Performance Report FY2019

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

NSF

FY 2019 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The FY 2019 Performance Report covers the period from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. This section describes OIG's accomplishments towards the three goals set forth in the OIG Performance Plan for FY 2019

GOAL 1: PROMOTE NSF EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

1. Identify and implement approaches to improve product quality and timeliness.

Quantitative Goals

- *Complete 50 percent of OIG internal audit products performed by OIG staff within 18 months of the engagement letter.*
- *Evaluate (consistent with Government Auditing Standards) grantee implementation of NSF policy in 25 percent of internal audits.*
- *Include steps to assess risk and test for potential fraud (when applicable) in 75 percent of audit plans, consistent with OA policies and procedures.*
- *Perform at least one independent quality control review of an audit product issued during the performance year in accordance with government auditing (GAGAS) requirements and Office of Audits policy.*
- *Resolve all internal quality control review (IQCR) findings and recommendations within three months of report issuance and in accord with OA policy, applicable CIGIE guidelines, and Government Auditing Standards (Yellow Book).*
- *Issue Annual Quality Assurance report to the AIGA in accordance with Office of Audits policy and government auditing (GAGAS) standards.*
- *Resolve all actions identified in the Annual Quality Assurance Report within three months of report issuance and in accord with OA policy.*
- *Assign 80 percent of all investigative cases to appropriate staff teams within 30 days of being opened/received.*
- *Make 75 percent of investigative referrals to other offices or organizations are made within 30 days of the need for referral being identified and are conducted in a manner consistent with office policy.*
- *Provide legal reviews or opinions within agreed upon timeframes 60 percent of the time to ensure that the office's operations stay within the bounds of governing legal requirements and that courses of action are promptly taken to minimize legal risk.*
- *Ensure that 80 percent of all confidential financial disclosure filings are reviewed and certified in accordance with Office of Government Ethics standards and timeframes.*
- *Circulate at least one IT update which discusses topics relevant to OIG operations or activities to assist in mission support.*
- *Provide at least one forensic accounting update to investigative management on the status of contract funds and ongoing case work.*
- *Ensure 75 percent of OIG publications are posted to external websites, such as Oversight.gov, consistent with relevant directives.*

Qualitative/Other Goals

- *Ensure audit work remains on schedule through at least bi-weekly tracking and monitoring of the status of the teams' timeframes.*
- *Review records practices and develop approaches for enhancements needed for accuracy or completeness.*
- *Provide data necessary for tracking and monitoring status of investigations to appropriate managers on a weekly basis to ensure work remains on schedule.*
- *Review OI investigative case management system (eLOC) and make refinements as necessary.*
- *Improve and enhance processing of OIG FOIA requests*
- *Ensure timely processing of human resources actions.*
- *Update the OIG's COOP plans in accordance with NSF and overarching DHS guidelines at least annually.*
- *Update the OIG's strategic plan and communicate verbally to all OIG staff to facilitate discussion and foster collaboration/coordination at least annually.*

Audits

Quantitative. During this performance period, the Office of Audits (OA) exceeded its stated goal of completing 50 percent of OIG internal audit products performed by OIG staff within 18 months of the engagement letter: OA issued 11 reports prepared by OA staff, of which eight (75%) were completed within 18 months of the engagement letter. In addition, OA exceeded its goal of evaluating grantee implementation of NSF policy in 25 percent of internal audits: OA issued three internal audits and evaluated grantee implementation of NSF policy in one (33%). OA also exceeded its goal of including steps to assess risk and test for potential fraud (when applicable) in 75 percent of audit plans: All four external and internal audits (100 %) performed by OA staff in FY 2019 assessed fraud risk, and none required additional testing for potential fraud.

In addition, the OA exceeded its goal of resolving all internal quality control reviews (IQCR) findings and recommendations within three months of report issuance. OIG's Office of Management issued an IQCR on August 16, 2019 and acknowledged resolution of all findings and recommendations just 11 days later. As for the goal of resolving all actions identified in the Annual Quality Assurance report within three months of report issuance, the report was issued September 30, 2019 and had no findings to resolve.

Investigations

Quantitative. The Office of Investigations (OI) accomplished all targets and met the goal of identifying and implementing approaches to improve investigative quality and timeliness. OI ensured that its investigative activities are high quality, timely and accurate, and of value to the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Government. During this reporting period, all investigative products were reviewed by management prior to dispatch. Over 90 percent of investigative cases were assigned to appropriate staff teams within 30 days of being received and opened, exceeding our goal of 80 percent. Further, with over 90 percent of investigative referrals to other offices or organizations being

made within 30 days of the need for referral being identified (with consent being obtained from the complainant when necessary), OI exceeded its goal of 75 percent. All case assignments and referrals were conducted in a manner consistent with investigative policy.

Qualitative. Data necessary for tracking and monitoring the status of investigations was compiled and provided to managers on a weekly basis and was used to ensure that all investigative work remained on schedule. OI's electronic case management system (eLOC) has been successfully deployed and has effectively served both investigators and managers. Refinements were made to enhance the identification and compilation of data for management reports.

Counsel

Quantitative. OC issued 91 percent of its reviews/opinions to the requesting office within agreed-upon timeframes or within 2 weeks when no time was agreed upon. Also reviewed 100 percent of the confidential financial disclosure filings were reviewed and certified in accordance with Office of Government Ethics standards and timeframes.

Qualitative. In the records arena, OC implemented Civil/Administrative Litigation Policies and Procedures. The document, among other things, includes steps for initiating, maintaining, and lifting litigation holds and sets forth a protocol to ensure accurate and legally-sufficient records production in litigation. Also, OC revised the procedures for handling Freedom of Information requests; these changes improve FOIA administration and service by optimizing consistency, accuracy, and timeliness in responses and reporting.

Office of Management

Quantitative. OM fully met the goal of providing independent assurance that the Office of Audits system of quality control is operating effectively for FY 2019. OM accomplished this by directing one internal quality control review, as well as conducing spot checks of five on-going audits for four key elements needed to ensure ongoing audit work is appropriately conducted and documented. Only minor issues were identified, and all issues were resolved immediately – well ahead of the three-month allotted timeframe. OM also issued the Annual Quality Assurance report to the AIGA, which included the results of the IQCR and spot checks, as well as an independent verification that all required staff met the annual continuing education requirements, confirming that OA's system of quality control is effective for FY2019.

OIG IT exceeded its goals by posting 24 updates to staff that discussed a broad range of topics relevant to OIG operations or activities to assist in mission support. In addition, OIG IT posted 52 publications to external websites such as Oversight.gov, all consistent with relevant directives. The Intake Coordinator referred 37 matters to NSF management, all within the prescribed 30-day time limit.

Qualitative. All these goals were met or exceeded. OIG requires annual Records Management training and attained 100% attendance. Records practices were reviewed; we are refining the closeout check process to increase accuracy or completeness in support of Peer Review. On a

weekly basis, the Intake Coordinator provided all data necessary to appropriate managers for tracking and monitoring status of investigations to ensure work remains on schedule. OIG IT performed ongoing review of OI investigative case management system (eLOC) and made data corrections, usability refinements and updates as necessary. OIG's COOP plan was updated in accordance with NSF and overarching DHS guidelines. The OIG's strategic plan was updated and communicated verbally to all OIG staff to facilitate discussion and foster collaboration and coordination.

As hiring opportunities arose, all documentation for HRM to initiate hiring actions was promptly prepared. The necessary documentation included newly developed PDs to clearly and accurately reflect the skills, talents, and experience necessary to successfully perform in the positions that were to be filled. These actions were across the board for the entire office and involved hiring for all components of the office. In addition, all queries from NSF HRM were responded to in one business day or less, exceeding the goal of responding in three business days or less. Finally, all new members transitioned into their positions with a thorough introduction to the Office of Management and OIG, including training on standards and expectations, and with coaching from managers and other members of the office to ensure their success.

2. Strengthen our focus by refining approaches for selecting work and setting priorities.

Quantitative Goals

- *80 percent of investigations opened in accord with investigative management intake recommendations.*
- *70 percent of discretionary audit products issued during the performance year address top management challenges or NSF's high-risk areas.*
- *75 percent of external audits in the annual audit plan cover high-risk awardees, as evidenced by reference to OIG's published management challenges and annual risk assessment documentation.*

Qualitative Goals

- *Optimize hotline webpage and intake form at least annually.*

Investigations

Quantitative. OI strengthened its focus on refining approaches for selecting work and setting priorities. We implemented formal criteria for application during our intake review process, during which senior OI managers meet weekly to triage new incoming information to better prioritize cases opened for investigation. Applying newly established criteria to each intake has increased the effectiveness of investigative oversight of NSF programs and operations and has ensured the highest priority is given to the most serious allegations and those with likely substantive and significant impact on NSF and U.S. national security. We exceeded our goal of 80 percent of investigations being opened in accord with recommendations made by OI managers, achieving this goal in over 90 percent of case openings.

Matters brought to OI's attention that are more appropriately addressed by NSF management have been promptly referred for action and matters deemed inconsequential or otherwise inappropriate for investigative activity have been placed in a searchable electronic file and are available for future review as needed. Successfully applying these criteria has ensured that investigative resources were employed with efficiency and economy.

Audits

Quantitative. In FY 2019, OA strengthened its focus on refining approaches and selecting work and setting priorities. It exceeded its goal of 70 percent of discretionary audit products addressing top management challenges or NSF's high-risk areas: 83 percent of discretionary audit products addressed ether management challenges, high-risk areas, or both. OA also exceeded its goal of 75 percent of external audits in the annual audit plan covering high-risk awardees: 94 percent of external audits in the plan covered high-risk awardees.

Management

Qualitative. This goal was exceeded, as a full revamping of the OIG Hotline webpage was done to bring it more in line with other OIG Hotline operations. We are continuing to finetune the webpage for clarity and usability.

GOAL 2:   SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY OF NSF PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

1. Detect and address improper, inappropriate, or illegal activities

Quantitative Goals

- *At least 75 percent of OIG-or IPA-performed external incurred cost audits, use data analytics to identify risk areas and develop audit procedures.*
- *As appropriate, at least 20 percent of internal performance audits use data analytics to identify risk areas and develop audit procedures.*
- *20 percent of investigations include forensic analysis.*
- *80 percent of investigations are opened on average within 14 days of receipt of factually sufficient allegation.*
- *75 percent of all investigations are closed within established timeframes.*
- *At least 1 written legal or legislative update is transmitted to staff, which discusses topics relevant to OIG operations or activities, and which is easily understood (without unnecessary jargon or legalese).*

Qualitative Goals

- *Evaluate use of suspension and debarment for all cases as appropriate.*

Audits

Quantitative. OA exceeded its goal of using data analytics on at least 75 percent of OIG- or IPA- external incurred cost audits: All 17 (100%) of the incurred costs audits by IPAs issued in FY 2019 used data analytics. Similarly, OA exceeded its goal of using data analytics on 20 percent of internal performance audits (as appropriate): It used data analytics on all three internal performance audits (100%) issued.

Investigations

Quantitative. During this performance period, OI exceeded its goal of opening 80 percent of cases on average within 14 days of receipt of a sufficiently documented allegation, meeting this standard in over 90 percent of cases. Further, OI also exceeded the goal of closing 80 percent of cases within timeframes approved by OI management, meeting this standard over 90 percent of the time. In addition, OI met its goal of incorporating forensic analysis into 20 percent of our open investigations. OI staff effectively conducted forensic analyses of routine investigative records and used its forensic audit contract or OM forensic analyst to incorporate forensic analysis in 9 complex investigations, as appropriate.

OI made 46 recommendations to NSF management for administrative actions, which included findings of Research Misconduct, government-wide suspension and debarment, and suspension and termination of awards. In addition, OI referred to NSF management 37 matters that were deemed appropriate for management action. Finally, OI referred 6 matters to other federal agencies.

Qualitative. OI incorporated a routine evaluation of potential administrative actions, including suspension and debarment, into our case management protocol in the resolution of each investigation. The office often recommends fact-based and indictment-based suspensions when evidence indicated the subject was not presently responsible. Similarly, OI routinely recommends government-wide debarment based upon information developed during civil/criminal and research misconduct investigations

Counsel

Quantitative. OC drafted and distributed 3 guidance documents, two of which covered ethics topics, the other focused on government information practices relating to personal privacy protection, exceeding its goal.

2. Strengthen OIG proactive oversight and outreach activities.

Quantitative

- *Investigations staff present at 80 percent of New Employee Orientations.*

Qualitative

- *Improve availability of whistleblower protection information through outreach and additional website material.*
- *Improve visibility of NSF award data by utilizing business intelligence.*

Audits

Quantitative. OA exceeded its goal of 50 percent of its staff participating in briefings to NSF and relevant external stakeholders. In FY 2018, 81 percent of OA staff participated in 119 relevant briefings and meetings, including those to NSF, through liaison briefings, new employee orientations, and program management seminars; as well as to external stakeholders, such as the research community, professional associations, and the public (which included leadership on developing the new community-wide OIG website Oversight.gov and OIG's debut on twitter). In OA's outreach efforts, 24 instances of favorable feedback were recorded.

Investigations

Quantitative. Members of OI staff participated in over 90 percent of NSF New Employee Orientation briefings.

Qualitative. OI exceeded its goal of 80% participation in outreach to NSF through the New Employee Orientations. In addition, OI has conducted extensive outreach to NSF, the IG community, and the research community, as addressed in Goal 3(3) below. OI has continued incorporating up-to-date information on whistleblower protections into outreach presentations to NSF employees and to the research community. Further, OI has updated the whistleblower protection information and resources available to the public on the OIG website. New substantive cases will continue to be identified through complaints that come in through outreach efforts, which encourage NSF program and financial officials – as well as members of the investigative and research communities – to refer matters to OI.

Management

Qualitative. OM has developed many new queries, dashboards, and alerts using business intelligence software leveraging data in the agency's current database in support of all offices.

3. **Refine financial investigative capabilities.**

Qualitative

- *Leverage existing audit and investigative information.*
- *Ensure timely and effective use of external forensic financial analysis.*

Audit / Investigations

Qualitative. Information flowing between OI and OA was effectively leveraged. Each office referred appropriate matters to the other and coordinated as necessary to benefit specific audits and investigations, de-conflict activities conducted by each office, and to avoid any duplication of effort. Similarly, forensic financial analysis, obtained through OM and through contracted forensic financial analyses, has been utilized to enhance the timeliness and thoroughness of investigations.

Management

Qualitative. OM coordinated the procurement and management of the external forensic accounting contract, providing review and oversight of the requests and performance in support of investigative activities. Our Senior Forensic Accountant also performed direct financial forensic analysis on 16 investigative cases, and other OM staff conducted document reviews and analysis in support of 17 additional cases.

GOAL 3: UTILIZE OIG RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY

1. Strengthen and utilize the professional expertise of all OIG staff.

Quantitative

- *Analyze the 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results and develop plan for addressing any issues identified within 3 months.*
- *All staff required to meet training requirements in Government Auditing Standards have met them.*
- *Perform independent biannual review of Office of Audits continuing education records to ensure compliance with GAO requirements.*
- *Have 40 percent of OA professional staff professionally certified in their area of expertise as of September 30, 2019.*
- *Conduct all-hands Office of Audits meetings at least bi-monthly.*
- *Conduct I-Group meetings at least quarterly.*
- *Conduct Office of Management meetings at least quarterly.*
- *OI staff meet FLETC and CIGIE mission-critical training requirements.*
- *Investigative staff complete 75 percent of approved Individual Development Plan-related training, subject to budget constraints.*
- *All OIG Contracting Officer's Representatives (COR) obtain required training to maintain certification.*
- *Conduct IT group meetings at least quarterly.*
- *Have two or more personnel able to perform 80 percent of major administrative functions.*

Qualitative

- *Conduct IT training, as necessary.*
- *Provide prompt, effective responses to requests for IT support.*
- *Identify and replace outdated computers, servers, printers, copiers, and related equipment as needed.*

- *Develop and deploy an in-house digital forensics capability to support the acquisition, identification, and analysis of evidence relating to OIG investigations subject to budget availability.*
- *Conduct exit surveys with all departing staff to obtain feedback on any issues and areas for office improvement.*

Audits

Quantitative. OA met its goal that all staff required to meet training requirements in *Government Auditing Standards* have met them: For the two-year period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2019 all OA professional staff met those requirements, which are 20 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) each year; and over the two-year cycle, a total of 80 hours of CPE, including 24 hours of government-related training. Further, as of September 30, 2019, OA exceeded its goal of 40 percent of professional OA staff being professionally certified: As of September 30, 2019, 45 percent of OA professional staff were professionally certified. To foster professional development, further, OA held nine all-hands meetings during the year – exceeding the goal of one every two months. At these meetings, staff shared technical and programmatic information to strengthen and utilize the professional expertise of all OA staff. Exit interviews were also conducted for departing OA staff, and pertinent feedback provided to management to help improve processes and communication overall.

Investigations

Quantitative. During this reporting period, OI exceeded the goal of completing 75 percent of approved IDP-related training. Over 90 percent of such training was accomplished, often using economical local training opportunities. All mandatory OI and OIG-wide training requirements were completed. Further, all training required by Attorney General Guidelines for OIG offices with Statutory Law Enforcement authority was completed. OI exceeded the goal for holding I-Group meetings as well, conducting 6 such meetings during this reporting period. Finally, OI conducted an exit interview with one employee, and we used the interview information to improve operations as appropriate.

Management

Quantitative. OM met or exceeded all goals for this measure. All (100%) Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) obtained the required training and maintained their certification. The AIGM held OM group meetings each month exceeding the goal of quarterly and met with the IT team almost weekly exceeding the goal of quarterly. Through extensive cross-training, 90 percent of administrative tasks can be performed by 2 or more staff., exceeding the goal of 80 percent.

Qualitative. OM exceeded all measure for this goal. The IT specialists conducted informal ad hoc IT training on NSF, OIG and other systems and applications as needed, both one-on-one and at various office meetings. Over 85 percent of routine IT support activities were promptly and effectively provided by our IT staff or referred to the NSF IT Help Center, ensuring that staff have the full IT resources needed to efficiently complete their work.

During the reporting period, OIG continued to replace outdated computers with laptops to provide increased flexibility for staff. Outdated equipment has been refreshed throughout the year to ensure staff has current and updated equipment including laptops and mobile devices. The NSF OIG IT specialist has taken specialized training in the analysis of digital evidence and training on forensic analysis tools and continues to set up the digital forensics laboratory. The digital evidence unit analyzed .pst files from multiple OI requests to support the investigators' cases.

OIG-Wide

Quantitative. In 2019, OIG decided that circumstances did not warrant putting a FEVS-driven action plan in place for the 2018 results. For context, much effort had been put into creating an action plan for the 2016 FEVS results, and in 2017 it was decided to let those efforts bear fruit – rather than developing an action plan for that year. This proved to be the right course in light of improved 2018 FEVS scores in key areas. Based on the upward curve and given the office's small size and influx of unanticipated operational demands, we again decided not to institute an action plan for the 2018 FEVS. We are, however, closely monitoring the 2019 FEVS and will assess and respond to them in a tailored fashion, as needed.

2. **Improve communication and collaboration within OIG.**

Qualitative

- *Ensure information exchange and referrals between the audit, investigation, and support units*
- *Enhance collaboration between Office of Management and other OIG offices/units*
- *Office of Management briefs at all-hands meetings, as needed.*
- *Use office-wide committees for completion of various OIG projects and activities.*
- *Provide briefings on significant cases/issues at OI meetings.*
- *Review all OIG policies and update as needed.*
- *Utilize collaborative software to improve communication and efficiency within OI.*

OIG-wide

Audit, Investigation, and Management staff continued to work together to improve communication and collaboration with their colleagues, accomplish office-wide initiatives, and achieve common goals. In FY 2019, the Office of Investigations made 6 referrals to the Office of Audits; and Audits made 14 referrals to Investigations.

To facilitate information exchange, the Assistant Inspectors General for Audit and Investigations met weekly. The AIGI also met with her OM colleagues weekly to discuss ongoing matters. OM staff presented at multiple All-hands meetings. OIG-wide collegiality was demonstrated further by teams assigned to conduct liaison to directorates and offices within NSF. Almost all the teams consist of one investigator and one auditor. Office-wide efforts were launched to undertake projects such as developing the FY 2019 OIG Performance Plan, Semiannual Reports, and Management Challenges.

Investigations

Information was effectively exchanged between OI, OA, and OM. The AIGI met regularly with her counterparts and ensured each had information necessary to successfully complete objectives. OI enabled OA to obtain material records through the preparation and execution of an IG subpoena. Further, OI arranged for another Inspector General, located at the site of the audit, to execute the subpoena to ensure the safety of OA personnel. At over 75 percent of OI meetings, updates on significant research misconduct, civil, criminal, or administrative cases were presented by the investigators or the relevant manager. These discussions allowed all staff to remain aware of ongoing efforts throughout the office and provided an opportunity for them to more deeply understand the varied matters under investigation across the office.

Counsel

Amended OIG-wide policy bulletin pertaining to staff training to clarify when and how tuition assistance may be provided; drafted/implemented OIG policies and procedures concerning civil and administrative litigation. In addition, revised OC's internal SOPs for FOIA and legal review.

Management

OM developed the new OIG Awards Policy and administered the first OIG awards cycle, culminating in the inaugural OIG awards ceremony in May 2019. OM ensured the OIG SES system was certified for the next 2 years under OPM's new protocol. OM assisted with the compilation and issuance of the Office of Audits handbook.

3. Ensure effective external communications and consultation with our stakeholders.

Quantitative

- *Redact audit reports in accordance with Freedom of Information Act and other legal authority pertaining to information disclosure and post on OIG's website within 3 working days of issuance 80 percent of the time.*
- *Provide complete and accurate responses to requests for information within established timeliness guidelines and FOIA/PA provisions 75 percent of the time.*
- *Provide testimonies to congressional committees timely.*
- *Provide complete and accurate responses to media inquiries within 15 business days of receipt or by other agreed upon date 50 percent of the time in order to advance public transparency and meet congressional stakeholder needs.*
- *Provide complete and accurate responses to congressional inquiries within 15 business days of receipt or by other agreed upon date 50 percent of the time in order to advance public transparency and meet congressional stakeholder needs.*
- *Provide briefings to the National Science Board (NSB), Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), NSF, the research community, the IG community, and other regarding OIG plans, priorities, and progress.*

- *50 percent of OI staff participate in outreach activities to NSF (including presentations at liaison briefings, new employee orientations, and program management seminars) or to external stakeholders and partners (such as the research community and the federal law enforcement community) in order to communicate OIG's message and to receive input that informs OI operations.*
- *Collaborate with other Federal and international agencies to joint training and projects, and the development of policies and procedures to advance common audit, investigative, and management goals.*
- *Provide leadership and active participation in activities within the OIG community.*

Qualitative

- *Prepare timely OIG budget requests.*
- *Update NSF leadership regularly on OIG activities and concerns.*
- *Review OIG website for necessary modifications and enhancements*

OIG-wide

OIG kept stakeholders apprised of its work by submitting all reports for which it was responsible by the required due dates, including two Semiannual Reports to Congress, NSF's Financial Statement Audit Report, the Federal Information Security Modernization Act evaluation metrics, the annual OIG Performance Report and Plan, and Management Challenges Letter. OIG also submitted the FY 2020 and 2021 budget request information according to OMB and congressional requirements.

The IG and her senior staff met with congressional staff engaged in oversight of NSF on multiple occasions during the year to brief them on the OIG's significant audit and investigative priorities. She testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in April on Top Management and Performance Challenges Identified by OIGs. OIG provided timely and complete information in response to all congressional inquiries and ensured that written testimony was accurate, complete, and submitted within the required timeframe. Likewise, media inquiries were responded to in a timely way.

The IG also briefed the NSF Director and Chief Operating Officer at regularly scheduled monthly meetings to inform them of OIG activities and to discuss opportunities to improve agency operations. The IG presented at each National Science Board's Committee on Oversight and met with individual Board members on multiple occasions. The IPA firm retained by OIG to audit NSF's financial statements also briefed the Committee about the results of the audit. The Assistant IG for Audit (AIGA) presented the annual audit plan to the Committee in November and the management challenges in February.

The IG and her staff actively led and participated in events and committees sponsored by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). In January 2015, the Inspector General was elected Vice Chair of CIGIE, and she continues to be an active participant on various committees and working groups. For example, she participates on the IG Candidate Panel for CIGIE that recommends qualified professionals for Inspector General positions to the

administration. Along with the Department of State Inspector General, the IG leads a Suspension and Debarment (S&D) Working Group under the auspices of the CIGIE Investigations Committee. This group works to increase understanding and effective use of S&D throughout the community to better protect government funds against fraud, waste, and abuse.

Audits

Qualitative. A total 24 of 29 (83%) of OA staff participated in outreach events in FY 2019, including briefings to the National Science Board (NSB), Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), NSF, and research and IG communities. Contractors for OA briefed the NSB on the results of the FY 2018 financial statement audit in November 2018 and on the beginning of the FY 2019 audit in May 2019. The Inspector General also presented the FY 2009 Audit Plan to the NSB in November 2018. During FY 2019 the AIGA participated in four briefings to various House and Senate Congressional staff and in two briefings to OMB staff to explain OIG's plans, priorities, and progress. In addition, OA staff provided input to OMB for updates to the *Uniform Guidance*, government-wide requirements for grants management.

OA staff also participated in outreach to NSF, including explaining OA's role to new NSF employees at 20 events, and to new program officers at four separate Program Management Seminars; and acting as liaisons between OIG and NSF Directorates and Offices. In addition, OA staff remained actively engaged with NSF committees and organizations during the performance period. They continued to meet monthly with staff from NSF's Office of Budget, Finance and Award Management as part of a Stewardship Collaborative, which focuses on issues related to internal NSF programs and operations as well as NSF awardees. Further, a subgroup of the Collaborative met monthly to discuss more specific audit resolution issues.

As for the research community, OA staff presented at two of NSF's Regional Grants Conferences to keep the research community apprised of current audit issues pertaining to award recipients. Also, in April 2019, an Audit Director discussed issues related to the construction and operation of NSF's major research facilities at NSF's Major Facilities Conference. The Director received the following feedback from that event: "I truly appreciate your time and candidness. I will continue to work with my organization to 'Write down what we do and do what we say.'" In addition, in May 2019, the AIGA and two OA staff members discussed the use of data analytics in the audit process with a university sponsored research office.

OA was also active in the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) community in FY 2019. In October 2018, the AIGA presented *Don't Hesitate – Collaborate: Building Partnerships with NSF OIG* to CIGIE's 5th Annual Leadership Forum. Also, in February 2019, the AIGA and two members of the computer analytics team met with another OIG about computer-matching possibilities. In addition, a staff member attended CIGIE's March 2019 Women in Leadership Forum.

OA participated in ten different joint training projects to help develop policies and procedures and advance common audit goals. One training project -- on data sources and analytics tools – involved an international agency. The rest were with Federal agencies or OIGs. In July 2019, the Deputy AIGA and a staff member met with staff at the Department of Justice OIG to discuss

indirect cost regulations and associated audit procedures. In August 2019, the Deputy and the staff member met with a Federal agency to discuss grant auditing. At various times during the performance year, an Audit Director provided information to two different OIGs on NSF's records management policies and on vetting per reviewers respectively.

In separate meetings from May through August 2019, OA staff members met with other OIGs to discuss OA's data analytics program and its new text mining tool, GENIE, an acronym for General Evaluation of Narratives with Intelligent Extraction, which performs text searches at the average rate of 1,000 documents/hour.

The presentation on OA's data analytics program to one IG received this feedback:

> "[The IG, the Audit Director of the compliance analytics
> team] and all involved should be pretty proud of what
> you're doing…[The] demonstrated executive commitment,
> resourcefulness, and utility [put] you in a class all by yourself."

When the IG explained to an NSB meeting in July 2019 that an OA staff member developed GENIE in house when commercial text-mining software was too expensive to purchase, one Board member exclaimed, "[that staff member] deserves a bonus!"

OA staff also engaged with professional groups focused on federal awards or on auditing standards. In March 2019 an OA staff member and a director of a university sponsored program office co-presented a webinar titled *OIG Audits in the Federally Funded Research Environment* for the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA). The August 2019 issue of NCURA magazine also published that staff member's article, *The OIG and Research Funding: What to Expect.* After that publication, OA was invited to write a column for each monthly NCURA magazine. The AIGA and IG also presented *Latest in Federal Audit Results* at the 61st annual NCURA meeting in August 2019. In addition, an OA staff member with a multi-year record of service to the Association of Government Accountants, received its National President's Award in July 2019 for extraordinary contributions to the Association.

OA staff members provided leadership and active participation in the OG community in FY 2019. Members of the Financial Statements team participated in multiple CIGIE-sponsored workgroups, such as the Financial Statement Audit Network's working group on Statements of Work and the Single Audit workgroup proposing changes to the FY 19 Single Audit Compliance Supplement. Since May 2019 another OA staff member has participated in a weekly Oversight.gov working group. Oversight.gov is a publicly accessible, searchable website, which contains public reports from Federal OIGs. The work group's project in FY 19 (and ongoing) is to develop the functionality in Oversight.gov for OIGs to post on the site all open recommendations, in addition to the reports.

Investigations

Qualitative. OI participated in numerous joint initiatives to develop policy for government-wide application. These included the DOJ Financial Fraud Task Force and its Grant Fraud

subcommittee, the Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee, the CIGIE Suspension and Debarment Working Group, and the CIGIE SBIR Working Group. OI also served as co-leaders of the Interagency Research Misconduct Working Group. OI staff participated in joint investigations with OIGs from across the government; we have been a leader in the SBIR Agent-Level Working Group. We also co-led the CIGIE sanctioned working groups for Special Agents in Charge and the Foreign Talent Programs Initiative. Further, the office provided joint training to the federal community at workshops and at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Through numerous meetings with agency leaders, and presentations at New Employee Orientation briefings, NSF Liaison meetings, NSF Grant Conferences, and NSF Program Management Seminars, the AIGI and OI staff have ensured open and productive communications continue between NSF and the OIG. Regarding its outreach to the research community, OI was forced to limit the number of in-person contacts with national education associations, universities, professional associations, and groups of NSF grant recipients due to budgetary constraints. However, OI continued to participate in events through VTC or in person at select outreach events, based on their attendance and/or proximity.

The AIGI has worked closely with the CIGIE and FLETC training staffs to meet the needs of the community. She has attended numerous functions, including the CIGIE AIGI Committee. She is also actively involved in outreach activities throughout the federal community and encourages her staff to do the same. Among the many community-related outreach activities in which the AIGI and/or her staff participated are the following:

- FLETC Law Enforcement Control Tactics Working Group
- CIGIE Investigations Committee monthly meetings
- Department of Justice Grant Fraud Working Group
- Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee monthly meetings
- CIGIE Small Business Innovative Research Working Group
- CIGIE Policy and Procedures Working Group
- CIGIE Whistleblower Investigations
- CIGIE Whistleblower Ombudsman Working Group
- National Insider Threat Task Force
- CIGIE Inspector General Criminal Investigator Academy and FLETC
- CIGIE SAC Working Group
- CIGIE Foreign Influence Working Group
- CIGIE AIGI Committee
- CIGIE Leadership Forum
- CIGIE Review Committee

OI effectively communicated with the public through timely release of information through our website and through multiple outreach events. Information updates were made to OIG's website throughout the year to improve the ability of the public to access information about OI investigations and to update important information regarding whistleblower protections.

Counsel

Quantitative. OC staff responded to 81 percent of all Freedom of Information Act and PA requests within established timeframes as required. All responses were well-supported and contained a thorough analysis of the law and how it related to the records at issue. OC also responded to 100 percent of the media requests within 15 days or by the requested due date, and all were complete and accurate. There was no congressional testimony during FY19.

OC also reviewed 100 percent of all audit and inspection reports for redaction of non-public information prior to their posting on OIG's website, finding and striking the appropriate balance between transparency and legal protections from disclosure (such as those pertaining to personal privacy). IT staff posted all reports within the 3-days of issuance, as required by law.

Management

Quantitative. The AIGM has worked closely with the CIGIE and FLETC training staffs to meet the needs of the community, including opening the doors of NSF to host multiple training sessions for both organizations. He has attended numerous functions, including the CIGIE Assistant IG for Management Committee, of which he is a founding member and the OIG Chief Information Officer subcommittee under the auspices of the CIGIE IT Committee. The AIGM is also actively involved in outreach activities throughout the federal community and encourages his staff to do the same. Among the many community-related outreach activities in which OM staff participated are the following:

- CIGIE Data Analytics Working Group; included leading a test data analytics sampling
- CIGIE Cross-cutting Projects Committee
- CIGIE Foreign Talent Plans Working Group
- CIGIE Chief Information Officer Committee meetings
- CIGIE AIGM Committee meetings
- DOD and Federal Hotline Working Groups
- CIGIE/FAEC Audit Quality Assurance Working Group

OM staff take a leadership role in coordinating government-wide events, such as the first CIGIE Women in Leadership Forum, multiple training sessions facilitated by CIGIE, FLETC, and Management Concepts, and quarterly meetings of AIGI, AIGM and CIO committees.

Qualitative. OM was instrumental in the preparation of timely OIG budget requests. OIG submitted the FY 2020 and 2021 budget request information according to OMB and congressional requirements and prepared a summary budget for the agency that met with high praise form the agency Director for being clear and comprehensive.

The Office of Management meets monthly with HRM staff to ensure all personnel matters are being promptly and accurately processed. OM coordinates frequently with NSF Personnel Security regarding background investigations for new and existing staff. The OM Budget team has strengthened its working relationship with the agency budget and finance office. A member of the OM staff has served as Co-Executive Secretary to the Committee on Oversight for the

National Science Board for the last 2 years, developing a strong liaison between members of the board and the OIG.

Office of Management is continually monitoring, reviewing and updating the OIG website, to ensure information is current, accurate, complete, and is accessible to all our stakeholders. OM updated the Audit Reports & Reviews webpage to give viewers the status of individual audit recommendations.