

OPINION

for the competition of the academic position of Associated Professor presented to a scientific jury formed by Order No. 130 / 23.12.2019 of the Director of the Institute of Microbiology "Stephan Angeloff" at BAS

COMPETITION ANNOUNCED: Assistant Professor in the professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Virology), announced in issue. 93 / 26.11.2019 State Gazette for the needs of the Department of Virology, Institute of Microbiology (IMICB), BAS.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihail Vladimirov Iliev, Department of General and Industrial Microbiology, Faculty of Biology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "

An application for participation in the announced competition was submitted by a single candidate - Assistant Professor Dr. Ivanka Nikolova Nikolova, Head of the Department of Virology and Laboratory for Experimental Chemotherapy of Enterovirus Infections at the Department of Virology, BAN, IMikB. The applicant's documents are prepared administratively and are presented as required.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE CANDIDATE PROFESSIONAL CAREER

1.1. Education

Dr. Ivanka Nikolova was born on 12. 11. 1972 in the city of Burgas, where in 1990 she completed her secondary education at the Russian Language High School. From 1990 to 1995 he studied Biology and Chemistry at the Faculty of Biology at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski ", where he obtained his Master's Degree. In 1998, she was enrolled as a full-time PhD student in the Department of Virology with a thesis on "Resistance and dependent mutants of the Cocksackie B1 virus to the picornaviral inhibitor disoxaril". In 2004 he successfully defended his dissertation work and obtained his scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in the field of Virology.

1.2. PROFESSIONAL CAREER

In 1995 Ivanka Nikolova was appointed to the position of Biologist-Specialist in the Microbial Genetics Section at IMikB, BAS until the beginning of her full-time doctoral studies in 1998. After completing the term of the doctorate, she was re-appointed to position at the Virology Section, IMICB. In 2004, she was appointed to the post of Associate Degree III at the Virology Section, IMICB. Since 2008 she has been the Assistant Professor at the Virology Department, and since 2012 she has been the Head of the Laboratory for Experimental Chemotherapy for Enterovirus Infections. Since 2016 she is currently acting Head of the Virology Department.

In the course of her education and professional development Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova has acquired professional experience and skills in two main areas: research and teaching. The professional realization of the candidate so far is related to the topic of the competition and reflects current and perspective directions of virology, in particular in the field of experimental chemotherapy of viral infections.

Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova has developed as a full scientist at the Institute of Microbiology where she has actively participated in scientific life, she is the secretary of the scientific seminar on Virology, the secretary of the Acad Foundation. "Prof. Dr. Stepfan Angeloff" and is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria. In 2003 she was rightfully nominated and won the Best Scientist Award in Bulgaria in the field of microbiology.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR PARTICIPATION:

2.1 NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSOCIATED PROFESSOR

Conclusion on item 2.1: The candidate Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova meets the national requirements for Associated Professor.

2.2. ADDITIONAL IMICB REQUIREMENTS

A total of 25 scientific papers were presented (3 of them - for the doctorate degree). 13 of the remaining 22 scientific papers are in the journals with an impact factor, with the candidate's total impact factor being 26.23. In 7 of these publications, the candidate is the first author. The number of citations (excluding self-citations and related citations) is 133. Evidence has been provided for 36 submissions at international and national scientific forums. The project commitment of the applicant is expressed in its participation as a member of the team of 9 projects, 3 of which are international, 4 funded by the NSF and 2 financed by BAS. Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova is the manager of two projects.

Conclusion on item 2.2: The candidate Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova meets the additional requirements of IMicB, BAS.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAIN FIELDS AND SCIENTIFIC WORK OF THE CANDIDATE

Research and scientific interests of Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova can be grouped in two main areas, namely: A) experimental chemotherapy for viral infections, B) genotyping and genetic analysis of various DNA viruses (cytomegalovirus and papilloma viruses).

The basis for the applicant's research contributions may be as follows: demonstration of the development of resistant enterovirus mutants in vivo against disoxaril; introducing a set of phenotype markers to characterize the viral drug mutants; the introduction of an algorithm for testing selective inhibitors of enterovirus replication according to the scheme of sequential alternative introduction; large-scale screening of promising substances is anti-enterovirus activity; cytomegalovirus DNA testing in patients is an unidentified eye disease; genotyping of HPV DNA in patient samples diagnosed with throat cancer; studies on genomic changes in cervical precancerous lesions and tumors induced by different types of human papillomaviruses from Bulgarian patients by Microarray CGH analysis.

4. TEACHING ACTIVITIES

As a part-time lecturer for the period 2014 - 2019 at the New Bulgarian University, Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova teaches a lecture course in virology as well as practical classes in virology and genetics. At the same time she is a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Physics of Sofia University, where she lectures on viral and bacterial infections of the eye. In the period 2008 - 2010 Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova was honored for taking practical exercises in Molecular Virology at the Faculty of Biology at Sofia University.

CONCLUSION

In terms of volume, content and quality, the presented scientific production and the active teaching activity of the sole candidate in the announced competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova meets the requirements of the ZRASRB, its Regulations and the additional requirements of IMICB.

In conclusion, I can summarize in this opinion that the complex evaluation of the materials provided, as well as the overall activity of the applicant, Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova gives me a reason to be convinced to propose to the Scientific Jury and the Honorable Scientific Council of the Institute of Microbiology at BAS to choose Assist. Prof. Ivanka Nikolova, Ph.D., for Associated Professor in the professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Virology), announced for the needs of the Department of Virology at IMICB, BAS.

Prof. Dr. Michael Iliev