



OPINION

on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for „Associate Professor“ in the Field 5. Engineering sciences, Professional field 5.13. General Engineering, scientific specialty "Ergonomics and Industrial Design", in the discipline "Design History, Theory and Methodology"

In the competition for professor, published in the State Gazette N: 101/ 27.12.2019 and on the site of the University of Forestry with the code WWI-AsP-1119-31 for the needs of the Department of "Interior and Furniture Design" at the Faculty of Forest Industry, as a candidate participate Assistant Professor Desislava Ivanova Angelova, Faculty of Forest Industry, Department of "Interior and Furniture Design"

Prepared the opinion: Stela Borisova Tasheva, Ph.D. Associate Professor in a Professional Field 5.7 Architecture, Construction and Geodesy, from University of Forestry, Sofia, and Institute of Art Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

1. Brief biographical data for the candidate

Assistant Prof. Desislava Ivanova Angelova graduated with a Master's degree in the area of *Interior and Furniture Design* in 2000, and in 2002 she began teaching as an assistant on a permanent contract at the University of Forestry (UF), where she is working till now. In 2011, she defended her PhD thesis on the topic: "A Research on Design Methods in the Structural Construction of Seating Furniture" (her scientific tutor was Prof. Arch. Regina Raicheva, PhD).

Assistant Prof. Desislava Ivanova Angelova, has a rich and intense teaching practice with more than 17 years of experience. In addition to the Department of "Interior and Furniture Design" - the Faculty of Forest Industry of the UF, she had also been as a part-time lecturer at the University of Structural Engineering & Architecture (VSU) "Lyuben Karavelov", and at the New Bulgarian University (NBU), Sofia. In 2011, she became an Assistant Professor at UF, after a contest. In 2016, she won an Associate Professor's competition for the discipline of *Graphic Design* at the UF. However, in 2018 the decision of the Faculty of the UF to select a jury for the competition was annulled by the court (following an appeal by one of the candidates). In the period 1.03.2016 - 18.06.2018 Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova was elected as a Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Forestry in the field of scientific developments.

2. Correspondence of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant according to the Rules of the Development of academic staff at the University of Forestry.

All the necessary documents and materials (concerning the candidate) were presented for the opinion statement: including the data specified in the state regulation, the data required by the National Centre for Information and Documentation, as well as the data requested by the regulations of the UF, Sofia. The information is organized by the candidate in an application form and 14 attachments with detailed lists and other evidence or supporting material.

3. Assessment of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activities (work with students and PhD students)

The fact that in the period 2011-2019 Assistant Prof. Desislava Ivanova Angelova was the tutor of 52 successful graduating defenses and has reviewed 116 diploma papers can serve as a tool to assess her skills and teaching credentials. Auditory and other curricular teaching activities of Assistant Prof. Desislava Ivanova Angelova, also fully comply with the university requirements.

In the period 2015 - 2019, she led lectures on three design fields - "Graphic Design", and "Design History, Theory and Methodology" for bachelors, and "Innovative and Strategic Design" for students in master degree, as well as project training in seven disciplines. For the lecture courses, she prepared the curricula in the respective academic years. Assistant Prof. Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova, is a co-author of a student textbook on Interior Architecture, an author of a study guide on Graphic Design and also of 6 training modules for the electronic forms of distance learning at the University of Forestry.

It can be said that the teaching activity of Assistant Prof. Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova is synchronized with her steady career progress at the UF and affirms once more the confidence and the respect of her colleague teachers and the students. Her work is described in detail in Annex 11 of the applicant's materials incl. through accurate work documents for the different periods.

4. Assessment of candidate's scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activities

General description of the presented materials

The candidate Assistant Prof. Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova participated in the competition with:

- **2 monographs.** The first one is entitled "Chairs at the Beginning of the 21st Century" (2016), published in Bulgarian. The second is co-authored (in proportion 80% to 20%) with Prof. Regina Raycheva and is declared as the major habilitation work. It is called "Textile Techniques in Furniture Design. Weaving and Knitting in Search of Form and Texture" (2020), published in English.
- **1 Book.** It is called "A Research on Design Methods in the Structural Construction of Seating Furniture" (2019), published in Bulgarian. It has been published on the basis of a thesis for doctoral dissertation.
- **1 publication in a scientific journal referred in the Web of Science; 18 research papers** in peer-reviewed journals or in peer-reviewed collections, and 1 popular article.

4.1 Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects

Assistant Prof. Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova has an active and fruitful project activity. She has been part of 9 educational projects, funded by operational programs, the sectoral program of *Erasmus*, and some academic institutions. She also participated in 3 applied projects funded by the Research and Scientific Sector of the UF and in 2 projects for external

financing of the international scientific and technical conferences, organized by the Faculty. Her membership in the Scientific and Organizing Committees of several international scientific forums, as well as in the editorial board of the journal of “Innovations in Forest Industry and Engineering Design”, published by the Faculty of Forest Industry, has also been proven.

4.2 Characterization of published scientific results

The overall impression of the research activity and of the publications, presented by Assistant Prof. Desislava Dr. Ivanova Angelova, is of constant attention to details, analytical methodology and high professional culture. I find particularly significant the results of the habilitation study - the monograph “Textile Techniques in Furniture Design. Weaving and Knitting in Search of Form and Texture” (2020), which brings to the scientific circulation in the country and abroad a new and unexplored trend in the current furniture design. The fact is, however, that the dissertation of Ch. Desislava Ivanova Angelova (published in the form of a book), and also the other monograph included in the competition data, have too important topics and compelling contributions in the field of contemporary interior design.

The studies of Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova gravitates in three (to some extent intertwined) scientific fields in design:

- training in engineering and interior design (5 scientific publications. One of them is referenced in the Web of Science)
- design methods and current trends in furniture design and production (a book, two monographs and 9 scientific publications)
- interior architecture and urban design (5 scientific publications)

The studies shows a gradual expansion of research interests as well as the association with co-authors with different perspectives. The papers presented for the competition reveal at the same time the high relevance of the performed research in terms of the scientific specialty and the subjects taught, as well as the high personal competence of Assistant Prof. Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova.

4.3 Reflection of Candidate's Scientific Publications in Literature (known citations)

- Total – 18 citations.

By type of citations:

- There are **5 citations** in reference and indexed journals in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes (Web of Science and SCOPUS). There are 12 citations in journals with scientific peer review or in scientifically edited collective volumes;
- There is 1 review for a product in a specialized design publications

The high number of found citations in international articles shows the importance and interest in the research of Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova in global terms. I

believe that her works have a rich and adequate reflection in the scientific literature that goes beyond the requirements of the competition.

4.4 Contributions to the candidate's work (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

I agree with the contribution list provided by the candidate. To me, as an architect-scientist, the studies in interior architecture and in the types of seating furniture are particularly important as: the classifications of furniture created with textile techniques, and also the tendency of developing a new functional type of a chair - for working with a laptop, derived by Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova. In addition, as a teacher, I value a lot the great importance of systematizing factors in design, the creative processes and the types of design methods. I accept the scientific and applied contributions declared by the candidate as fully justified.

"The analysis of the chairs designed today proved that they were the result not only of the pursuit of greater convenience or functionality, but also of the new way of thinking and the new attitude towards the environment," wrote Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova in her monograph "Chairs at the Beginning of the 21st Century". It is in my opinion that the great merits and importance of the candidate's studies and works lie in the precise capture, evaluation and forecasting of the dynamic changes of modern times, their reflection in society, in education and in the evolution of engineering and interior design.

5. Assessment of the applicant's personal candidate

The book "A Research on Design Methods in the Structural Construction of Seating Furniture" and the monograph "Chairs at the Beginning of the 21st Century", as well as 7 other of the publications submitted for the competition, are independent author's production. The main habilitation work was in English, and was co-authored with Prof. Dr. Arch. Regina Raicheva, where according to the separation protocol 80% of the authorship belongs to Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova. Given the ambitious concept and the innovative content of the habilitation work, this collaboration is justified and appropriate, and the two researchers' perspectives are complementary and ensuring the high quality of the text. The collaborations, existing in some of the other papers are also sufficient and successful. They make it possible to fully cover the experiments conducted in the students' education, and to interdisciplinary and to follow border scientific fields.

I find that the proportion of authorship and co-authorship in the works presented for the competition by Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova reveals both her high professional and scientific training and her ability to succeed in a team. I consider the personal contribution declared in the documents to be convincingly proven and sufficient.

6. Critical remarks

A possible recommendation for the future work of Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova is towards expanding her interests in relation to Bulgarian studies and deepening her investigations in the field of Bulgarian design history and philosophy. It seems to me, that her work as one of a scholar with international publications and citations can contribute to the discovery of valuable features and parallels in the evolution of the design in our country.

However, my recommendations for future analyzes cannot in any way diminish the great achievements and merits of the candidate's scientific works of Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova.

It is obvious that the scientific, applied, applied and educational activity and results presented for the competition clearly exceed the minimum requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 5.13. General Engineering, Ergonomics and Industrial Design.

7. Personal impressions

I have witnessed the professional growth of Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova since 2012, when I myself started working as a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Forest Industry in the UF. She is an extremely responsible, helpful and considerate colleague. It is noteworthy that she has a high level of research and ethics cultivation in terms of publication and teaching. In addition, Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova is distinguished for her patience, positivism and inspiration, especially in her work with students of the University of Forestry.

I believe she demonstrates a thorough knowledge of interior and industrial design; of ergonomics; of artistic styles in the design; of furniture technologies and constructions; of graphic design and interior architecture. Her active work in national projects, and her participation in a number of international forums and collaborations, has also provided her publications with a contemporary research perspective and high relevance.

8. Conclusion

In connection with the above, I propose that Assistant Professor Dr. Desislava Ivanova Angelova be elected as an „Associate Professor“ in the discipline "Design History, Theory and Methodology" in the Professional field 5.13. General Engineering, scientific specialty "Ergonomics and Industrial Design".

Prepared the opinion:

Ph.D. Associate Professor Stela Borisova Tasheva,

Opinion delivered to: