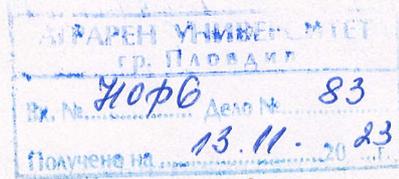


OPINION



Regarding competition for the academic position of " Professor" in the field of HE "Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional field 6.1. "Plant Science," scientific specialty "Ornamental plants," announced in the State Gazette no. 62/21.07.2023. with Candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Stefanova Ivanova

by Prof. Dr. Svetla Dimitrova Yancheva, Agricultural University - Plovdiv, Profesional field 6.1. "Plant Science," scientific specialty "Breeding and seed production of cultivated plants," appointed as a member of the scientific jury according to Order No. RD 16-901 /25.09. 2023 of the Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

Associate Professor Valeria Stefanova Ivanova, was born in 1963. She completed her higher education at VSI in 1986 with the qualification of Engineer-Agronomist in Horticulture and Specialization in Floriculture. She started working at the Institute of Floristry - Sofia, Negovan, from 1986 to 1991. After that, she worked at AU-Plovdiv, successively holding academic positions: assistant - in 1991, senior assistant - in 1993, chief assistant - in 1996, and associate professor - in 2007. She obtained a Doctoral degree in the scientific specialty "Ornamental plants" after defending a dissertation on the topic: "Optimization of plant load and nitrogen fertilization in the cultivation of chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum indicum* L) for cut flowers in polyethylene greenhouses" in 2003. She is a member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture at AU - Plovdiv, Chairman of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture at AU - Plovdiv, Member of the ERASUM+ Program Commission at the Faculty, Member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of "Scientific Works of the Agricultural University" and "Agrarian Sciences" journals, Head of the Master's course "Ornamental Plants and Landscape Design," Head of the specialty "Ornamental Horticulture and Landscaping," Head of the Doctoral Program "Ornamental Horticulture."

2. General description of the scientific production.

In the announced competition for "Professor," Associate Professor Valeria Stefanova Ivanova is the only candidate. The documents and materials presented are in accordance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the

Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Application of the LDASRB, and the relevant Regulations of AU-Plovdiv.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Stefanova Ivanova participated in the competition for "Professor" with a scientific production of 36 scientific works, of which a monograph - 1 piece, a chapter of a collective monograph - 1 piece, a Guide for exercises in floristry - 1 issue and 33 scientific publications. Thirty-four of the publications are collaborative works, and Associate Professor Valeria Stefanova Ivanova is the first author in 20, second - in 10, and third and subsequent - in 6 scientific works. The Reference to conformity regarding the implementation of the national scientometric indicators,

According to group of indicators "A" - Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor," defended in 2003 - **50 points**.

According to group "B" - indicators 3 or 4 - presented monograph - **100 points**.

According to group "G" - indicators 5 to 12 – 265.97 points.

According to group of indicators "D" - Citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes - the candidate presents ten citations - **150 points** that exceed the required scientometrics.

According to group of indicators "E" - **145 points**.

3. Teaching Activity

* Lectures, exercises, and practical seminars with students from bachelor's, master's, and ERASUM+ courses in various specialties of AU-Plovdiv. Giving lectures abroad. Supervising graduates and doctoral students. Management and participation in scientific projects - national and international.

* Academic employment of the candidate - the Reference for teaching activity in the last five years shows 3832 hours, or an average annual performance for the period - 766 hours, equated in exercises.

* The teaching activity is complemented by the guidance of two successfully defended doctoral students.

* Published study materials - one issue - Student exercise guide for floristry - Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

* Developed study programs - 29 items, one in English.

4. Scientific research activity

In the Reference for the scientific contributions, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Ivanova outlines different directions of a rich interdisciplinary experimental work focused on various ornamental plants - flower crops, trees, and shrubs- by applying conventional

and biotechnological methods for propagation and breeding. The objects of research were mainly the ornamental species *Chrysanthemum indicum*, *Ginkgo biloba*, three types of linden - *T. grandifolia*, *T. argentea* and *T. Parvifolia*, *Magnolia grandiflora* L. and *Magnolia × soulangeana* Soul.-Bod and *Taxus baccata*, as well as fruit species such as cherry and plum, and other crops with ornamental value. Scientific contributions are divided into seven groups, and methodological and scientific-applied contributions are formulated in the Reference for Scientific Contributions. Scientific publications present Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Ivanova as a researcher capable of planning experiments and interpreting the results obtained.

Proof of this is also the co-authored chapter of a collective monograph in English and the presentations of scientific results at national and international conferences. The participation in 3 educational projects, two international scientific projects, and Head management of 17 projects financed by AU-Plovdiv is impressive. The presented information and documents demonstrate workability, communication, responsibility, and ability to work in a team and represent a solid foundation and prerequisite for consistently built expertise and a promising scientific career.

5. Notes and recommendations.

The critical remarks and recommendations refer to the presentation of the Contributions from the research work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Ivanova. Most of them could be better summarized and systematized. Probably, the massive amount of studies with such a wide variety of plant species and the desire of the applicant to present them in more detail are the reasons for this finding, which does not reduce the scientific value of the overall long-term research work. Given the accumulated rich methodology, skills, and consistency in the work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Ivanova, I recommend that in her future scientific activity, she should focus on publishing in prestigious journals referred to and indexed in global scientific databases.

6. Conclusion.

Based on analyzing the candidate's pedagogical, scientific, and scientific-applied activities, I believe that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Ivanova meets the requirements of the LDASR, the Regulations for its application, and the Regulations of the Agriculture University. Her diverse scientific activity, consistency, and responsibility make her a well-rounded scientist with high professional qualities. All of the above gives reason **POSITIVELY** to evaluate the overall scientific activity of the candidate.

I also propose to the honorable Scientific Jury to vote POSITIVELY and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeria Stefanova Ivanova as "Professor" in the area of HE 6. "Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, professional field 6.1. "Plant Science," scientific specialty "Ornamental plants."

Date: 13.11.2023

Plovdiv

OPINION PREPARED BY: 

(Prof. Dr. Svetla Yancheva)