

## Report on Research Compliance Volume 20, Number 7. June 22, 2023

### NSF Suspends 18 Awards, Receives Repayments Related to Foreign Ties, Research Misconduct

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One university lost 14 awards; another, four. An investigator was suspended governmentwide. A public institution paid back more than \$850,000, while two others returned nearly a million dollars.

Institutions and investigators are experiencing award suspensions and other costly repercussions for failing to report foreign support or connections to the National Science Foundation (NSF) and, to a lesser degree, for research misconduct.

In recent years, such actions most often involved NIH funding. For example, the Van Andel Research Institute paid \$6.6 million related to NIH-funded investigators' undisclosed foreign support from China in violation of the False Claims Act (FCA). However, NIH generally does not publicly disclose details of award suspensions and terminations, whether related to foreign involvement or not.

Although the new actions were taken by NSF, they were described by the agency's Office of Inspector General (OIG) in its most recent semiannual report to Congress, which covered the six-month period ending March 31.<sup>[1]</sup> As is its policy, OIG did not reveal the names of the universities or principal investigators (PIs), with the exception of cases involving the Department of Justice (DOJ).

In this report, OIG detailed an FCA settlement with The Ohio State University (OSU), which paid the government \$875,689.

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