



SCIENTIFIC OPINION

regarding the competition for "associate professor" in the scientific specialty Ornamental Plants announced in the State Gazette No. 48 of 26. 05. 2026 with candidate Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Valentin Panchev Panchev

by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Dimitrov Panayotov, appointed pursuant to Order No. RD 16-812/29.06.2026 of the Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv as Chairman of the Scientific Jury

1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev was born on 16. 06. 1982 in the city of Plovdiv. In 2001 he graduated from the Professional High School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy "Arch. Kamen Petkov" – Plovdiv, with a degree in Park Construction. From 2001 to 2006 he studied Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv and received a Bachelor's degree. In 2007 he graduated with a Master's degree in Landscape Design, also at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv. He worked as a teacher at PGABG "Arch. Kamen Petkov" – Plovdiv during the period 2008-2015. From 2015 to 2019, after winning a competition, he was a part-time doctoral student and assistant in the Department of Horticulture at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. In 2019, he defended his thesis entitled "Studies on different methods of reproduction of species of the genus *Tilia*" and received a Doctoral degree in the specialty "Ornamental Horticulture". Since 2019, he has been a chief assistant professor in the same department. This shows that his entire career has been related to ornamental horticulture. His activities, both as a university lecturer and as a scientist, are focused on studying various aspects of the technology and application of ornamental plants. His scientific research is related to different ways to stimulate the growth and decorative value of a large range of flower and tree species. Through several courses and specializations, such as periodic participation in ENTER, conducting a specialization in China, as well as a Methodological Training Course from Sofia University, he improves his qualifications as a teacher and researcher. He has pedagogical ability. He has presented the results of his scientific work at various scientific forums in Bulgaria and abroad - Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Turkey, etc. In this way, he has become well-known among scientific circles. He also actively participates in the European ERASMUS+ program with visits to prestigious universities in Poland, the Czech Republic, Jordan and Turkey. He is a member of the Union of Scientists, Plovdiv branch, where he is actively involved. He is a member of the General Assemblies of the Agricultural University and the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture, as well as of the Faculty Council of the same faculty. For many years he was the secretary of the departmental council of the Department of Horticulture. Every year he takes an active part in the candidate student campaign.

2. General description of scientific production.

In the competition for "associate professor" Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev participated with a total production of 36 works, grouped as follows:

- ❖ Scientific publications in the nomenclature specialty - 36 pieces, of which:
 - Publications related to the doctoral dissertation - 7 pieces, which are not subject to consideration;
 - Publications with impact factor - 6 pieces
 - Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals - 22 pieces;

The personal participation of Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. V. Panchev in the mentioned 29 works is illustrated by the fact that 10 numbers (34.48%) are independent, in 5 numbers (17.24%) he is the first, in 9 numbers (31.03%) he is the second, and in the remaining 5 numbers (17.24%) he is the third and next author.

To prepare the opinion, 29 articles are subject to analysis. I do not analyze the articles in which I am a co-author.

The scientific activity of Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev fully meets the minimum national scientific requirements. Under indicator A, he has defended a doctoral dissertation. Under indicator B, he indicates 10 articles published in refereed and reviewed journals in the world-famous Web of Science and Scopus databases, collecting 255 points, with a required score of 100. In group G, a book based on a dissertation is presented, 6 articles in journals in Web of Science and Scopus, and 12 scientific publications in non-refereed journals with scientific review or in edited collective volumes. Under this indicator, the total number of points is 256.65, which is also significantly above the minimum requirements. Three citations of his scientific publications in journals referenced in world databases, as well as two in non-refereed journals with scientific review, are presented, thus reaching 55 points.

From the above, it is evident that the scientific and publication activity of Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev fully meets the national requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor".

3. Activity as a university lecturer.

Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev has been teaching classes in 13 different academic disciplines for 11 years, all in the field of ornamental horticulture, such as Floriculture, Decorative Nurseries, Flowers for Open Areas, Bouquet Arrangement, etc. He conducts lecture and exercises in the MC "Ornamental Plants and Landscape Design". Every year he significantly fulfills the required standard for teaching activity. From 2021 to the present, he has been assigned several times to give a lecture in various specialties, both in bachelor's and master's courses in 5 disciplines, such as Floriculture, Decorative Horticulture, Dendrology and Park Management, Qualification and Storage of Vegetables and Flowers, Bouquet Arrangement, etc. He has independently developed curricula in Qualification and Storage of Vegetables and Flowers, Bouquet Arrangement, which shows that Dr. Panchev has experience and skills in organizing and conducting the educational process. At the same time, he has been the scientific supervisor of a large number of over 20 successfully defended diploma students, both bachelor's and master's. He organizes teaching practices with students at specialized sites for growing ornamental plants. He maintains various educational collections to illustrate the taught material. I can confidently state that Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Panchev has the respect of the students and is a sought-after lecturer who copes very well with his teaching activities. Every year he is the course supervisor for the 1st and 2nd year students in the specialty "Ornamental Horticulture".

4. Scientific research activity.

The scientific and publication activity of Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Panchev can be summarized in three main areas, related to the propagation of ornamental plants, the effect of ultrasound sonication on the vital indicators of seeds of ornamental species, as well as the development of some technological solutions in the cultivation of flower species, mainly gladiolus. He studies the possibilities of vegetative propagation by applying stimulants and by micropropagation methods, and in this regard offers an

effective protocol for micropropagation of linden. In this regard, he conducts successful experiments with other crops, such as ficus, petunia, aucuba, *Angelonia angustifolia*.

In experiments with ultrasound, he establishes the optimal period of sounding of lupine, antirrhinum, colutea, caesalpinia and zinnia seeds. At the same time, he also offers suitable methods for overcoming the dormancy of cherry laurel and linden seeds. It establishes some seasonal and geographical differences in the content of ginkgolides A, B, C and bilobalides in *Ginkgo biloba* plants growing in different regions. Extensive research work is also carried out with gladioli related to varietal study, determination of optimal nitrogen fertilizer rates, survival of corms, as well as the effect of ultrasound on the seeds of this crop.

The experiments are carried out at a high scientific level, applying modern methods and research analyses. He applies various statistically and mathematical methods for data processing, such as dispersion, regression and correlation analysis. His publications are written in a concise scientific style with the correct use of scientific terms. As a result of the studies conducted, his scientific works have been cited several times in prestigious scientific journals, referenced in world databases. This shows that his scientific work is relevant and recognizable in scientific circles in our country and abroad.

The implementation of this research activity is a result of participation in a number of scientific and infrastructure projects both under national programs such as "Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Fellows", and from the scientific plan of the university.

I fully accept the presented scientific contributions.

In summary, based on the above, it can be emphasized that Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. V. Panchev is a well-established scientist who can initiate and conduct scientific research by himself.

5. Comments and recommendations.

I have no serious comments regarding the presented university pedagogical and scientific activities of Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. V. Panchev. I would like to recommend that he expand the range of studied ornamental species, publish in more reputable journals, and as a result of the accumulated scientific experience, prepare a monographic work.

6. Conclusion.

Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I believe that Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev Panchev meets the requirements of the Law on Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations of Application of the Law on Development of Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and Regulation of the Agricultural University-Plovdiv for its application, while at the same time he has established himself as a good university teacher, carries out targeted and relevant scientific activity and has mastered the necessary scientific methods and analyses.

All this gives me reason to evaluate his overall activity POSITIVELY.

I would like to propose that the esteemed Scientific Jury also vote positively, and that the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv elect Chief Asst. Prof. Dr. Valentin Panchev Panchev as "associate professor" in the scientific specialty Ornamental Plants.

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PREPARED THE OPINION:
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