

Bx. № 280 HO-05-06/20.03.2024

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Milena Tihomirova Nikolova PhD, Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Studies (IBEI), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), regarding the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” at IBEI, BAS in the professional field 4.3. “Biological Sciences”; scientific specialty: “Botany”

The only participant in the competition for "Associate Professor" for the needs of IG “Plant diversity and local development”, section "Applied Botany", Department "Plant and fungal diversity and resources" at IBEI-BAS, announced in SG No. 98/ 24.11.2023, is **Chief Assistant Teodora Angelova Ivanova, PhD**. She obtained a master's degree in "Biotechnologies, Plant Biotechnologies", at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", as well as the educational and scientific doctoral degree in the scientific specialty "Botany", with a dissertation on the topic "In vitro cultivation of *Ruscus aculeatus* L. and *Ruscus hypoglossum* L. (Liliaceae)". Dr. Ivanova's work experience began at the Institute of Botany, BAS, transformed in 2010 into IBEI and continues without interruption until now.

All materials for the competition have been prepared following the current regulatory documents: Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the relevant Regulations of IBEI/BAS. The list of scientific works presented by Dr. T. Angelova includes a total of 32 titles, of which 1 essay of dissertation and 5 publications related to the acquisition of the educational and scientific doctoral degree and refer to Group of indicators "A" (50 points). 26 scientific works are presented for the current contest, grouped according to the national minimum requirements under professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences. Of them, 6 pcs. (3 x Q1; 1 x Q2; 1 x Q3) are publications equivalent to a habilitation thesis (Group "B") with a total numerical value of 110 points (of the required 100). Dr. T. Ivanova is the first author in all publications to this group,. Group "D" includes 20 scientific works (5 publications - in Q1, 1 in Q2, 2 in Q3, 1 in Q4, 3 with SJR without IF, 4 without SJR and IF and 4 chapters from a book with a total numerical value of 277 points (of the required 220) Group "D" includes a list of 37 established citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in Web of Science and Scopus with a total numerical value

74 points (out of a required 60). The submitted statement of contributions accurately corresponds to the applicant's research achievements.

The main scientific research and contributions of the candidate is aimed at collecting and summarizing the traditional knowledge about plants preserved in Bulgarian society - a new and current direction for Bulgarian botany. A rich database showing the place of plants in Bulgarian song folklore has been created - over 4000 photonyms of plants and their products have been documented, the most significant plants for Bulgarians have been determined. Important results have been achieved in the study of plant diversity in home gardens - data have been collected on the use of over 200 taxa of cultivated and wild plants, local gardens have been analyzed as sources of local forms preserved over generations. For the first time, 11 plant taxa used as food have been reported for Bulgaria, and three of them were even newly established in an international aspect. Dr. Todorova's research is important for preserving the cultural identity of Bulgarians by identifying and popularizing culturally significant species and their products.

Based on the presented scientific production, its citability and the significance of the obtained results, it is categorically proven that Dr. T. Ivanova fully meets the subject matter and requirements of the announced position. The direction in which he works is new, current and promising with fundamental and applied importance.

In conclusion, the presented data prove that Dr. T. Ivanova's scientometric indicators cover and exceed the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in the relevant professional field, determined by the current normative documents. The candidate has a clearly defined research profile, with significant achievements and prospects for further development. Expounded so far gives me reason to confidently express my positive opinion regarding the present candidacy and to recommend to the members of the Scientific Council of IBEI, BAS to support the election of Ch. Assist. Teodora Angelova Ivanova, PhD for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of science: 4.3. "Biological Sciences", scientific specialty "Botany" for the needs of the IG "Plant diversity and local development", section "Applied Botany", department "Plant and fungal diversity and resources" of IBEI-BAS.

20.03.2024

Prepared the opinion:

(Assoc. Prof. M. Nikolova)