

Report on Research Compliance Volume 18, Number 3. February 16, 2021 In This Month's E-News: March 2021

By Theresa Defino

◆ **A former post-doctoral fellow at the McGovern Medical School, part of the University of Texas (UT) Health Science Center, admitted to committing research misconduct** by “knowingly and intentionally falsifying, fabricating, and plagiarizing data and text” in six papers and eight manuscripts, according to the HHS Office of Research Integrity (ORI). In its Feb. 4 *Federal Register* notice, ORI said Yibin Lin “falsely created fictitious author names and affiliations without listing himself as an author to disguise himself from being the offender, and submitted them for publication in *bioRxiv* and *medRxiv*, open access preprint repositories, by falsely assembling random paragraphs of text, tables, and figures from previous publications and manuscripts to improve his citation metrics.”

Lin agreed to the most severe administrative sanction available in cases of misconduct, namely a 10-year, governmentwide exclusion (also called a debarment when imposed rather than agreed to) that prohibits him from participation in government programs beginning Jan. 7. As noted by Retraction Watch, none of the published articles—since retracted—bear Lin’s name as an author. It also reported that John Inglis, a co-founder of the pre-print servers where the papers appeared, said their staff was responsible for “uncovering the deception.” Inglis called Lin’s actions “the most egregious example of deception we have seen in *bioRxiv*’s 7 years and 107,000 manuscripts,” adding he was “really pleased that UT acted so promptly and thoroughly to investigate and deal with the perpetrator.” Lin’s is the first misconduct finding ORI has released in 2021, following a year in which it made 10 such findings. (2/11/21)

◆ **Lin Yang, a former University of Florida (UF) researcher, has been indicted on six counts of wire fraud and four counts of making false statements**, the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced Feb. 3. A grand jury returned the indictment on Dec. 15 related to an award of \$1.75 million for which Yang was the principal investigator from 2014 to 2019. Yang would not have been eligible had he disclosed “support he received from the Chinese government and a company that he founded in China to profit from that research,” DOJ said. Yang’s grant was to “develop and disseminate an imaging informatics tool for muscles known as ‘MuscleMiner,’” the government said.

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