



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A14100055

Page 1 of 1

We received a notice from an institution¹ that its Institutional Review Board (IRB) reported an incident of serious non-compliance in relation to human subjects research work conducted by a principal investigator (PI)² who was sponsored under an NSF award.³ The PI took improper actions following a participant's attempt to withdraw from the research study. The IRB suspended the PI's human subjects research work and the university placed the PI on administrative leave. Although the PI appealed the IRB suspension, the IRB reaffirmed the serious non-compliance determination and determined that, before the PI could resume human subjects work following his return to duty, remedial educational sessions and a corrective action plan would be required. The PI was, however, separated from employment before this could occur, and the institution did not appoint a substitute PI. Based on the NSF program officer's⁴ view that NSF policy⁵ would not permit continuation of the award under these circumstances, we recommended to NSF that it terminate the award, and NSF did so, with a total of \$24,653 of unexpended award funds that were de-obligated.

Our review of the matter concluded that appropriate actions were taken by the institution and the IRB to ensure the proper oversight in NSF funded projects involving human subjects. The non-continuation of the award led to the recommendation and award termination. Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.

1

2

3

4

⁵ NSF Award and Administration Guide, Chapter II.B and Chapter VII.A.