



## **U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION** **Office of Inspector General**

### **Case Closeout Memorandum**

OIG Case Number I-24-0063-O | August 22, 2025

We investigated allegations made by a former Director of Technology Commercialization and New Ventures (Complainant) at a public University (University), claiming the university retaliated against him for making covered disclosures regarding its noncompliance with regulations and laws. Specifically, the Complainant alleged the University terminated his employment because of protected disclosures that were to University leadership in February, August, October, and November 2023. The alleged protected disclosures dealt with the loss of intellectual property (IP) and non-compliance with IP reporting requirements under the Bayh-Dole Act, a lack of financial conflict of interest (FCOI) reporting, and a breach of the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) unrelated business income tax (UBIT) reporting requirements. At all times relevant, the Complainant was an employee of the grantee University for the purposes of the applicable statute.

Our investigation determined that the Complainant made protected disclosures to University officials. The University provided testimonial and written evidence that it would have terminated the Complainant's employment in the absence of the disclosures. The University originally recommended that the Complainant be fired based on performance issues and creating a hostile work environment, but ultimately settled on including them in a mass layoff for budgetary reasons.

We provided our findings to NSF. NSF determined the Complainant's disclosures did not evidence gross mismanagement of a Federal grant, gross waste of Federal funds, abuse of authority, or a violation of law, rule, or regulation. NSF also determined that even if the Complainant's actions qualified as a protected disclosure, the University would have taken the same actions in the absence of such disclosures.

This case is closed with no further action taken.