CLOSEOUT FOR M-95080032

OIG received a 7 July 1995 letter written by the complainant, [redacted] who worked in [redacted] In his letter, the complainant said he had evidence of "scientific malpractice" involving NSF grants. Because he provided no details in his letter that would permit any evaluation of his concerns, OIG contacted the complainant with a request for more information.

The complainant responded with a request for information about OIG's policies and procedures. OIG wrote to the complainant and provided him with information about its policies and procedures, and about confidential source status. In addition, OIG requested information about the complainant's concerns so that it could meet its obligation to investigate issues of misconduct in science related to NSF-supported activities (45 C.F.R. part 689.1(f)).

The complainant responded to OIG's request with a letter that did not contain the requested information.

OIG wrote to the complainant again, requesting information that would enable OIG to evaluate the alleged issues of misconduct in science. Four months passed with no response from the complainant. During the four months, OIG received scattered information about the subject's complaint from other sources.

OIG determined that the complainant had two concerns. First, the complainant alleged that several authors had published information that perpetuated an error, an action which he equated to misconduct in science. Second, the complainant alleged that journal editors prevented him from exposing the error when they refused to publish his letters and papers about it. None of the information provided enabled OIG to positively identify a possible subject with NSF support.

NSF investigates allegations of misconduct in science involving activities funded by NSF (45 C.F.R. part 689.1). Without more detailed information from the complainant, OIG was unable to determine whether or not the allegations in this situation were issues of misconduct in science according to NSF's definition. In addition, OIG was unable to determine if any NSF supported activity pertained to the allegations and, therefore, could not determine if NSF had jurisdiction in this matter.

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

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