



## SCIENTIFIC OPINION

regarding the competition for "professor" in the scientific specialty Decorative plants, announced in SG No. 62 of 21. 07. 2023 with candidate Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Valeriia Stefanova Ivanova by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Dimitrov Panayotov, Agricultural University-Plovdiv, appointed according to Order No. RD 16-901/25. 09. 2023 of the Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv for chairman of the Scientific jury

### 1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeriia Ivanova was born on 23.02. 1963 in the village of Alekovo, Velko Tarnovo region. In 1986, she graduated from the Agricultural University-Plovdiv (HIA) specialty of Viticulture and Horticulture as an agronomist. During her studies, she also received an additional qualification as a Mass Media Associate (Journalism). From 1986 to 1989, she worked as an agronomist in the Scientific and Production Laboratory of Tissue Culture at the Institute of Floriculture-Sofia, Negovan. During the period 1989-1991, she was a research assistant at the same institute. In 1991, she started working at the Agricultural University-Plovdiv (HIA), successively holding the academic positions of Assistant, Senior Assistant, Ch. Assistant and since 2007, is an Associate Professor of Decorative plants. Since 2003, she has been defending her doctoral thesis and received the title of education and scientific degree "Doctor". She indicates that she has an excellent skills of spoken, read and written English and Russian languages. She was a member, chairman of the General Assembly of the Faculty Council and a member of the ERASMUS committee at the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture. She is the creator and leader of a master's course in "Decorative plants and landscape design". She is Deputy Ch. Editor of the journals Scientific Works and Agricultural Sciences at the University. Has skills in working with a number of computer programs. She was a member of the scientific committee of the International Conference in Latvia. She increased her qualifications by participating in a number of courses in Russia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Belgium and Israel. She is a member of Scientific Union-branch Plovdiv. Her main teaching activity is related to conducting lectures, seminars, exercises and education practices in the field of flori culture and decorative dendrology with Bachelor and Master students. Her scientific activity covers aspects of propagation, decorative evaluation and application of flower, tree and shrub species, both for cut flowers as well as in the creation of park areas. Her work experience is 32 years and 8 months.

### 2. General description of the scientific production.

In the competition for "Professor" Assoc. Dr. Ivanova participated with a total output of 38 papers, which covered the minimum scientometric requirements of the Rule of application of Law on the development of the academic staff in Bulgaria, grouped as follows:

- ❖ *Scientific publications on the nomenclature specialty - 38 issues, of which:*
  - *Publications related to the doctoral thesis – 3 issues, which are not subject to consideration;*
  - *Publications with an impact factor – 10 issues*
  - *Monograph – 1 issue*



*Chapter of a monograph – 1 issue*

- *Publications in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals – 15 issues;*

- *In non-refereed editions with scientific review – 18;*

*From them*

- *Publications in conference proceedings – 5 issues;*

- *Guide for exercises – 1 issue.*

Assoc. Prof. Ivanova's personal participation in the mentioned 36 works is illustrated by the fact that 3 articles, one monograph and one guide are independent, in 15 she is the first author, in 9 she is the second author, in the remaining 7 she is the third and subsequent author.

In addition to the above publications, Assoc. Prof. Ivanova indicates, after taking the academic position of "Associate Professor", that she is the author or co-author of another 45 articles.

❖ *Textbooks - 0 items.*

❖ *Study guides – 1 item.*

*In order to prepare the opinion, 35 publications are subject to analysis, but since I am a co-author in 5 publications, which represent much less than the permissible 20%, under the numbers of G7 - 1, 7, 11 and from G8 - 3 and 9, I do not review them.*

### **3. Teaching activity.**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanova develops an extremely active teaching activity, which is expressed in lectures, seminars, exercises, educational practices and field practices. She teaches in a number of educational subjects, both at bachelor's and master's levels. Here I would like to emphasize the great efforts that Assoc. Prof. Ivanova puts into organizing and conducting the master's course in "Decorative plants and landscape design" as well as the bachelor's course "Decorative horticulture and landscaping", and in both courses she is also the main lecturer on special subjects. For many years, she has been the head of the mentioned Master's course, which she carries out with great desire and skill. She gave lectures in the field of ornamental horticulture in Greece, Germany and Lithuania.

*Academic employment of the candidate.*

In confirmation of the above, her heavy academic workload is also evident, that is obviously from the attached report, as for the last five years varies from 468.9 hours to 1276.6 in the academic year 2018/2019. She was a scientific mentor to students in the "Student Internships" Program

The teaching activity is complemented by the the fact that she was supervisor of 66 successfully defended graduate students, of which 23 bachelors and 43 masters. She was the supervisor of two defended PhD students.

*Published study materials.*

After taking up the academic position of "Assoc. Prof." she was the independent author of a Guide of the Practicle exercises of Floruculture.

*Developed curricula.*

She has developed 29 curricula in 16 disciplines in the field of ornamental horticulture in subjects studied by bachelors and masters.

### **4. Scientific research activity.**

*Areas of publication.*

The main areas of research and, accordingly, of publication of Assoc. Prof. Ivanova are directly related to the specialty for which the competition has been announced. A



large part of her publications are devoted to the propagation of ornamental plants. Peculiarities of seed propagation are investigated, also a number of articles related with aspects of vegetative propagation of various ornamental crops. She has also conducted extensive research in connection with *in vitro* propagation of many ornamental tree species. A significant part of the publications covers specific aspects of the cultivation technology of some ornamental and flower species. Some physiological features of plant development were also studied. Research has been carried out related to the use of ornamental trees and shrubs in landscape objects.

*Citation and referencing of scientific production.*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivanova points out that there are ten citations to her publications that meet the minimum scientometric requirements. Separately, it reports that by September 2023, its total number of citations is 142.

*Participation in scientific projects.*

The above mentioned large scientific activity is the result of her participation, after holding the academic position of "associate professor", in three scientific projects, two of which are international with China, in three educational projects and in one long-term infrastructure project.

### **5. Notes and recommendations.**

I have no serious objections to the teaching and scientific work of Assoc.Prof. Dr. Ivanova. I may point out, as an opinion, that it would be better if the Report on Scientific Contributions were presented more concisely, summarizing and specific, so that its contributions, which are not few, would stand out more clearly. This does not in the least detract from her serious research work. I recommend that she continue to publish articles in journals of high rank and influence in scientific circles, as well as publish university textbooks on Floriculture and Ornamental Dendrology.

### **6. Conclusion.**

Based on the analysis of the pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities of the candidate, I believe that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeriia Stefanova Ivanova meets the requirements of the Law on the development of the academic staff in Bulgaria, Rule of application of Law on the development of the academic staff in Bulgaria and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application. She develops an active teaching activity, conducts classes in a large number of disciplines, both in bachelor's and master's courses. She is the head of a master's course. At the same time, her scientific activity is significant, there are a number of publications in prestigious scientific journals. Investigate important and essential problems in the field of ornamental horticulture

All this gives me reason to **POSITIVELY** evaluate her overall activity.

I allow me of proposing to the honorable Scientific Jury to also vote positively, and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Viticulture and Horticulture at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valeriia Stefanova Ivanova as "Professor" in the scientific specialty Ornamental Plants

Date: 13. XI. 2023  
Plovdiv

**PREPARED THE SCIENTIFIC  
OPINION:**.....  
(Prof. Dr. Nikolay Panayotov)