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Severe Sanctions Accompany ORI's First Misconduct Finding of 2021

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 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 cofounder of the preprint 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.

[Link to Federal Register notice](#)

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