



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A04040018

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In April 2004, an NSF Program Manager (PM)<sup>1</sup> told us about an email he had received from the complainant.<sup>2</sup> The complainant had sent an email to several people, including the PM. In the complainant's email, he described an experiment, which he described as being conducted in an atmosphere where a particular result was expected to be obtained and said someone (he did not identify a subject) had taken liberties with data to obtain the desired result. After we discussed the matter with the PM, he said anyone familiar with the matter (and asserted all the copied recipients would be) would know exactly what the complainant is discussing. Supporting his assertion, he showed us a subsequent email sent to him in response to the complainant's email that mentioned a paper (the paper)<sup>3</sup> that provided details about the experiment, the data, and the authors (subjects).

We called the complainant to get the details of which data might not be genuine, but he declined to provide any details of the allegation, or even make an allegation. He thought a company, with which he is affiliated, was negatively affected by the data in the paper, but he thought the incident was "water over the dam." He described his situation as resulting from management problems at an organization that sponsored the research using NSF funding.<sup>4</sup> In particular, he thought how the organization managed (or did not manage) conflicts of interests resulting from its technology transfer program were to blame rather than any individual.

Because the complainant declined to provide information necessary to pursue the allegation, we cannot conduct an inquiry. Accordingly, this case is closed.

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2 NSF Program Managers are required by NSF policy to notify OIG of allegations of misconduct.

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