

Office of Research Integrity

NEWSLETTER

The *ORI Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Office of Research Integrity, Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and distributed to applicant or awardee institutions and PHS agencies to facilitate pursuit of a common interest in handling allegations of misconduct and promoting integrity in PHS-supported research.



IN THIS ISSUE

Societies Act	2
Intro to RCR	4
RCR Expo	5
Conflict of Interest	6
Case Summary	7

17 RCR Resource Projects Funded by ORI

Instructional materials that require learners to develop a plan for resolving an individual or institutional conflict of interest, or feature continuous storylines that show the development of attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to research integrity or use learning games to promote best practices, are among the 17 projects provided support this summer by the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Resource Development Program.

RRI Program Makes Five Awards; 1st Round Studies Due for Completion

Five awards were made this summer by the Research on Research Integrity Program (RRI) increasing the number of studies being supported to 22 of which 7 are due to be completed this year.

Abstracts of the studies scheduled for completion this year are posted on the ORI web site in the Research section under Programs. Funding for studies in the first three rounds was limited to 2 years.

The 31 applications submitted in response to the third request for applications topped the previous high by 1. The success rate was 16 percent. Previous, success rates were 28.6 percent and 30 percent. The number of awards in the first 2 years was 7 and 10, respectively. One first-year award was withdrawn at the request of the institution because of potential legal problems.

ORI will support three new awards; the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse will support one award each. Grants were limited to \$100,000 in direct costs, plus indirect costs for each of 2 years.

See RRI Awards on page 3

Besides basic biomedical researchers, projects address the needs of international students, social and behavioral scientists, medical device researchers, clinical researchers and community agency staff. Other projects propose self-assessments of an individual's knowledge of RCR and institutional RCR programs. Several projects cover the nine RCR core instructional areas while others focus on one or more of the core areas.

ORI received 41 applications by the February 28, 2003, deadline.

See Project Description on page 4

AAMC/ORI Program Continues; RFA Coming

ORI and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) plan to continue through FY 2007 their effort to institutionalize the responsible conduct of research (RCR) initiative in the culture of academic disciplines by facilitating the development of pertinent infrastructure in academic societies to provide enduring support for that effort.

The ORI/AAMC RCR Program for Academic Societies will post a new request for applications this fall on the AAMC (<http://www.aamc.org/programs/ori/>) and ORI (<http://ori.hhs.gov>) web sites. The program is open to all academic societies in the United States whose members conduct medical, biomedical or behavioral research. Submission deadlines will probably be in November 2003 and March 2004.

Of special interest are projects focused on developing guidelines, standards, policies, publications, organizational units, annual conferences, instructional resources, or curricula related to the core RCR instructional areas.

Historians Educating; Not Investigating

The American Historical Association (AHA) announced last May that it will combat professional misconduct by historians through an education campaign to promote scholarly integrity rather than continue its ineffective 15-year policy of investigating misconduct allegations.

The AHA, however, revised its *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* to assist other institutions to address charges of professional misconduct against historians. The revised statement of standards is available at <http://www.theaha.org/PUBS/STANDARD.htm>.

The AHA Council concluded that “the modest benefits to the profession” that resulted from the investigation and adjudication of misconduct allegations did not “justify the time, energy and effort that have gone into the process” for the following reasons:

- the process had virtually no impact on the profession because it was confidential;
- the process failed to address many cases of obvious plagiarism and professional misconduct because only formal complaints were considered;
- the process did not have serious consequences even for individuals clearly guilty of egregious professional misconduct because the AHA had virtually no sanctions for misconduct; and
- the process was rendered ineffective because the AHA’s desire to maintain neutrality constrained it from criticizing behavior that might be subject to investigation and adjudication.

Clinical Society Addresses Sticky Issues

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) announced last May that it will tighten conflict-of-interest rules for its members and lobby to revamp oversight of clinical trials, according to *Science*. (300:719).

The actions are based on a report from a 20-member task force. ASCO will require its members disclose all relevant financial ties when publishing, including gifts valued over \$100.

An ASCO task force concluded that IRBs are struggling to keep up with the flood of cancer trials and that adverse event reporting greatly needs repair. It proposed regional IRB oversight of multisite clinical trials and adverse event reporting, lifting some burden from local boards. Many universities are concerned about legal liability if they cede oversight.

Notable Quotes:

“Scientific societies and scientific journals should continue to provide and expand resources and forums to foster responsible research practices and to address misconduct in science and questionable research practices.” *Responsible Science: Ensuring the Integrity of the Research Process*. Vol. 1:16, NAS, 1992.

“Journals have an obligation to publish retractions of published reports that have been found erroneous by the original authors or that have been declared fraudulent by appropriate authorities at the research institutions.” *The Responsible Conduct of Research in the Health Sciences*, p. 38, IOM, 1989.

“The topics that require immediate attention by scientific journals include repetitive publication, supernumerary authorship, institutional responsibilities for disclosure and notification of research misconduct in publication, the use and misuse of peer review, and the appropriate response to suspicions or confirmations of misconduct in published work or work submitted for publication.” *The Responsible Conduct of Research in the Health Sciences*, p. 37, IOM, 1989.

Scientific Societies Promote Research Integrity

A special issue of *Science and Engineering Ethics* acknowledges what scientific societies have done to promote research integrity and suggests what else they can do as custodians of the norms and traditions of scientific disciplines and as an important source of professional identity for scientists.

Published in April 2003, the issue, *The Role of Scientific Societies in Promoting Research Integrity*, Volume 9, Number 2, was edited by Stephanie J. Bird, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Mark S. Frankel, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Several articles in the issue were originally presented at a conference, *The Role and Activities of Scientific Societies in Promoting Research Integrity*, co-sponsored by AAAS and ORI in April 2000. Complete information on the issue is available on the publisher’s web site at www.opragen.co.uk.

Research Ethics Award Nominations Invited

Nominations are invited for the annual Research Ethics Award presented by the Friends Research Institute, Inc., (FRI), for significant original contributions to knowledge in research ethics. The award, made at the FRI’s annual ethics conference, includes \$10,000 and a plaque. The 2003 awardee was Jay Katz, M.D., Yale University.

All nominations should be submitted by e-mail to mhipsley@friendsresearch.org by December 1 of each year. Details on the award process are available at <http://www.friendsresearch.org/award.html>.

Watch for RCR Resources RFA!

RRI Awards Announced for 2003 (from page 1)

Total funding for the third round (new and continuations) totaled \$1.96 million, which is slightly lower than the funding for the second round (\$2.1 million) and almost double the funding for the first round (\$1.0 million). ORI provided \$1.22 million for the third round; NINR, NIDA, and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke provided \$.74 million.

The fourth request for applications, available on the ORI web site in the Research section under Programs, increases the maximum size of the grants to \$250,000 annually in direct costs and lengthens the project period to 3 years. Another agency has joined the program—Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Submission deadline is November 14, 2003.

Attorney Assigned To Legal Staff at ORI

An attorney, who studied the history of science as an undergraduate and conducted graduate research on the history, ethics, and government oversight of gene therapy, has joined the legal staff assigned to ORI by the Office of the General Counsel (OGC).

Prior to entering government service this year, Michael A. Klein was an associate at a New York law firm where he primarily worked on securities and shareholder litigation. After receiving his law degree from Columbia University in 1999, he clerked at the U.S. Court of Federal Claims in Washington, D.C.

He graduated magna cum laude from Amherst College as a history major, and earned a master's degree in science writing from The Johns Hopkins University.

Grant titles, principal investigators, and institutions for the awards follow:

Industry-Sponsored Research Contracts..Phase II. Michelle Mello, Harvard School of Public Health.

Research Integrity and Financial Conflicts of Interest. Patricia Tereskerz, University of Virginia.

Dilemmas Academic Scientists Face. Karen Seashore, University of Minnesota.

Educating for Responsible Research Conduct in Behavioral Sciences. Margaret Gibelman, Yeshiva University.

Scientific Misconduct: Role of the Research Coordinator. Marion Broome, University of Alabama-Birmingham.

Award abstracts are posted on the ORI web site in the Research section under Programs. Contact Mary Scheetz, Director, Extramural Research Program, at 301-443-5300 or mscheetz@osophs.dhhs.gov.

New Software to Guide Annual Report Submissions

Institutional officials will be guided by new software, compatible with MacIntosh® computers, in submitting the 2003 Annual Report on Possible Research Misconduct that will simplify the process, provide needed information, and reduce incomplete and erroneous reports.

The new software will lead officials through the process which will be shortened for more than 95 percent of the officials. Requested passwords and IPF (Institutional Profile File) numbers will be automatically provided, thereby eliminating the need for e-mails and phone calls. The program will not allow incomplete reports to be submitted and will automatically check for institutional policies on research misconduct.

ORI/OHRP Collaborate On Education Program

ORI and the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) have initiated a collaborative educational program that focuses on the conduct and sponsorship of conferences and workshops, the development of resources for educational programs on the responsible conduct of research (RCR), and exhibits at annual meetings of scientific societies.

The offices jointly sponsored a workshop, *Respect for All Involved: A National Research Integrity and Human Subject Protections Workshop*, on September 8-9, 2003, in New York City that was co-sponsored by Columbia University and several institutions. In addition, ORI staff make presentations during OHRP conferences and workshops and vice versa.

Through its RCR Resource Development Program, ORI is supporting the creation of several resources on human research protections that have been reviewed and recommended by OHRP. The offices have collaborated on holding exhibits at annual meetings of scientific societies for several years.

ORI Co-sponsors 2 More Meetings

ORI will co-sponsor two more workshops on the responsible conduct of research this year that will be held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Society for Neuroscience and the Council of Graduate Schools.

The RCR 101 Educational Workshop, developed by Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R), will be held November 7 in New Orleans during the neuroscience meeting and two sessions of the research integrity in graduate education workshop will be held December 3, 2003, in San Francisco during the meeting of graduate deans.

ORI co-sponsored events are on the ORI home page at <http://ori.hhs.gov>.

Project Descriptions Posted on ORI Web Site (from page 1) **Intro to RCR Is In-Press**

The funding rate was 41 percent, which considerably exceeds the 16.7 percent rate in the first round, when 78 applications were received and 13 funded. Funding also increased from about \$325,000 in the first round to almost \$425,000 in the second round. Awards were made to 11 universities, 2 hospitals, a college, a professional association, and a commercial enterprise.

The third round request for applications (RFA) is expected to be published this fall with a submission deadline in early 2004. The RFA will be posted on the ORI web site and published in the *NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts*.

“Because of the product development already underway,” Loc Nguyen-Khoa, Director, RCR Resource Development Program, said, “The new RFA may contain significant changes in the direction and scope of the program.”

Title, project director, and institution are:

Educating Staff in Community Agencies about Human Subjects Protection in Research, Leslie Alexander, Bryn Mawr College.

A Guidebook for Teaching Selected RCR Topics to Culturally Diverse Trainee Groups, Madeline Alexander, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

Research Integrity: A Novel Approach, Jan Allen, Northwestern University.

RCR Education Support Using Online Games, Parham Baker, Educational Online Systems, LLC.

An Online Competency-based Assessment and Self-Study Program for the Responsible Conduct of Research, Lori Bakken, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Health Research with Human Subjects: A Web-based Course on Making Responsible Decisions, Alan Benjamin, The Pennsylvania State University.

Educating Clinical Staff on Clinical Research Data, Cheryl Chanaud, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Behavioral Health Research: An Ethics Case Compendium and Instructional Method, James DuBois, Saint Louis University.

Development of Online Learning Courses for Fundamental Procedures for Working with Laboratory Mice, Nicole Duffee, American Association for Laboratory Animal Science.

Development and Pilot Testing of a Comprehensive Assessment Tool for RCR, Deni Elliot, University of Montana.

RCR for the Rest of Us, Jeffrey Hecht, Northern Illinois University.

Web-based Research Integrity Training for Medical Device Researchers, Linda Hogle, Stanford University.

Improving Disclosure and Decisions on Conflicts of Interests: An E-Curriculum, Jeffrey Kahn, University of Minnesota.

Online Decision Instruction on Data Integrity, Murali Krishnamurthi, Northern Illinois University.

Development of a Web-based Course on Conflicts of Interest in Research as a Prototype for Educational Interventions on Responsible Research Conduct, Melissa Proll, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Video Vignettes to Actively Foster the Mentor/Trainee Relationship and the Promotion of the Responsible Conduct of Research, Kathleen Reinhard, Syracuse University.

Ethics of Peer Review: A Guide for Manuscript Reviewers, Sara Rockwell, Yale University School of Medicine.

Project descriptions are posted on the ORI web site in the RCR Education section under Programs.

ORI expects to distribute single copies of its *Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)* this year to the 4,000 institutions and organizations that have an active misconduct assurance on file. Currently, the publication is “in-press.”

The document will be posted on the ORI web site in the RCR Education section under Programs by the end of this year. The Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, will offer it for sale; details forthcoming.

The 130-page text, prepared by Nicholas H. Steneck, University of Michigan, with illustrations by David Zinn, Ann Arbor, introduces the reader to the nine RCR core instructional areas in four sections that follows research from inception to planning, conducting, reporting, and reviewing research. The book features text-box inserts, discussion questions, and electronic and printed resources.

Use On-Line Resources To Promote RCR

An easy and inexpensive way to keep the responsible conduct of research (RCR) message before employees, faculty, and students is to use the resources available on-line on the ORI web site at <http://ori.hhs.gov>.

These on-line resources could be made generally available within your institution or organization by all-hands electronic distribution, global e-mail messages announcing their availability on the ORI web site, or posting on an electronic bulletin board or on an RCR web page on your web site.

Available resources include the quarterly *ORI Newsletter*, funding opportunities, RCR instructional resources, publications/studies/reports, conference and workshop announcements, and guidelines, policies, and regulations.

19 Exhibitors Set for RCR Expo in Pittsburgh

Instructional materials developed by 19 institutions and organizations for responsible conduct of research (RCR) education programs will be exhibited during the first RCR Expo to be held October 18-19, 2003, during the annual meeting of the Society for Research Administrators International in Pittsburgh.

For information on exhibit space, contact Loc Nguyen-Khoa at 301-443-5300 or nguyen-khoa@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Columbia University - Two training e-seminars that require learners to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills related to mentoring and conflict of interest. Interactive multi-media seminars include video, audio and text.

Indiana University: Poynter Center - An on-line short course, *The Least of My Brothers*, that explores ethical issues surrounding the PHS Syphilis Study at Tuskegee. An 80-page booklet: *Moral Reasoning in Scientific Research: Cases for Teaching and Assessment*. A Web-based test for training courses on human subjects protection.

The Medical College of Georgia - A WebCT course on the responsible conduct of research that covers 13 subject areas; the 9 core RCR areas plus fiscal compliance, technology transfer, biosafety and chemical safety, and radiation safety. The course will be required for doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows beginning this fall.

Michigan State University - An RCR workshop series for graduate students and a 3-hour graduate course with focus on professional development needs and the associated skills to improve the practice of scholarship/research rather than on the ethical conduct of research as a specific outcome.

North Carolina State University - A course, *Contemporary Science, Values, and Animal Subjects in Research*, that integrates applied philosophy and

scientific practice for researchers working with animals. *A Primer for Research Ethics* developed for undergraduates. *The Research Ethics Modules* includes 11 modules on various aspects of research ethics for faculty and graduate student training.

St. John's University - An on-line instructional resource for identifying and discussing several varieties of unethical writing practices including plagiarism, self-plagiarism, inappropriate paraphrasing, inappropriate citations, selective reporting of literature and methodology, and authorship issues.

University of Alabama: Birmingham - A 1-hour video addressing mentoring and authorship that features discussion between PIs and graduate students, acted scenarios about lab dilemmas, and interviews.

University of Maryland: Baltimore - A web-based curriculum on responsible authorship and acceptable publication practices that informs researchers about the process of manuscript preparation.

University of Miami/The Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) - A web-based course on human research protection that contains 13 content modules. More than 22,000 persons at 230 institutions registered for the course.

University of Pennsylvania - A web-based course, *Responsible Conduct of Research Fundamentals*, that covers the core RCR areas and material transfer, intellectual property, environmental safety, preparing grant proposals, and research administration.

Cleveland State University - A CD-ROM-based training module on conflicts of interest and commitment. The interactive course requires about 45-60 minutes to complete. Some video and audio are incorporated to provide guided instruction through the material.

University of Pittsburgh - A modular web-based training program in research ethics that includes a testing component, certificates and verification of completion.

More than 9,000 persons have been certified in the basic research integrity module since 2001.

University of Washington - Case-based modules designed to promote an institutional climate conducive to research integrity through a broad-based teaching program that engages many research faculty. Each module includes a faculty guide for leadership discussion.

University of Michigan - A web-based foundational instruction and certification program for faculty, staff, and students engaged in research. Provides individualized "curriculum" for each user according to an individual's research role. Besides core RCR areas, include sponsored project administration.

University of Montana - A web-based course that includes six sections that cover the major topics in research ethics. Employs case studies that require a minimum of three levels of responses to complete the case. Participants are encouraged to repeat the case analyses, choosing alternative decision paths.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - An interactive, web-based training program to teach the responsible conduct of research that uses animation to bring the RCR message to life. The training offers a testing and certification process, and continuing education credits.

Family Health International - The *Research Ethics Training Curriculum* is based on 30 years of experience conducting research in developing countries. The RETC provides updated and standardized basic training on human research ethics.

Association for Research Integrity - A web-based course-RCR Online Program - covering the nine RCR core areas and documentation on completed training.

University of Minnesota - Three tutorials - informed consent, conflict of interest, and intellectual property. The informed consent tutorial offers separate paths for behavioral/social investigators and biomedical researchers. Two other tutorials are under development.

Institutional Conflicts of Interest Addressed by AAMC

Principles and recommended processes for addressing competing fiduciary responsibility and ethical obligations facing institutions that conduct human subjects research are outlined in the second report prepared by the Association of American Medical Colleges on conflicts of interest.

The report, *Protecting Subjects, Preserving Trust, Promoting Progress II: Principles and Recommendations for Oversight of an Institution's Financial Interests in Human Subjects Research*, is a companion to *Protecting Subjects, Preserving Trust, Promoting Progress: Policy and Guidelines for the Oversight of Individual Financial Interests in Human Subjects Research*. Both reports are available at <http://www.aamc.org/members/coitf>.

“An institution may have a conflict of interest in human subjects research whenever the financial interest of the institution, or of an institutional official acting within his or her authority on behalf of the institution, might affect—or reasonably appear to affect—institutional processes for the conduct, review, or oversight of human subjects research,” the report states.

The report recommended that “as a fundamental principle, institutions should ensure that in practice, the functions and administrative responsibilities related to human subjects research are separate from those related to investment management and technology licensing.”

“Disclosure to the IRB of record, to research subjects, and in all publications should be required whenever the institution holds a financial interest that is or could reasonably appear to be in conflict with a proposed human subjects research project under the terms of these policy recommendations, and the conflict has not been eliminated through recusal or otherwise,” the report states.

The report enumerates circumstances that should lead to a “specific, fact-

driven inquiry” to determine whether the financial relationship may affect or reasonably appear to affect human subjects research conducted at the institution including receipt of royalties from the sale of the investigational product being studied; an institutional equity interest of any value in a *non-publicly traded* research sponsor; an institutional equity interest greater than \$100,000 in value in a *publicly-traded* research sponsor, and an official’s equity interest, consulting fees, honoraria, gifts or other emoluments, or appointments as an official of a commercial sponsor.

Other financial relationships that may warrant close scrutiny include procurement involving major purchases from a commercial sponsor and the solicitation and receipt of substantial gifts from potential commercial sponsors. The report recommends formation of a standing institutional conflict of interest committee (ICOI) rather than expansion of the jurisdiction of the individual conflict of interest committee because of the “complexity and sensitivity of the issues to be considered by the ICOI committee, the need for participation by senior officials, and the strong recommendation that public members be included.” The ICOI should receive reports on the institutional financial interests obtained through licensing agreements and on the personal financial interests of institutional officials that have a pervasive authority over or direct responsibility for research programs, the Report states. The ICOI should communicate its conclusions to the institutional review board (IRB), the Report advises.

Other recommendations in the report concern multi-center trials, external monitoring of single/primary site trials, external IRB review, recusal, interim recusal, the hospital as a separate entity and accreditation and the financial interests of IRB members.

Science Council of Japan Addresses Misconduct

The first comprehensive report on research misconduct in Japan recommends that allegations of research misconduct be investigated by third-party committees run by national ministries or scientific societies rather than universities and institutes, according to *Science*. (301:153). The report further recommends that universities and institutes create clear guidelines to replace unwritten rules on scientific conduct.

The report was issued by the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) because of the increasing number of research misconduct cases in Japan. Created in 1949 to promote science, the SCJ, composed of 210 elected scientists, is attached to the government, but operates independently.

The problem is exacerbated, according to the report, by a cultural reluctance to confront eminent scientists engaged in questionable activity and the bonds formed through lifetime service to a single institution.

Beijing University Adopts Misconduct Policy

Beijing University issued the first policy for responding to research misconduct allegations in China last March after it was used in a case that resulted in a misconduct finding against a faculty member who was accused of plagiarizing a U.S. textbook on cultural anthropology, according to *Science*. (296:448).

The most prestigious university in China adopted the policy because of a rising tide of questionable behavior in the scientific community. Besides plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of research data, the definition of research misconduct includes “intentionally exaggerating the academic value and economic and social results of a research finding; publishing results without appraisals from school authorities or other academic organizations, . . . and disclosing research findings that should be kept confidential according to the country’s laws and regulations.”

Case Summary

John W. Rooney, Ph.D., Columbia University (CU): Based on the CU investigation report (CU Report), an admission by the respondent, and additional analysis performed by ORI in its oversight review, the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) found that John W. Rooney, Ph.D., former postdoctoral research fellow, CU, engaged in scientific misconduct by falsifying research supported by National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institutes of Health (NIH), grant T32 HL007343, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), NIH, grant R01 AI043576, National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), NIH, grant R01 GM029361, and National Cancer Institute (NCI), NIH, grants P01 CA075399 and R01 CA076496. Specifically, PHS found that Dr. Rooney engaged in scientific misconduct by: (1) falsifying Panels A-C of Figure 1 in the following paper: Rooney, J.W. & Calame, K.L. "TIF1 β functions as a coactivator for C/EBP β and is required for induced differentiation in the myelomonocytic cell line U937." *Genes and Development* 15:3023-3038, 2001; the respondent falsely claimed that high levels of expression of the TIF1 β gene were induced by dimethylsulfoxide and a phorbol ester; and (2) falsifying Figure 3 in the original and Figures 6 and 7 in a revised version of a manuscript (Rooney, J.W., Postel, E.H., & Calame, K.L. "The DNA-cleavage function of NM23-H2/Puf is essential for myeloid differentiation and for transcription of myeloid-specific genes," submitted to *Molecular and Cellular Biology*). The respondent falsely claimed that wild-type NM23-H2/Puf protein could cleave DNA promoter sequences in all five purported target genes and that the K12Q mutant protein could not cleave any of them. The respondent also falsely claimed in electrophoretic mobility shift assays that two authentic oligonucleotides bound to the NM23-H2/Puf protein when they did not do so. The *Genes and Development* paper has been retracted (*Genes and Development* 16:2170, 2002), and CU has indicated that the *Molecular and Cellular Biology* manuscript will not be resubmitted until all of Dr. Rooney's data have been replaced by the work of others.

Dr. Rooney entered into a Voluntary Exclusion Agreement in which he voluntarily agreed for 3 years, beginning on May 16, 2003: (1) to exclude himself from any contracting or subcontracting with any agency of the U.S. Government and from eligibility for, or involvement in, nonprocurement transactions of the U.S. Government as defined in 45 C.F.R. Part 76; and (2) to exclude himself from serving in any advisory capacity to PHS.

Australian Misconduct; Case Questions System

The handling of allegations of scientific misconduct made against a prominent medical researcher and clinician at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia is raising questions about the adequacy of the present system of investigating misconduct in that country, according to *Science*. (296:449).

The researcher is accused of misrepresenting and fabricating experimental results, manipulating authorship credit in presentations and papers, and providing false data on a federal grant application by three members of his laboratory.

Several months after making the allegations, the whistleblowers broadcast their charges on ABC radio to put pressure on the university. Two days later, the UNSW Council ordered an outside inquiry and an internal review of university procedures for responding to allegations.

No national body exists in Australia to handle research misconduct allegations. Each institution sets its own procedures in compliance with relevant state employment or anti-corruption laws.

A former state commissioner for health care complaints in Australia questioned whether institutions can effectively investigate serious scientific misconduct that threatens their reputations and their bottom lines.

Nobelists Urged Probe of Plagiarism by Official

A senior Indian university official and his graduate physics student were found guilty of plagiarizing a paper on the characteristics of black holes, published 6 years earlier by a Stanford University professor, according to *Science*. (299:800).

An international group of physicists, including three Nobelists, had urged the Indian government to investigate the allegations after they became public.

The investigative panel concluded that the article published by the respondents in *Europhysics Letters* showed "complete similarity not only in all mathematical equations and symbols but also in the language used and the tone, tenor, and manner of expression of ideas."

The university official, a vice chancellor, said he would appeal the decision to the chancellor and other authorities because he had done nothing wrong.

Dishonesty Committee Under Attack in Denmark

Social scientists in Denmark are campaigning to have the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty (DCSD) abolished, but some 600 natural and medical scientists in that country have signed a petition supporting the continuation of the DCSD, according to *Nature*. (421:681).

The controversy began last January when the DCSD stated that a book, *The Skeptical Environmentalist* written by political scientist Bjorn Lomborg was "objectively speaking, deemed to fall within the concept of scientific dishonesty." Social scientists argue that the book should not be judged by criteria used to assess dishonesty in the natural and medical sciences.

Following debates in the Danish parliament and newspapers, the Danish Science Minister set up an independent working group to examine the regulatory basis and procedures of the DCSD.

**Conference, Workshop, and Meeting Proposals
Due October 1, 2003**

ORI is seeking proposals from institutions, scientific societies, and professional associations that wish to collaborate with ORI in developing conferences, workshops, symposia, colloquiums, seminars, and annual meeting sessions that address the responsible conduct of research, research integrity, or research misconduct. ORI will provide up to \$20,000, depending on the event proposed.

The next target date for receipt of applications is **October 1, 2003**. Proposal instructions and an application form are available on the ORI web site at <http://ori.dhhs.gov/html/programs/conf-workshops.asp>. Please submit your proposal electronically to cfassi@osophs.dhhs.gov. Dr. Carolyn Fassi may be reached at 301-443-5300.

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