



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A-05110080

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We received allegations of intellectual theft from the complainant.¹ He alleged one of his ideas (the first idea) was presented in a research press release (the article)² without crediting him. He claimed this idea was part of work performed under his NSF award.³ The credit for this first idea was given to the subject⁴ in the article, not the complainant. He also alleged another idea (the second idea) was taken by other groups⁵ without crediting him. The complainant claimed the second idea was developed from his NSF award.

We noted that the complainant's first idea was presented about a year after his NSF award closed in two separate, but identical publications.⁶ The subject was the primary author on both while the complainant was a co-author. Further, a review of the NSF award showed that the complainant had worked with the subject under the award. Finally, the article was not authored by the subject, but was prepared by a public relations office. As a co-author on the publications that presented and discussed the first idea, the subject could continue developing the idea without the complainant. There is no substance to the allegation that the subject stole the complainant's first idea.

Our review of the complainant's NSF award, including the Final Report, showed that there was no mention or discussion of the second idea. In fact, the Final Report discussed only the first idea as the product of the award. There was no evidence that NSF has jurisdiction over the alleged theft of the complainant's second idea.

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

¹ [redacted], the complainant, is [redacted].
² Article is entitled "[redacted]" in [redacted]. The [redacted] was [redacted].
³ NSF award [redacted], entitled "[redacted]" was submitted by the complainant as the sole PI.
⁴ [redacted] (the subject) is [redacted].
⁵ [redacted].
⁶ The first publication was in [redacted]. The second publication was in [redacted]. Both of these publications had the subject as the primary author and the complainant as the co-author.