

OPINION

by Prof. Velizar Kostadinov Gochev, PhD,

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Of the materials submitted for the competition for appointment to an Associate Professor's Academic position at the University "Prof. Assen Zlatarov"- Burgas in higher education area

4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.2 Chemical sciences,
Scientific specialty of Biochemistry

1. General presentation of the materials submitted

By Order № P-266 of 15/09/2022 of the Rector of the University "Prof. Assen Zlatarov"- Burgas (UAZB) I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the appointment to the academic position of Associate Professor at the UAZB in higher education area 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.2 Biological sciences, scientific specialty of Biochemistry. The competition was announced in the State Gazette No. 45 of June 15, 2022 and on the web site of UAZB for the needs of Medical faculty. The only candidate is Chief Assist. Prof. Yordan Nikolaev Georgiev, PhD in Chemical Sciences. The complete set of materials submitted by Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD in electronic form is in accordance with the Regulation on the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria (RIASDARB) and the Regulations of the UAZB on the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Act.

The applicant has enclosed a list of 19 scientific publications and laboratory manual. They were not included in the dissertation thesis for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor and the materials for the competition for the appointment to an Associate Professor's academic position and all of the submitted materials are under review for the participation in the present competition.

The content of the applied documents and the manner of their organization allow me to define the procedure as lawful.

2. Short biography of the candidate

Yordan Georgiev graduated from University of Food Technologies in Plovdiv, acquiring higher education with a Bachelor's degree in Biotechnology with a professional qualification Engineer. He graduated "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv, acquiring higher education with a Master's degree in Biopharmaceutical Biochemistry. In 2018, Mr. Georgiev acquired PhD in 4.2 Chemistry, Bioorganic chemistry, chemistry of physiologically active substances at Institute of Organic Chemistry with Centre of Phytochemistry (IOCCPC). Professional career of Chief. Assit. Prof. Georgiev, PhD, for more than ten years, is tightly connected with The Laboratory of bioactive substances in Plovdiv, following the positions of chemist – analytical specialist, assistant professor and since 2018

Chief Assist. Prof. The candidate has three years teaching experience as a part-time Chief. Assist. Prof. in Biochemistry at Medical University of Plovdiv. During his career, Mr. Georgiev carried out series of scientific specializations and educational courses in Bulgaria and abroad in Sweden, Czech Republic, Poland, Norway and Japan.

The creative biography of the candidate is entirely in the field of the announced competition.

3. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

Assessment of the candidate's research activity

Group of indicators A: Indicator 1 Dissertation thesis for acquiring educational and scientific degree "doctor" – requirement of RIASDARB – 50 points, implementation by the candidate – 50 points.

Group V indicators (Sum of indicators 3 or 4): Indicator 3 Habilitation thesis – monograph or Indicator 4 Scientific publications that are published in journals refereed and indexed in the world scientific databases Scopus and Web of Sciences – requirements of RIASDARB – 100 points, implementation by the candidate – 145 points.

For participation in the competition and fulfillment of the indicator's requirement, Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD submits six original scientific publications, equal to habilitation thesis. Five of the papers are published in journals, belonging to quartile Q₁ (5 x 25 = 125 p.) and one paper in journal of quartile Q₂ (1 x 20 = 20 p.). All of the submitted papers are gathered in a sphere of bioactive polysaccharides, published in highly impact journal, such as *Drug Discovery, Plant Science, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Process Chemistry and Technology, Agronomy and Crop Science*. The major goal in the publications of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD are bioactive polysaccharides, isolated from Bulgarian medicinal plants, cyanobacteria, Antarctic yeasts, and traditional agricultural crops and analyses of immunomodulator, antioxidant and antitumor activities of newly isolated polysaccharides. The major impacts and scientific contributions of his scientific studies are the efforts to clarify the biochemical mechanisms of immunomodulating process by natural polysaccharides and the influence of polysaccharide structure on the bioactivities of the compounds.

Group of indicators G (sum of indicators from 5 to 10) - requirement of RIASDARB – 200 points, implementation by the candidate – 256 points.

Indicator 7 Scientific publications that are published in journals referred and indexed in the world scientific databases Scopus and Web of Sciences.

To fulfill the requirements of the indicator Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD submits 13 original scientific publications, divided into quartiles as follows: 7 in scientific journals of quartile Q₁; 3 in scientific journals of quartile Q₂ and 3 in scientific journals of quartile Q₄. All of the submitted papers developed and upgrade the major research topic of the candidate – isolation, chemical characteristics and analyzes of various bioactivities of natural bioactive compounds.

Group of indicators D (Sum of points in indicator 11) - requirement of RIASDARB – 100 points, implementation by the candidate – 46 points.

An important attestation for scientific achievements of researchers is the number of positive citations of their publications. Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD applies list of 234 positive citations in database of Scopus and Web of science, which proves that the published results by the candidate are widely accepted by an international scientists.

Group of indicators E (Sum of indicators from 12 to 20) - requirement of RIASDARB – 150 points, implementation by the candidate – 248 points.

Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD has been a participant in 13 research projects (10 national and 3 international projects) financially supported by National Scientific Fund by Bulgarian Ministry of Education and European Programs. He is the leader of 3 research projects, which proves his ability to plan, to organize and to manage whole scientific research and also expresses the candidate not only as researcher but also as administrative manager. The participation of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD in many scientific events by 12 oral presentations and 19 poster presentations demonstrates the high level of his communication and presentation abilities, which is very important for university professor. An important evidence for the candidate's scientific qualification is his reviewer activity, as for the period since 2018 to 2022 he had prepared more than 100 independent reviews for highly impact journals.

I define the contributions reached in the scientific publications of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD as scientific and scientifically applied with an original character, expanding the possibilities for application of natural bioactive polysaccharides in biomedicine. His scientific competence in a sphere of chemistry and biochemistry of natural polysaccharides is unboubtful.

Assessment of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activity

The major working activities of Mr. Georgiev, who works as Chief. Assist. Prof. in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences for 10 years, are focused mainly on scientific researches, but he also possesses teaching experience as university professor. For three academic years, Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD carried out 1428 academic hours as part-time assistant professor in Biochemistry at Medical University of Plovdiv. About 50 % of academic hours were carried out in English with human medicine, dental medicine and pharmacy students. Chief Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD is a sole author of an educational guide entitled "Biochemistry teaching aid for medical students – Self-preparation questionnaire for colloquiums in Biochemistry", which will definitely be useful for the students, especially in the self-testing process. In addition, the candidate was an invited lecturer on selected topics from the field of glycobiology for Bachelor, Master and PhD students at IOCCPC – BAS, Biological faculty at "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv, universities in the Czech Republic

and Sweden. Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD was a co-supervisor of the research diploma thesis of one student from UFT.

The teaching activity of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD is short, but it is at a high level, meeting all national and international standards for a university professor.

4. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

The personal contribution of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD for the realization of the presented publications is fully relevant to his experience and it is undoubtful.

5. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no critical notes on the content of the materials presented in the competition.

6. Personal impressions

I know Yordan Georgiev as his university professor on the Biotechnology of Medicinal Substances in the Master's program "Biopharmaceutical Biochemistry" and since then I have had wonderful impressions of the depth of his knowledge, the marked interest in research work and the positive attitude towards colleagues and teachers. In the following years, during our professional contacts, these positive impressions only strengthened.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD fulfill all the national and institutional requirements. The candidate has submitted a considerable number of scientific papers published after the defense of the PhD thesis and the appointment to Chief Assist. Professor's academic position. The candidate's works have original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition. The scientific and teaching qualification of Chief. Assist. Prof. Georgiev, PhD is undoubted. Getting acquainted with the materials and scientific output presented in the competition, performing analysis of their importance and the scientific and applied contributions contained therein, I find it justifiable to give my positive assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report with a proposal to the Faculty Council of the Medical Faculty for the appointment of Chief. Assist. Prof. Yordan Nikolaev Georgiev, PhD, to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University "Prof. Assen Zlatarov"- Burgas in higher education area 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional field 4.3 Chemical sciences (Biochemistry)

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Prepared by :

(Prof. V. Gochev, PhD)