



CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A10040032

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NSF OIG received an allegation of plagiarism in a proposal submitted to NSF.¹ During the inquiry we identified copied material in one NSF proposal. The Subject's² response to our inquiry did not dispel the allegation, and we referred the matter to the Subject's institution³ for investigation.

The University concluded, based on the preponderance of evidence, that the Subject carelessly⁴ committed plagiarism, deemed a significant departure from accepted practices, and took actions to protect the University's interests. The University did not identify a pattern of plagiarism in other documents the Subject authored.

We reviewed the University's findings. We noted the Subject repeatedly claimed to not have authored any of the plagiarized material in the proposal himself. He attributed the copied text to two post-doctoral researchers⁵ and a German collaborator,⁶ and provided documents supporting his claims.⁷ We reviewed these documents. We concluded the post-doctoral researchers were responsible for authoring most of the copied material, but determined that each individual had copied only a minimal amount. Accordingly, we did not deem their actions a significant departure from accepted practices, a necessary element for making a finding of research misconduct. We could not however establish the German collaborator's responsibility for the remaining copied material.

We sent the two post-doctoral researchers and the PI Questionable Research Practice letters, reminding them of their responsibilities in submitting proposals to NSF which include appropriate citation of sources. Accordingly, this case is closed.

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED], who finalized the report, noted that although the Committee found that the Subject acted carelessly, he himself was of the opinion that in fact the Subject had acted recklessly.

5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]

⁷ Report, Exhibits XI and S-3. We note that, while [REDACTED] does appear to have authored text labeled A based on the email traffic and documentation in Exhibit S-3, the track change document does not specify that he is the individual who made the changes, during which the plagiarized text was inserted.