

REVIEW

**on the competition for acquiring the academic position “Associate Professor”
in the professional field 5.13. „General Engineering”, in the academic
discipline „Technological Entrepreneurship”
announced in the State Gazette, issue 31/19.04.2022
candidate: Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ilhanova Ahmedova**

**Reviewer: Prof. DSc. Eng. Krassimir Ivanov Enimanev, holding the position
of „Professor” in the professional field 5.13. „General Engineering” at the
Department of „Business Development and Innovations” in the Faculty of
Business and Management, „Angel Kanchev” University of Ruse**

1. Basic information about the competition and applicant’s short professional biography

The competition for the academic position „Associate Professor” was announced to meet the needs of the Department „Industrial Management”, Technical University of Varna. Only one candidate submitted the required set of documents– Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ilhanova Ahmedova. She was born in 1983 in the town of Dobrich. In 2000 she graduated from the Vocational High School of Tourism „P.K. Yavorov” – Dobrich with a diploma of outstanding performance - excellent and acquired vocational qualification „Operator in the production of bread, bakery and confectionery products”.

In 2008 Sibel Ahmedova obtained a bachelor’s degree in the specialty „Finance” and a professional qualification of „Economist” at VTU „St. St. Cyril and Methodius”, the city of Veliko Tarnovo.

In 2009 she completed an educational-qualification degree „Master” in the specialty „Finances. Enterprise Finances” at VTU „St. St. Cyril and Methodius”, the city of Veliko Tarnovo.

From 2012 to 2015 she was studying for the educational and scientific degree „Doctor” in the scientific specialty 05.02.21 „Organisation and Management of Production (Industry) ” at TU-Varna. In 2017 she defended her doctoral dissertation titled „Study into the impact of the programme support upon the competitiveness of the small and medium-sized enterprises (on the example of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Turkey).

At the beginning of 2013 she was appointed as an assistant in the Department of „Industrial Management” at TU-Varna. At the end of 2020 she was re-appointed as a chief assistant in the same department, where she continues to teach fundamental disciplines such as Technological Entrepreneurship, Innovation Management, Business Financial Management, Finance, etc.

2. General description of the submitted materials

For the purposes of the present competition, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova has submitted 18 scientific works, of which 15 publications, one monograph, one university textbook and one course manual.

The candidate’s scientific research and applied activities are conducted in the areas of: **technological entrepreneurship and innovations** – 7 publications - [D.7.1.], [D.7.2.], [D.7.4.], [D.8.3.], [D.8.4.], [D.8.7.], [D.8.9.]; **enterprise competitiveness**– 4 publications -[D.7.3.], [D.7.5.] [D.8.5], [D.8.6] and **financial management** – 4 publications- [D.7.6], [D.8.1.], [D.8.2.], [D.8.8.].

From the total number of the publications presented hereto fifteen are written in English, and 3 of the scientific works are printed in Bulgarian (a monograph, a textbook, and a course manual). Five of the publications are refereed and indexed in the **Scopus** database [D.7.1., D.7.2., D.7.3., D.7.4., D.7.5.], and one in the **Web of science** [D.7.6.]. Presented, further, for critical evaluation are nine publications in scientific journals that are non-refereed and non-indexed in world-renown databases of scientific research [D.8.1., D.8.2., D.8.3., D.8.4., D.8.5., D.8.6., D.8.7., D.8.8., D.8.9.]. On the whole, the vast majority of the proposed publications– 14 pieces are single-authored, and only 2 pcs. are co-authored, with Dr. Ahmedova being the second author. The teaching material subject to review is also developed in co-authorship– 2 pcs. (a textbook and a course manual).

According to the information provided, the cited reference count includes 100 citations of publications: 5 in scientific publications in refereed and indexed in the **Web of Science** databases, 12 citations in collective volumes with international scientific review and 2 in non-refereed journals.

For her participation in the present competition, the candidate has also submitted published teaching materials – 2 pcs. (a textbook and a course manual for laboratory exercises), which are in co-authorship and are intended as an additional medium of instruction in the discipline of „Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship”.

Dr. Sibel Ahmedova is a member of the well-established and highly-regarded scientific organization in our country – The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, the Territorial Organisation of Scientific and Technical Unions-Varna.

The analysis of the candidate’s monograph, scientific research and applied developments, and other materials mentioned above, reveals that the basic requirements of the Regulations on the conditions and order for holding academic positions at the Technical University of Varna are fully met. Moreover, it is readily apparent from Table 1 that the candidate significantly exceeds in some groups of indicators.

Table 1.

<i>A group of indicators</i>	<i>Content by indicators</i>	<i>Minimum requirements for holding the AP of „Associate Professor”</i>	<i>Candidate points</i>
<i>A</i>	Indicator 1	50	50
<i>B</i>	Indicator 2	-	-
<i>C</i>	Indicator 3 and 4	100	100
<i>D</i>	Sum of the indicators from 5 to 11	200	390
<i>E</i>	Sum of the indicators from 12 to 15	50	100
<i>F</i>	Sum of the indicators from 16 to 28	-	80
<i>G</i>	Indicator 29	30	121
	Total:	430	841

It is evident from the data reported in Table 1 that the candidate considerably surpasses the minimum requirements stated in the ADASRB for holding the academic position of „Associate Professor” in the professional field 5. Technical Sciences.

3. General characteristics of the candidate’s scientific research and applied activities.

The scientific research and applied activities of Ch. Assist. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova aligned with the following areas:

- **technological entrepreneurship and innovations** – 7 publications - [D.7.1.], [D.7.2.], [D.7.4.], [D.8.3.], [D.8.4.], [D.8.7.], [D.8.9.];
- **enterprise competitiveness**– 4 publications -[D.7.3.], [D.7.5.] [D.8.5], [D.8.6]
- **financial management** – 4 publications- [D.7.6], [D.8.1.], [D.8.2.], [D.8.8.].

Compiled is a full list of the candidate’s participations in 2 national projects, funded by NP „Young Scientists and Postdoctoral candidates” and 3 intra-university projects of the „Entrepreneurship and innovations” club within the department of „Industrial Management”. It is worth pointing out that the candidate was awarded with a certificate of “the best and most dedicated lecturer” on account of her invaluable contribution not only to the development and establishment of the „Entrepreneurship and innovations” club, but also as a recognition of her remarkable cooperative work carried out in joint collaboration with the university undergraduates.

Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova has made a notable contribution to the improvement of the installed educational version of EnterpriseOne ERP system and its upgrade to 2020 SP15 version currently available in the laboratory 507NUK, part of the facilities and equipment resources pertaining to the department of „Industrial Management” at TU-Varna.

The provided evidence points to the candidate’s productive participation in 5 international conferences in Belgrade – Republic of Serbia, Sevastopol-Russia, Singapore, Yalta/Crimea- Russia.

The scientific production of the only candidate-Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova gives me sufficient grounds to claim that she is an authoritative academic lecturer and researcher in the field of the announced competition and has the necessary qualities for the acquisition of the AP of „Associate Professor”.

4. Evaluation of the candidate’s pedagogical approaches, teaching and lecturing activities

The candidate’s training practice amounts to almost 10 years of experience and an intensive teaching work in the field of:

1. Technological Entrepreneurship, for undergraduates in their EQD „Bachelor”, course 2, lectures;

2. Fundamentals of Finance, for the EQD „Bachelor”, course 2, lectures and laboratory exercises;
3. Business Financial Management, for the EQD „Bachelor” course 3, lectures and laboratory exercises;
4. Innovation Management, for the EQD „Bachelor”, course 4, seminars and course work;
5. Industrial Enterprise Competitiveness, for the EQD „Bachelor”, course 4, laboratory exercises and course work;
6. Regional development, for the EQD „Bachelor”, course 3, lectures and seminars;
7. Analysis and Diagnostics of Business Activities, for the EQD „Bachelor”, course 3, lectures and laboratory exercises
8. Technology Venture Management, for the EQD „Master”, course 2, lectures
9. Entrepreneurial Network Management, for the EQD „Master”, course 2, lectures
10. Financial Management and Venture Capital Funds, for the EQD „Master”, course 2, lectures and exercises

The candidate took part in the development of 3 curricular programmes in the field of Technological Entrepreneurship, Fundamentals of Finance and Business Financial Management.

For the past 3 years, Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova reports a workload of 1605,7 hours including: 653 hours of lectures, 94,1 hours of seminars, 731,3 hours of laboratory exercises and 127,3 hours of course work/course project in the EQD „Bachelor”. For participation of the competition, the candidate had signed up for 121 hours of lectures delivered in „Bachelor” degree programmes taught in Bulgarian.

Undertaken were two staff mobilities for teaching at the International Balkan University, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia (2021) and Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University (2021), where the candidate delivered a series of lectures on the subjects of entrepreneurship, competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, and financial management with a total workload of 20 lecture hours altogether.

5. Main scientific and scientifically applied contributions.

For participation in the competition, along with the publications in various refereed and non-refereed journals, the candidate has also presented a monograph entitled: „Regional competitiveness as a factor in the development of the North-Eastern region” (C.3), the principal focus of which is on the regional competitiveness and the factors for its improvement. This highly detailed study explores the tools designed to enhance NER’s regional competitive performance on the basis of the best practices in this field of scientific research in the Republic of Turkey. The monograph is 126 pages long and consists of three chapters. The subject matter is straightforward, perfectly coherent with consistent flow of paragraphs and sections, and adheres to the established requirements for such a type of publication. Thereupon, the crucial role and true significance of regional competitiveness is conveyed clearly and unambiguously, and the possibility of its enhancement is fully disclosed. The nature and extent of the candidate’s monograph contributions are pointed out in the consolidated groups of all the significant contributions of the Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova, with regard to:

Scientific contributions

- the fundamental concept of regional development and competitiveness are carefully systematized (C.3);

- a new definition of the concept of „regional competitiveness” is proposed on the grounds of the theoretical analysis of its nature and distinctive characteristics (C.3);

- complete research is conducted into the main methods of analysis and evaluation of investment decisions and their advantages and disadvantages are efficiently summarised (D.8.2);

Scientifically- applied contributions

- advanced is a model designed to produce an improvement in the regional competitiveness, on the basis of which some practical guidelines are developed for a more increased competitive performance of the Northeastern Region (C.3);

- a profound insight is provided into the prevalent entrepreneurial attitudes among the students of the specialties IM and TEI at TU-Varna and their awareness of the opportunities to start their own businesses and/or implement their own entrepreneurial ideas (D.7.4);

- a closer look is taken into the state of the digital transformation, implementation and utilization of digital technologies in the enterprise financial and business process management (D.7.3, D.7.5, D.8.8);

- the sources of technological entrepreneurship and innovation funding for the Bulgarian enterprises are analysed, and practical guidelines are suggested as to the creation and maintenance of a flexible innovation system at the national level (D.8.4);

- the importance of the technology transfer, clusters, venture capital, and research and development as a tool for enhanced growth and enterprise competitiveness in Bulgaria is critically examined (D.7.1, D.8.1, D.8.5, D.8.6., D.8.7);

- formulated are some guidelines for improved innovation activity of the enterprises in the food and beverage industry (D.7.1);

- summarized are the measures to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the economy of the Northeastern Region (D.8.3);

- put forward are specific recommendations for the increase in the flow of foreign investments in Bulgaria (D.7.6)

- systematised are recommendations and guidelines for the support of family-owned businesses in Bulgaria (D.8.9)

Applied contribution

- developed is a model for enhanced regional competitive performance of the Northeastern Region, Republic of Bulgaria. (C.3)

6. The relevance of the contributions to the science and practice.

From my perspective, the personal contribution of the candidate Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova to help achieve such outstanding results from her pedagogical approaches in teaching, her scientific research and applied activities is commendable and indisputable. It should be strongly emphasized that the obtained scientific results, concrete practical proposals, and the citation count are largely due to the personal effort, unique ideas, appropriate expertise and organisational skills and qualities of the Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ahmedova. It is also worth noting that the quantitative indicators of the

criteria for acquiring the academic position of „Associate Professor” are not only fully met but also exceed in quantity.

7. Critical observations and recommendations.

No serious shortcomings, inadequacies or irrelevancies might be identified in the materials presented for participation in the competition for holding the academic position of „Associate Professor”. My specific recommendations, however, to the candidate are as follows:

- To keep up the intellectual effort and persistence in carrying out extensive research and publication activity in renowned, refereed journals both at home and abroad;
- To venture her informed opinion stating very clearly her well-grounded critical point of view and professional expertise, especially in the prospective development of various teaching and pedagogical materials (university textbooks, manuals), single-authored and/or co-authored, to gain full recognition both in the immediate academic circles and beyond.
- To work more closely with graduate students, doctoral students and young scientists so as to create a team that has the professional capacity to achieve even more impressive results.

8. Reviewer’s personal impressions and definitive statement.

I do not have the privilege of being personally acquainted with the candidate Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova, and yet being a member of the scientific jury that was selected to consider her previous acquisition of the academic position of „Chief Assistant Professor”, I got the distinct impression that she is an excellent researcher and inspired lecturer.

On closer acquaintance with the scientific works submitted by the candidate Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova, the prominent contributions therein, as well as on the basis of all other presented achievements in her teaching activities and the close correspondence with the ADASRB requirements, I firmly believe that she is a respected lecturer and a highly qualified specialist, showing consistency, perseverance and precision in all aspects of her research activity that is in full compliance with the regulative criteria and indicators for evaluation of candidate participation in a competition for acquiring the academic position of „Associate Professor”.

CONCLUSION

The complex evaluation of the candidate’s pedagogical and scientifically applied activities gives me grounds for a highly positive assessment of her entire research output. Taking into consideration that the necessary quantitative indicators specified in the Regulations on the conditions and order for holding academic positions at the Technical University of Varna are fully met and even significantly outperformed, I strongly recommend the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively for awarding the Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sibel Ahmedova the academic position of „Associate Professor” in the professional field 5.13. General Engineering, in the scientific specialty „Technological Entrepreneurship”.

Date: July, 2022

Заличена информация
по Регламент (ЕС)
2016/679

Rev
Prof. DSc. Eng. K. Enimanev