG concluded that, in this case, the

---

[1] NSF proposal [redacted], entitled [redacted] was submitted by the subject with two co-PIs; [redacted] According to the Biographical Sketches, all three were affiliated with the first institution.

[2] Th[redacted] entitled [redacted] was submitted by [redacted] with the subject as a co- PI. The subject's Biographical Sketch indicated that he was currently affiliated with [redacted]

incorrect information provided by the subject in his NSF proposal did not rise to the level of misconduct in science.

With respect to the second allegation, the subject provided OIG with annotated copies of both proposals to show the differences between them. He explained that the two proposals were intended to perform complementary research on different materials and would produce different experimental results and conclusions. OIG concluded that there was no substance to the allegation that the subject had submitted two essentially similar proposals simultaneously to NSF and the foreign foundation.

This inquiry is closed, and no further action will be taken in this case.

cc: Staff Scientist, Deputy AIG-Oversight, AIG-Oversight, IG