

OPINION

By Prof. Dobroslav Stanimirov Kyurkchiev, PhD, Doctor of Medicine

Regarding competition for the Academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics; professional field 4.3. Biological sciences; scientific specialty "Immunology" announced for the needs of Department of Immunology, "Stefan Angeloff" Institute of Microbiology – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Documents of only one candidate have been accepted for participation in the competition –
Assist. Prof. Nikolina Mihaylova Mihaylova

I. Professional development

Assist. Prof. Nikolina Mihaylova Mihaylova graduates from the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Master's degree "Cell Biology and Pathology".

Her professional development is invariably connected with the Department of Immunology that is part of the "Stefan Angeloff" Institute of Microbiology – BAS, where she started and continues her career until now. She successively passes through all professional stages of trainee, PhD student, science fellow, and assistant professor. All these testify to the impressive consistency of a scientist that has found his place and feels stable and realized in it. Moreover, Mrs. Mihaylova is improving her professional skills by specializing in the Institute INSERM, Paris and her specialization is not a tourist deviation, as we sometimes observe, but is directly connected with her specific work in the Department of Immunology.

I consider that this consistency has key importance for the development of the scientist during the time when the fluidity and in most cases the meaningless movement between structures is considered as a positive.

II. Research activity

The main interests of the candidate are in the area of the selective suppression of the autoreactive cells in mouse models of different autoimmune diseases.

Given the "epidemy" of autoimmunity in the last decades, which affects around 8% of the population of the developing world, these approaches have key importance and the research on this field deserves the highest scientific evaluation. Furthermore, the results of this work are unequivocally and internationally acknowledged. The candidate represents 35 scientific

publications, 26 of which have an impact factor, as well as participation in the chapter of book.

There are presented 69 participations in congresses and conferences, Mrs, Mihaylova has the status of a "participant" in 12 national and 2 international projects. She is the leader of two scientific projects. The citations of Mrs. Mihaylova's scientific works are 256, as 102 of them are presented for participation in this competition, and are another proof of the value of her scientific work far beyond regional standards.

III. Meeting the necessary criteria

Mrs. Mihaylova more than twice meets the minimal needed criteria, as well as the additional ones. Her scientometric indicators set by impact factor and H-index are impressive. In general, the scientific presentation of the candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor" fully complies with current legislation and with the relevant regulations of the Institute of Microbiology "Stefan Angeloff" – BAS.

I know Nikolina Mihaylova since many years and she has always impressed me with her scientific objectivity, calmness, organization and efficiency. I consider that she is a real example of a scientist and pride in the structure in which she works. Moreover, I have a direct impression of the fact that her knowledge and skills are invaluable to doctoral and graduate students in the Department of Immunology.

Based on the fact that the candidate meets all the necessary requirements and has a scientific production with extremely high quality and recognized and evaluated by the world scientific community, I would strongly recommend the esteemed scientific jury to award the candidate the academic position of Associate Professor and I will vote accordingly.

22.06.2021

Prof. Dobroslav Kyurkchiev, MD, PhD, Dsci