



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A10040027

Page 1 of 1

We received an allegation that a researcher<sup>1</sup> refused to share data collected under an NSF award in response to a request from a member of the public. The researcher had collected the data as the CoPI on a collaborative award<sup>2</sup> and published an article<sup>3</sup> reporting summary statistics from his analysis. The allegation included questions regarding the validity of the published conclusions intimating concerns of data falsification.

The institutions involved in the collaborative award did not include the CoPI's primary employer.<sup>4</sup> The university<sup>5</sup> with the ultimate responsibility for maintaining the research records, including the data in question, had not retained copies of any of the data the CoPI collected. When it was unable to produce the records in response to our request, the university asked the CoPI to provide it with copies of the data. He refused to do so.

We issued subpoenas to the CoPI and his primary employer, under whose logo he collected the survey data. In response the CoPI notified us that the data had been lost when a server was decommissioned and he had failed to transfer the data or make an archive copy. He provided a set of statistical printouts that somewhat corresponded with the published paper, but the printouts were inconclusive with respect to any assessment the underlying data. Given the absence of any additional data, the complexity imposed by the lack of direct authority of the university over the CoPI, and the university's failure to maintain the research records make further investigation untenable.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5

[REDACTED]