



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-10120056

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This case was initiated when NSF-OIG received multiple identical complaints about potential research misconduct (RM) and possible misuse of NSF funds against a university¹ Principal Investigator (PI)² on an NSF Award³. The grant was for support of laboratory experiments with a certain variety of plant⁴.

The alleged RM suggested that the plants had died and experiments were being conducted on a different species of plant. There was also an assertion that data had been fabricated to cover up an unsuccessful replication of the laboratory experiment.

The charges of grant fraud pertained to laboratory activities that were alleged to be outside of the scope of the grant, student travel unrelated to the grant and personal expenses that may have been charged to the award.

Based on our request, the university conducted an Inquiry into the RM allegations. The university Inquiry committee determined the RM allegations were unsubstantiated. The inquiry committee discovered that lab notebooks were missing and stated it would address this less than best practices of post-production data storage as a separate matter. To emphasize the importance of addressing this matter, we issued a Questionable Research Practices letter to the university.

We also requested from the university the general ledger and supporting documentation for all expenditures incurred by the NSF award. After reviewing all the documentation, we concluded that the allegation of misuse of funds was unsubstantiated.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

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[Redacted text]