



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A15010005

Page 1 of 1

An NSF-funded¹ PI² allegedly interfered with a former postdoc's³ ability to publish a paper while also presenting the work in posters without the postdoc's consent to be listed as an author on the posters. Our review of the posters in question found that the posters presented proposed experiments including some preliminary data from the apparatus. The postdoc was the primary designer and builder of the apparatus; although, graduate students had the responsibility for developing some of the ancillary equipment that was not completed when the postdoc left the lab. The PI's awarded proposals for the period in question characterize the experiments as in development. There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the status of the apparatus or equipment have been misrepresented in the posters or the PI's NSF proposals. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the postdoc has been prevented from publishing her work as a sole author in an instrumentation paper other than the PI's assertion that the lab is still testing and refining the apparatus.

Although it is a questionable practice to include authors on articles and posters without their prior review, there is no support for an allegation of plagiarism. Under these circumstances this is an authorship dispute outside the definition of research misconduct.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

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