



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A03060035

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We received a telephone call from a scientist<sup>1</sup> who brought to our attention a recent issue of a research journal<sup>2</sup> containing a retraction of a paper<sup>3</sup> that cited NSF support.<sup>4</sup> The retraction caught his attention because it noted the results of an experiment were performed by a single investigator and were not able to be replicated by the senior scientist<sup>5</sup>; and the researcher who conducted those experiments<sup>6</sup> could not be contacted to sign the retraction. These factors could lead one to consider the data in the published paper may have been fabricated.

We contacted the senior author and asked about the circumstances of the retraction. He explained his research group was in the process of attempting to replicate the published results, but had been unable to do so thus far. He said they have no evidence of fabrication (outside of the discrepancies, there are no apparent problems with the original data), but, nonetheless, were concerned other scientists might rely on those results and waste time and money. As possible reasons why their experiments didn't replicate the other researcher's, he suggested the samples may have been mislabeled or too old, but did not rule out fabrication.

We asked the senior author notify us if, in the course of his research, he acquires evidence indicating the data were fabricated. Until then, we have no evidence of fabrication; accordingly, this case is closed.

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<sup>1</sup> (footnote redacted).

<sup>2</sup> (footnote redacted).

<sup>3</sup> (footnote redacted).

<sup>4</sup> (footnote redacted).

<sup>5</sup> (footnote redacted).

<sup>6</sup> (footnote redacted).