



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I03030009

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NSF's Office of Division of Acquisition and Cost Support, BFA/DACS, referred the matter of possible false certification in a contract proposal submitted by an entity formed under the auspices of the US Small Business Administration's (SBA) Mentor/Protégé Program.¹ The Protégé signed the proposal and accompanying certifications, including the certification that: "The Offeror and/or any of its Principals – Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for the award of contracts by any Federal agency." DACS found that Mentor is currently listed in the General Services Administration (GSA) Excluded Parties Listing Service (EPLS) as a firm that is under Voluntary Exclusion from all HUD programs only. DACS also found that the proposal was not within the competitive ranged and eliminated the proposal from consideration for contract award.

SBA-OIG declined to join our investigation and the SBA Office responsible for the Mentor/Protégé program stated that they were aware that GCS was listed in the EPLS but would not address this issue unless an active contract was presented for certification by the office.

The Protégé was interviewed and stated that he was aware that Mentor had an agreement with HUD not to conduct business with HUD, but was told that this was not a debarment or suspension action. Protégé said that he even had an attorney look at the HUD agreement and the attorney advised that this agreement did not mention debarment and/or suspension. The Protégé said that he did not know that there was a government-wide debarment list maintained by GSA; consequently, he did not check the list prior to signing the certification.

We concluded that the Protégé did not know the certification was false and determined that there is no loss to the government.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

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