

## OPINION



on the application materials for a competition for an academic position, field of higher education 6. "Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine", professional field 6.3. "Animal Husbandry", scientific subject "Special branches (bees and silkworm)", for the needs of the Department of Plant Protection at the Faculty of Agronomy, announced by decision of the Academic Council of the University of Forestry in the State Gazette No. 102 of 08.12.2023 with a term of two months and procedure code: **AGR -AsP-1123-120**.

### **Candidates for the competition are:**

#### **1. Chief assistant professor Tsvetelina Alipieva Nikolova PhD;**

**Prepared the opinion: Rositsa Trendafilova Shumkova PhD, Assoc. Prof.** professional field 6.3. "Animal Husbandry" from Research Centre of Stockbreeding and Agriculture - Smolyan.

#### **1. Brief biographical details of the applicant(s)**

The candidate for the competition is Chief assistant professor Tsvetelina Alipieva Nikolova. She completed her higher education in Agronomy at the Faculty of Agronomy of the University of Forestry in 2005 and obtained a Master's degree. In 2008, she began working as an assistant professor in the Department of Perennial Crops and Horticulture at the same university. In 2017, she successfully defended her dissertation "Alteration of biological traits on the silkworm (*Bombyx mori*) under the influence of forage collected from areas with high content of heavy metals in the soil". She was awarded a PhD in the scientific subject "Special branches" (silkworm), professional field 6.3 "Animal Husbandry". From 13th November 2008 to 2nd October 2019, she worked as a lecturer in the field of "Special Branches (Bees and Silkworms)". She taught classes on Beekeeping, Bee pollination, Animal husbandry and Private animal husbandry. In 2019, he was appointed as a Chief Assistant Professor in the scientific subject Special Branches (Bees and Silkworms) at the Faculty of Agronomy, Department of Plant Protection, University of Forestry, where he currently holds the position.

Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Alipieva Nikolova has participated in 12 scientific projects. The results of her scientific research have been published in 1 monograph, 1 book chapter, 2 handbooks, 35 scientific publications and 4 popular scientific publications. The candidate has also participated in scientific forums where she presented the data of her research activities.

#### **2. Compliance of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant(s) with those required under the Regulations for Academic Development at the University of Forestry;**

The submitted documents and materials, as well as the scientific-metric indicators of Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova, submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the field of higher education 6. "Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine", professional field 6.3. "Animal Husbandry", scientific subject "Special Branches (Bees and Silkworms)" in the discipline "Beekeeping" have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Forestry and meet the criteria of the University of Forestry for the academic position of "Associate Professor".



### **3. Evaluation of the teaching activities of the candidate(s)**

The candidate Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova is an active lecturer at the University of Forestry, Sofia. During her work experience she started her activity as a lecturer in the field of "Special Branches" (Bees and Silkworms). She taught classes in the disciplines of Beekeeping, Sericulture, Bee Pollination, Animal Husbandry and Private Animal Husbandry. With the promotion of her academic position to Chiefassistant professor, her teaching work has increased and she presents to students in the BSc and MSc programmes, the subject Agronomy and Plant Protection. She has lectures and exercises on the following subjects: Beekeeping, Sericulture, Pollination of Honey Plants; Honey Plants and Bee Pasture, and Soil Health. She also teaches classes in Basics of Animal Husbandry and Private Animal Husbandry.

### **4. Evaluation of the candidate(s)' scientific, applied, and publication activity**

#### **4.1. Participation in scientific, applied, and educational projects**

According to the presented personal information in the biography of Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova, she has participated in 12 projects. In four of these projects, she served as an academic mentor, and they were funded by European institutions. In the remaining projects, which are nationally funded, she is a team member. Based on the experience gained, I can assess that the candidate has high competence in creating, participating in, and presenting projects.

#### **4.2 Characteristic of published scientific results**

One monograph, 19 scientific publications, one independent handbook, one handbook in co-authorship and two scientific - applied publications were submitted for the competition for "**Associate Professor**". Separately, 3 scientific articles related to the PhD thesis for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" and two scientific - applied articles were submitted. Her biography shows individual participation in a book chapter. The candidate's publications have been published in foreign refereed scientific journals - 7 issues, in Bulgarian refereed journals - 7 issues and in non-refereed journals - 5 issues. The submitted publications are 14 in foreign languages and 5 in Bulgarian.

The personal involvement of the candidate in the scientific works mentioned for the competition is illustrated by the fact that 7 are independent, 4 are in a team with one author and 8 are in a collaboration with more authors.

The performance of the groups of indicators is as follows:

- Group A - Dissertation for the award of the degree of Doctor of Education and Science - 50 points;
- Group B - Habilitation thesis - 100 points;
- Group D - Publications - 308.3 points (exceeds the minimum points required for this group);
- Group E - Citations - 60 points;
- Group F - Participation in projects - 180 points;

#### **4.3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the literature (citation rate)**

The scientific results of Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova have been published in international refereed journals. In the reference for scientific and publication activity 4 citations are presented, which meet the requirements of the competition. I am convinced that the candidate has been cited many times, but she has not indicated any other citations.

#### **4.4. Contributions to the work of the candidate(s) (scientific, scientifically applied, applied)**

The scientific contributions from the research activity of Chief assist. prof. PhD. Tsvetelina Nikolova are in the field of honey plants. The main topics on which she works are summarized information on honey plants. The purpose is successful planning and organization of beekeeping activities to create conditions for continuous and diverse bee pasture. She is the author of a monograph on this topic.



Scientific contributions have been extended by studying morphological and biological features, nectar and pollen production, sugar content, honey production and the impact of climatic changes on honeyplants.

A new contribution of an original nature is the assessment of honey plants resources in the area of the Training Experimental Field "Vrazhdebna", Sofia. An important contribution to science is the study of the impact of biochar on the species *Cucurbita pepo* var. *giromontia*, *Vicia faba* and *Phacelia tanacetifolia* Benth.

Tsvetelina Nikolova has studies on silkworm *Bombyx mori* L. associated with the ingestion of artificial food supplemented with an extract of *Tribulus terrestris* L. The active substances in the plant, even in minute quantities, have a positive effect on the larvae studied. This is a confirmatory contribution.

From the attached reference it is seen that scientifically applied are studies related to the status, trends and prospects of beekeeping in our country. She finds that urban conditions are suitable for the rearing and development of bee colonies.

#### **5. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidate**

The analysis of the entire scientific research activity of Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova shows that she is a motivated and accomplished scientist with a sufficient volume of scientific production.

#### **6. Critical remarks and recommendations**

I do not have any significant comments to the submitted materials for the announced competition, but I recommend the candidate in the future to make an effort to publish her articles in refereed journals with impact factor. I would also like to add that the papers are well presented. My personal recommendation to Tsvetelina Nikolova is to actively participate in more national and international scientific forums.

#### **7. Personal impressions**

Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Nikolova shows active research, teaching and applied activities in the institution she works. She is an accomplished specialist in the field of honey plants. This allows her to work in the future in a team with scientists from the subject "Special branches (Bees and Silkworms)".

#### **8. Conclusion**

The submitted scientific production by Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Alipieva Nikolova meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Forestry and meets the minimum requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor". This gives me grounds to evaluate positively the overall activity of the candidate.

I propose that the candidate Chief assist. prof. Tsvetelina Alipieva Nikolova to take the academic position of Associate Professor in the discipline of Beekeeping, scientific subject "Special Branches (Bees and Silkworms)" from professional field 6.3. Animal Husbandry

Prepared the opinion:  
/Assoc. Prof. Ro

The opinion has been forwarded to: 10.4.2024 г.