



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A-04080054

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We received an allegation that the subject's NSF proposal¹ contained the same project idea (intellectual theft) as the complainant's earlier collaborative NSF proposal.² The complainant explained that he had reviewed the NSF Website for awards and observed that the subject had received an award for his idea.

Our review determined that the project idea presented in each proposal was not unique to either complainant or subject. The project idea was a common project idea publicly encouraged by their scientific community. In addition, our closer comparison of the two NSF proposals showed that, although each used some common techniques, the actual proposed approaches were significantly different. We concluded that there was no substance to the allegation of intellectual theft against the subject.

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

¹ NSF proposal, [REDACTED] was submitted by the subject, [REDACTED]

² NSF proposal, [REDACTED] was submitted by the complainant as PI with two co-PIs [REDACTED]. The proposal was declined [REDACTED]