

## STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetoslav Antonov Georgiev, MD, Medical University–Varna, of the materials provided for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine, scientific specialty "Rheumatology"

*Subject:* competition for the occupation of the academic position "Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine, scientific specialty "Rheumatology" at MU-Plovdiv

Pursuant to Order No. R-2383/11.07.2024 and letter No. R-1700/12.07.2024 from the Vice-Rector NID of MU - Plovdiv, materials were provided for the preparation of opinions regarding the announcement of a procedure for two academic positions. Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine, specialty "Rheumatology", at the Medical University - Plovdiv with two candidates - Assoc. Sevdalina Lambova, MD and Assoc. Rositsa Karalilova, MD.

### **I. Analysis of the candidate's career profile**

The candidate for the relevant competition, **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sevdalina Nikolova Lambova, PhD**, is a member of the academic staff of the Department of "Propaedeutics of Internal Diseases" at the Faculty of Medicine of the Medical University of Plovdiv.

Associate Professor Dr. Sevdalina Nikolova Lambova was born on May 25, 1979 in the town of Karlovo. Graduated from medicine in 2003. at Thrace University - Faculty of Medicine, Stara Zagora. Since 2004, she began training as a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Propaedeutics of Internal Medicine, MU - Plovdiv, UMBAL "St. Georgi" EAD Plovdiv. Since 2004, she has specialized in the Rheumatology Clinic at the UMBAL "St. Georgi" EAD Plovdiv, having recognized specialties in "Rheumatology" (since 2015) and "Internal Diseases" (since 2016). Since 2014, she has a master's degree in "Public Health and Health Management". From 13.03.2007 on, she is an assistant at the Department of

Propaedeutics of Internal Medicine, and since 17.12.2018 – chief assistant. From 15.02.2022 holds the position of Associate Professor of Rheumatology in the same Department.

In 2009, she worked on a scientific project after winning a scholarship from EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) at the Clinic of Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology, Kerchhof Hospital, Bad Nauheim, Germany, where on 16.12.2011. She defended a doctoral dissertation, recognized by the Medical University of Plovdiv in 2013. Since 2016 until now, she is the Head of the Department of Rheumatology at the "St. Mina" EOOD Plovdiv. Associate Professor Dr. Sevdalina Lambova speaks English (C1) and German (B2).

## II. General description of the submitted materials for the competition

Assoc. Prof. Lambova has presented extremely precisely prepared documents that reflect her high level of professionalism and attention to detail. In the presented self-assessment, the candidate convincingly demonstrates that she not only meets, but also significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activities, necessary for occupying the academic position "Professor" in scientific field 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine.

The analysis of the individual groups of indicators shows that Assoc. Prof. Lambova has serious scientific achievements published in renowned international and national journals, as well as a significant contribution to the education and training of students and young specialists. In addition, the candidate has an active role in scientific research projects and participation in international scientific forums, which further emphasizes her high academic and scientific level. These indicators clearly testify to her considerable competence and willingness to occupy the position of "Professor", further contributing to the development of medical science and education.

Табл. 1. Наукометрични показатели и преподавателска дейност

Group	Indicators	Requirements for Professor	Assoc. Prof. Lambova
A	1. Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"	50	50 p.
B	2. Dissertation work for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"		
C	3. Habilitation thesis - monograph 4. Habilitation work - scientific publications (not less than 10) in publications that are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific	100	100 p.

Group	Indicators	Requirements for Professor	Assoc. Prof. Lambova
	information		
D	5. A published monograph that is not presented as the main habilitation thesis 6. A published book based on a protected dissertation work for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" or for the award of a scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" 7. Publications and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information 8. Publications and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes 9. Published chapter of a collective monograph	250 points	1325,2
E	10. Citations or reviews in scientific publications referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes 11. Citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes 12. Citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals	300 points	8185 p.
F	3. Obtained scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" 14. Supervision of a successfully defended doctoral student (n is the number of co-supervisors of the corresponding doctoral student) 15. Acquired medical specialty 16. Participation in a national scientific or educational project 17. Participation in an international scientific or educational project 18. Management of a national scientific or educational project 19. Management of an international scientific or educational project 20. Published university textbook or textbook that is used in the school network 21. Published university textbook or textbook that is used on the school network 22. Training of interns, specialists and doctoral students (seminars and practical classes)	140 points	223.1
G	Teaching activity: Study load (lectures and exercises): Academic position:	200 points (for the last 2 y. X 1 т/час) 200 points (Assoc. Prof. – 100 p. for 1 year.)	720 ah = 720 p. + 225 p.
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>1240</b>	<b>10 828.3 p.</b>

### III. Evaluation of the scientific works of the candidate for the overall academic development

✓ General characteristics of scientific production and publication activity

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is the author or co-author of 77 full-text publications (of which 67 are referenced in Scopus or Web of Science). The total impact factor of the full-text publications of Assoc. Dr. S. Lambova is 110.195, and the impact factor of the published scientific reports/summaries is 207.4.

In the current competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Lambova participated with 23 full-text refereed articles (11 with an impact factor), 14 reports and scientific announcements/summaries published in refereed journals, 6 full-text publications in non-refereed journals.

Assoc. Prof. Lambova has presented evidentiary material according to previous procedures for ESD "Doctor", AP "Docent".

✓ **Scientific activity - dissemination and application of the candidate's scientific and practical achievements among the scientific community**

Assoc. Prof. Lambova's scientific contributions presented in the reference cover a wide and diverse scientific issue, which is aimed at current and significant aspects both in general medical practice and in the specialized field of rheumatology. These contributions fully correspond to the requirements and specifics of the announced competition, demonstrating in-depth knowledge and an innovative approach in addressing key medical issues.

Assoc. Prof. Lambova's scientific works include original research that contributes significant discoveries, as well as confirmatory and applied aspects that have direct relevance to practical medicine. A significant part of the results have been published in prestigious international journals, which are indexed in world-renowned databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. In addition, many of these publications are included in high Impact Factor (IF) journals indexed in Clarivate Analytics, which is further proof of the relevance and quality of her research work. This emphasizes that Assoc. Prof. Lambova is an active and recognized researcher in her field, with contributions that are relevant not only at the national but also at the international level.

The main specialized scientific areas of development and research activity are focused on the following directions: scleroderma, capillaroscopy, digital ulcerations in systemic connective tissue diseases, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, etc.

✓ **Participation in the implementation and management of projects**

Associate Professor Dr. Sevdalina Lambova participates in scientific and educational projects. The following projects are participating in the current competition:

1. KP-06-H-33/9 Diagnostic and prognostic significance of new biomarkers in osteoarthritis and potential for disease-modifying therapeutic interventions, "Scientific Research" Fund at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Culture, headed by Prof. Dr. Balik Jambazov, 2019-2022. (Enclosed official note from PU "Paisiy Hilendarski") - successfully finalized and reported.
2. Participation as an academic mentor in educational project BG05M2OP001-2.013-0001 "Student practices" - phase 2 (attached additional agreement No. P-558/15.09.2020).
3. International scientific project - COST Action CA20104 "Network on evidence-based 7 physical activity in old age".
4. International scientific project COST Action CA21122 "PROMoting Geriatric Medicine IN countries where it is still eMERging" (Confirmation letter from MES, Ex. №0423- 12/07.05.2024)

✓ **Scientific and creative achievements (scientific authority)**

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Associate Professor Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is the editor for the "Scleroderma" section of the journal Current Rheumatology Reviews (referenced in Web of Science and Scopus; impact factor for 2022: 1.5). From 2020 Assoc. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is a member of the editorial board of Life magazine (referenced Web of Science and Scopus; impact factor for 2022: 3.2). Service notes from the publishers are attached. Assoc. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova has experience as a reviewer in international refereed rheumatology publications. Attached is a reference to conducted reviews from the Web of Science database and certificates from some journals. Assoc. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is a reviewer for the EULAR congress (European League Against Rheumatism) in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023. Attached are copies of the lists of reviewers for the last two years 2022 and 2023.

### ✓ **Guide for PhD students**

Assoc. Prof. Lambova is the supervisor of two successfully defended doctoral students and of one full-time doctoral student in training. She is the head of training for residents in rheumatology. She participates as a presenter in training courses, incl. at the "Capillaroscopy" workshop during the national conferences and congresses of rheumatology 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

### **IV. Evaluation of the monographic work**

In the competition for AP "Professor" Assoc. Prof. Lambova presents a monograph on "Capillaroscopy in rheumatology - what should we know?" with a volume of 216 pages. The monographic work includes 12 main chapters, 112 figures and 15 tables. The monograph meets the criteria according to the the Law on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, being reviewed by three qualified persons, and the data, the need to share the knowledge and experience gained over the years in the application of capillaroscopy, are a contribution to rheumatology practice.

Assoc. Prof. Lambova's monograph is carefully structured in accordance with academic requirements and meets all criteria for volume and content. The book demonstrates significant scientific value by presenting original data supported by authored capillaroscopic images that enrich and visually support the theoretical concepts presented. The expanded content of the monograph is accompanied by a comprehensive bibliography, in which the author refers to a wide range of scientific sources, which further emphasizes the depth and seriousness of the research. This approach shows not only an excellent awareness of the subject, but also an ability to critically analyze and integrate existing knowledge.

In conclusion, the monograph written by Assoc. Prof. Lambova is a valuable teaching aid with clearly expressed scientific and applied value. It not only contributes to the expansion of knowledge in the field of capillaroscopy, but also serves as a reliable resource for professionals and students interested in this field. The paper is a significant contribution to the medical literature that offers important directions for practical application and future research.

## **V. Reflection (citation) of the candidate's publications in the national and foreign literature**

The scientific works of Assoc. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova have been cited in a number of refereed publications with an impact factor, including by leading experts in the field. According to the Scopus database (accessed June 2024), the publications have been cited 815 times, the h-index of Associate Professor Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is 15. A reference from the Scopus database is attached.

Associate Professor Sevdalina Lambova participated in the competition with 552 citations, of which 533 citations in refereed journals (Web of Science and Scopus), 19 citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes. Attached is a report from NACID for 552 citations and a report on the impact factor of the cited articles from the list for participation in the competition.

The reference provided by Prof. Lambova testifies to H-index 15 in Scopus, and a check made in the referenced database Web of Science shows H-index 13. I think that the presented citations and references testify to the high publication image of the candidate, cover and even multiple times exceed the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the Medical University - Plovdiv and the Law on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria.

## **VI. Complex, qualitative evaluation of the teaching-methodical and teaching activities**

Under the guidance of Assoc. Prof. Lambova, two doctoral students have successfully defended their thesis, and one full-time doctoral student is in the process of studying and writing her own dissertation. She actively participated in the training of rheumatology fellows as the head of their rheumatology specialization, demonstrating high professionalism and commitment to the development of young specialists in the field. Prof. Lambova is also a key figure in training initiatives in rheumatology, leading training courses, including the workshop "Capillaroscopy" during the national conferences and congresses in rheumatology in the last few years (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 ).

In addition, she co-authored a module in an online capillaroscopy course organized by the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR), highlighting her contribution to international scientific training. In recognition of her merits and expertise, Assoc. Dr. Lambova has been selected as a member of the organizing committee and lecturer of the first

capillaroscopy course in Bulgaria under the auspices of EULAR, which will be held in September 2024. This initiative will lay the foundation for new standards in medical education and will establish Bulgaria as a center for advanced research in this field.

In addition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sevdalina Lambova is actively engaged in the training of two specialists. Under her guidance, they have the opportunity to develop the necessary practical skills and knowledge that allow them to establish themselves as competent and confident professionals in their field. The report on the teaching activity in the last two years shows that Prof. Lambova is charged with 225 teaching hours in the training of interns, specialists and doctoral students, and 720 teaching hours in lectures and exercises. Her active role in the training of new scientists and specialists underlines her dedication to the academic community and her significant contribution to the development of scientific potential in the field.

## **VII. Critical notes and recommendations**

I have no specific remarks regarding the work of Assoc. Prof. Lambova. In her further work, I would recommend that she share with a larger audience her scientific works, including the habilitation work presented in the form of a monograph. Also, it would be useful to expand its collaboration with research teams in the country to continue enriching its scientific contribution.

## **VIII. An overall assessment of the applicant's suitability**

With this statement, I give a **POSITIVE** assessment to Associate Professor Sevdalina Lambova, PhD, in relation to the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3, respectively, to the requirements under Art. 2b, para. 5 of the Law on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the requirements specific to MU - Plovdiv in terms of areas for units with clinical activity, defined in the Regulations for Academic Development at the Medical University - Plovdiv.

## **IX. Conclusion**

Based on the detailed analysis of the teaching, development and research activities of Associate Professor Sevdalina Lambova, PhD, I can confirm that the candidate meets the



mandatory and specific conditions, requirements and scientometric criteria for the academic position "PROFESSOR" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine, specialty "Rheumatology", according to the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the Medical University - Plovdiv and the Law on the development of the academic staff of the Republic of Bulgaria. I give a **POSITIVE** evaluation of the application.

30 August 2024.

Varna

Reviewer:.....

/Assoc. Prof. Tsvetoslav Georgiev, PhD/

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