

OPINION

regarding the materials for participation in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", field of higher education 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional direction (PD) 6.4. Veterinary Medicine, (scientific) specialization "Zoonoses and Organization of Veterinary Services", for the discipline of "Nutrition and Agronomy", for the needs of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, announced in the State Gazette no. 28 / 01.04.2025, procedure code: VM-AsP-0325-160

Candidates for participation in the competition are:

1. Chief Assistant Dr Hristina Stalinoa Neshovska, PhD

Member of the Scientific Jury with opinion: DSc Angel Petrov Vodenicharov, Professor of PN 6.4. Veterinary Medicine from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Thrakia University, Stara Zagora - retired.

1. Brief biography of the candidate.

Chief Assistant Dr. Hristina Neshovska was born on December 23, 1987, in Sofia. She completed her secondary education in 2005 at the Bulgarian general education school in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. In 2006, she began her studies at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Thracian University, where she graduated in 2011 with a Master's degree – professional qualification "veterinary doctor" (Master – veterinary doctor). From February 2010 to August 2010, she participated in the "Erasmus" program (student mobility) at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Veterinary Sciences in Brno, Czech Republic. Her professional career as a veterinarian began in the same year at a well-known veterinary center in Sofia, and after three years she joined the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency – Regional Directorate in Sofia (Chief Inspector). From 2015 to 2018, she also worked as Chief Inspector at the Sofia Health Inspectorate.

Since 2018, she has been a regular assistant at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Forestry. On October 27, 2021, she defended her dissertation on the topic "Study of the influence of HPP treatment on the quality and safety of raw dog food," as a result of which she was awarded the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" (Diploma No. LTU - ONS - 2021-149 / 27.10.2021). Almost a year later (October 18, 2022), she was appointed to the academic position of chief assistant, which she currently holds. Throughout 2023, she has served as a "chief assistant - postdoc" under the National Program for "Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers."

The candidate is proficient in spoken and written English, Slovak, and Czech, demonstrates good organizational skills and efficiency in executing assigned tasks, possesses excellent communication skills, and has the necessary competencies for working with basic computer applications.

2. Compliance of the submitted documents and materials of the candidate(s) with the requirements according to the Regulations for the Academic Staff Development in UF

The review of the documents and materials submitted by Dr. Nashovska showed that they comply with the requirements according to the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff in LTU. No plagiarism or untrustworthiness of the scientific data in the research was found. Regarding the fulfillment of mandatory indicators, it can be noted that the candidate not only meets them but also exceeds some of them, as for indicators G and D – with required values of 200 and 50, the fulfillment is 234.15 and 80, respectively.

3. Evaluation of the candidate's educational and teaching activities

As an assistant and later as a senior assistant, Hristina Neshovska participated fully in the preparation and conduct of exercises, seminar sessions, practical, semester exams in five disciplines: "Nutrition and Agronomy", "Quality and Safety of Animal Foods", "Veterinary Hygiene and Technologies in Animal Husbandry", "Public Veterinary Affairs and Legislation", and "Ecology". The listed disciplines cover a wide range of student education and are included in the curriculum of the "Veterinary Medicine" specialization for the educational qualification degree "Master". From the provided report on the educational workload for the last six academic years, it is evident that, with the exception of only the 2021/2022 academic year (on sick leave due to impending childbirth), the normative for classroom workload has been exceeded in all other years, with the highest value for this indicator recorded for the 2024/2025 academic year – 491 hours. Outside of classroom workload the average is around 30 hours per year. The teaching load in English language instruction is also impressive, especially for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic years – respectively 214 and 232 hours of classroom engagement. Dr. Neshovska is a co-author of the study programs for the subjects: "Nutrition and Agronomy" (according to the announced competition), "Veterinary Medical Hygiene and Technologies in Animal Husbandry," "Ecology," and "Quality and Safety of Animal Food," studied in the first and primarily in the second year.

4. Evaluation of the candidate's scientific research, applied research, and publication activity

According to the competition, 18 publications have been presented, of which 11 (61.1%) have been published in English in scientific journals that are refereed and indexed in world-

renowned scientific information databases. The remaining seven have been published in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review, six of which are also in English and one in Bulgarian. In addition, two separate books are presented: a habilitation work - a monograph (168 pages) and a book based on a defended dissertation (124 pages), along with the corresponding publishing details. The number of sole publications is 3 (16.6%), those where Dr. Neshovska is the first author are 7 (38.9%), the second author 4 (22.2%), and in the remaining 4, she is in third place. From this, two important conclusions can be made: 1) In 55.5% of the articles she is the sole or leading author, and 2) the maximum number of authors in collective publications is three, which is almost never seen in similar procedures, since usually the authors are often even many times more.

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

As a principal assistant – postdoctoral researcher, Dr. Neshovska has been involved in research activities under the National Program "Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers." Additionally, her involvement in organizing two annual scientific forums is noted: International Scientific Conference "Tradition and Modernity in Veterinary Medicine." 28–30.04.2023, Yundola, Bulgaria; International Scientific Conference "Tradition and Modernity in Veterinary Medicine." 26–28.04.2024, Yundola, Bulgaria.

4.2. Characteristics of the obtained scientific results

The analysis of the results obtained from the research is related to important issues concerning certain foods intended primarily for dogs, but also for other types of domestic animals. A small but significant part pertains to the analysis of veterinary legislation in food production, as well as contamination with heavy metals in marine aquaculture.

4.3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the literature (citations)

The results of the candidate's publications have been reflected in the scientific literature, with a total of 6 citations, of which 5 are in refereed and indexed scientific journals, series, and conference proceedings – Web of Science and SCOPUS, and 1 in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes. It is noteworthy that the points from citations from the first group are significantly more – 75, than the minimum national requirements – 15.

4.4. Distribution of the candidate's developments (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

The distribution of the contributions from the candidate's developments, presented as scientific (9), scientific-applied (5), and applied (3), is presented competently, which I accept without objections.

5. Assessment of the candidate's personal involvement

As already noted in point 4, in more than half of her publications (55.5%), Dr. Neshowska is the sole or lead author. This fact clearly demonstrates her active and dominant participation.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

I consider it appropriate to recommend participation in scientific forums abroad, in national (NFNI) and international scientific projects related to the candidate's professional and scientific profile. It is also important for her further career development to publish in international specialized journals with a high impact factor and impact rank. I would like to express my personal belief that these recommendations will become a reality in the near future, as Dr. Neshowska has the necessary potential to fulfill them.

7. Personal impressions

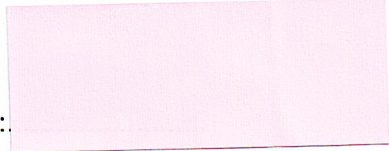
My personal impressions mainly relate to the candidate's student period at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Stara Zagora. She made an excellent impression not only in the educational process but also with her active participation in the 'Erasmus' program and the European Credit Transfer System, thanks to her very good language preparation, necessary motivation, and right attitude towards student mobility. In addition, I would add the very good assessment I received regarding her work as a practicing veterinarian in the aforementioned clinic. My impressions from the materials submitted for the competition, which were organized and presented neatly, are very good.

8. Conclusion

From the materials presented for the competition, it can be concluded that Dr. Neshovska is an established, highly qualified and respected university lecturer, with the potential to plan and conduct scientific research with significant results. This is presented as a promising specialist in the nutrition of domestic animals, as well as in other similar areas of veterinary medicine. The above gives me sufficient grounds to rank and give my positive assessment of the candidate. Taking into account the ranking and the assessment of the overall activity of the candidate, I propose that **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Hristina Stalinova Neshovska, Ph.D.**, take the academic position of Associate Professor in the discipline "Nutrition and Agronomy", from PD 6.4. Veterinary Medicine and I allow myself to recommend the members of the honorable Scientific Jury to also vote positively for its proposal for election by the Faculty Council.

06. 08. 2025

Stara Zagora

Prepared the opinion: 

/Prof. Dr. Angel Vodenicharov, DSci/