

REVIEW

to: the resources submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of „associate professor“ at the Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“

by: Prof. Dr. Boyan Lyubomirov Durankev, professor emeritus at VUZF

member of the Scientific Jury in the competition for the academic position of „associate professor“ in the field of higher education 3. „Social, economic and legal sciences“, professional field 3.8. Economics (Marketing - Product Innovations), for the needs of the Department of „Marketing and MIE“ at the „Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences“ at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, announced in the State Gazette - issue 98 of 19.11.2024.

According to report No. RD-21 -96/16.01.2025 from the Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences and with Order RD-22-71 of 17.01.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ for the approval of the Scientific Jury for the selection of „Associate Professor“, I am appointed as **a member of the Scientific Jury**, and by decision of the first meeting of the jury I am obliged to prepare **a review** of the competition.

1. General presentation of the candidates and the materials received

One candidate submitted documents in the announced competition, namely **Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova**.

The documentation presented is in the required volume and complies with the Academic Staff Development Act and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. The documentation is very well prepared, which significantly facilitates the preparation of the review.

2. Presentation of the candidate for participation in the competition

Katerina Kozludzhova, PhD, is at the beginning of the „mature“ academic age, when **researchers are both more productive and more in-detail**.

The candidate was born on 12.11.1980. She completed **her secondary education** in 1999 at the elite Ivan Vazov Language High School in Plovdiv, where she studied English. During the period 2000-2003, she studied at the International College - Albena (currently Higher School of Management) and Hoge Hotel school Maastricht, Netherlands majoring in Hospitality Management, where she obtained **a bachelor's degree**. A new step in her academic

development followed - during the period 2008-2010 she studied at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ field „Corporate Management“, where she also obtained **a master's degree** with diploma No. 038090. She climbed even higher in her academic development during the period 2016-2018, again at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, where she received the educational and scientific degree „**doctor**“ with a defended dissertation on the modern topic „Market implementation of innovations in the software industry“ (Diploma No. 1000317, issued on May 21, 2018).

I would like to take the opportunity to describe in more detail the training of the candidate Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova, because it **illustrates a logical sequence** in a certain scientific field - „Economics“ and more specifically in the sister specialties „Marketing“ and „Management“, to which the issues of „Market Realization“ and „Innovations“ gravitate.

Work is no less intense and reveals the architecture of a systemic development. During the period 1999-2000 she was an English teacher at 45 Primary School „Dimitar Talev“ - Plovdiv. In 2003-2004 she attended an internship program for working with clients at One of „The Leading Hotels of the World“ - The Grove - London, United Kingdom. Later, fate took her even further when, from 2004 to 2008, she worked as a team supervisor at Marco. Island Marriott Resort - Florida, USA. During the global financial crisis of 2008-2011, she returned to Plovdiv, where she took on the responsible position of Product Manager for Software Production at ORAC Engineering Ltd. November 2012 - May 2016, she was the Secretary of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“. From October 2018 to this day, she is a „chief assistant“ at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, where she teaches the following courses: „Innovations in Business“, „Marketing Research“, „Innovations in Business“ in English, „Marketing“ in English.

Of the **benefits she has brought to the academic activities** of Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ (I will omit the detailed descriptions of the other jobs she has held), I will mention the following: organizing international scientific forums; organizing meetings of students with business organizations; organizing activities together with business organizations; organizing students to participate in National Marketing Olympiads; participating in international webinars with a focus on business innovations.

It can be concluded **that the academic, creative and professional career** of Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova has been on a consistent rise over the last three decades.

3. Characteristics of the candidate's scientific activity

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova has the necessary **employment** at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ (According to the official reference: „the same works at the University under a basic employment contract with order P34-515/08.10.2018 in the Department of „Marketing and MIE“ at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, and continues to work. As of 12.12.2024, the same has a total work experience of 15 years, 02 months, 21 days, of which 6 years, 02 months, 07 days is teaching. The person has *experience as a „chief assistant“ for 6 years, 02 months, 07 days* and acquired the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ 6 years, 06 months and 24 days ago.“) and is a chief assistant professor.

The professional development of the candidate for the academic position of „associate professor“ marks different (in ascending order) stages. During the period from her entry into work at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, and until now, she has participated in various specialized scientific events. This is a quite convincing professional (scientific and practical) career.

As **a researcher**, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova has specialized primarily in the field of innovation, market implementation, marketing research, the software industry, as well as the connections and relationships between them. In this order, I would like to remind you that the candidate has a high level of English, which has allowed her to freely research a significant amount of specialized scientific literature in this language (in addition to Bulgarian), part of which is indicated and critically analyzed in her publications.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova is **the author of a number of publications**. Especially for her participation in the competition, she has submitted 11 publications (after the defense of the dissertation): 1 monograph; 1 textbook, 1 published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree „doctor“; 8 studies and articles. According to the list submitted by the candidate, the articles published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information Scopus and WoS are 2 pieces; the articles published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes - also 2 pieces; the studies published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information Scopus and WoS - 3 pieces; a study published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes - 1 piece.

The total volume of publications of the candidate for „associate professor“ is about 600 standard pages (according to my calculations). They are not included in the list of works for obtaining the educational and scientific degree „doctor“.

4. Quantitative assessment according to regulatory criteria and indicators

According to the adopted „Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria“, candidates for the academic position of „Associate Professor“ are assessed according to a set of criteria and indicators. They are specified imperatively both in **the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria**, as well as in the related requirements adopted in **the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“** .

Response to the basic legal requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria:

According to: Art. 24. (1) (Amended - SG, issue 101 of 2010) Candidates for the academic position of „associate professor“ must meet the following conditions:

1. **have acquired an educational and scientific degree „doctor“ - yes;**
2. **not less than two years:**
 - a) have held the academic position of „assistant“, „chief assistant“ - **yes;**
 - b) have been teachers, including part-time teachers, or members of a research team at the same or another higher education institution or scientific organization, - **yes;**
3. have **presented a published monographic work** or equivalent publications in specialized scientific publications or evidence of relevant artistic achievements in the field of arts, which do not repeat those presented for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ and for the acquisition of the scientific degree „doctor of sciences“ - **yes.**

Response to the quantitative requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ as well as the additional requirements of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences for occupying the academic position of „Associate Professor“ :

1. *To be the author or co-author of a textbook or teaching aid - Yes.*

Author of a published textbook „Innovations in Business“.

2. *To have prepared and delivered a course of lectures – Yes,* in 4 courses:

A new course „Innovation in Business“ has been developed.

Expanded and updated course „Marketing Research“.

Developed a training course „Innovation in Business“ in English.

Developed a Marketing course in English.

3. *Has he participated in research projects* – **Yes**, in 3 projects.

National Program „Young Scientists and Postdoctoral Fellows-2“, 2022.

Project SIPO-19, „Strategy for Building a Public Image of PAISIY HILENDARSKY“, Scientific Research Fund, 2020.

Project „Enhancing the social-entrepreneurship spirit through the creation of innovative support structures for the Cross-Border Region, funded by the Territorial Cooperation Program INTERREG Greece - Bulgaria (2014-2020), 2019.

4. *To participate in the competition with publications in specialized scientific publications in the scientific specialty of the competition: studies or scientific articles and scientific reports* - **Yes**.

The requirement is met.

5. *To participate in the competition with at least one publication in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in the world-renowned databases of scientific information (Scopus and Web of Science) in the scientific specialty of the competition* – **Yes**.

Of the scientific publications submitted by the candidate, 5 are refereed and indexed in the global databases Scopus and Web of Science.

It can be concluded that in terms of *normative criteria and indicators for evaluating scientific research work*, the candidate **meets the normative requirements**. These facts are reflected in the study of her scientific works.

The information on **the covered indicators** that the candidate submitted is as follows.

Mandatory points, according to the established criteria for evaluating candidates participating in a competition for the academic position of „Associate Professor“ at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, are:

I. National minimum requirements according to the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 26) and the Regulations for its implementation (Art. 1 a. para. 1) - 400 points .

II. Additional indicators of FISN for evaluating candidates - $35 + 70 = 105$ points.

Total number of points required: 505.

Points reported by the candidate:

I. National minimum requirements according to the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 26) and the Regulations for its implementation (Art. I a. para. 1) - 665 points.

II. Additional indicators of FISN for evaluating candidates - $70+296.9+40=406.9$ points.

Total number of points scored by the candidate: 1071.9.

In other words, **the regulatory requirements have been exceeded more than twice.**

5. Characteristics of the candidate's teaching activities

As a lecturer at the Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, the candidate for „associate professor“ leads **lectures and exercises** in the disciplines „Innovations in Business“ and „Marketing Research“ to students of the specialties „Marketing“, „International Economic Relations“, „Business Management“, „Tourism Business Management“, „Linguistics with Marketing“ and „Chemistry with Marketing“, full-time and part-time studies, in the „bachelor“ program.

In her teaching activities, she focuses on **continuous direct and feedback with students**, creating commitment to the course, involving students in the learning process, creating desire and interest in theoretical knowledge. She constantly updates practical assignments and topics for exercises, including case studies based on real examples from global business, which stimulate students' analytical thinking and creativity.

Every academic year, she also meets with **international students under the Erasmus+ program**, for whom she develops new courses in English in the disciplines of „Business Innovation“, „Marketing Research“ and „Marketing“.

I will allow myself a remark regarding my participation in a number of competitions for associate professorships and professorships. Strangely enough, teaching activities in our universities are seen as something ordinary, but not as important as publications. In fact, **the main commitment** of our professors is precisely related to the „production“ of intelligent, knowledgeable, capable, and disciplined specialists and individuals („personalities“ is often omitted); the secondary commitment is scientific research. For this reason, I put the candidate's audience commitment in the first place.

The information about the quality of her teaching activities that I have from her colleagues and students is not exactly highly positive.

6. Qualitative assessment according to the criteria and indicators for scientific and research activities

According to the adopted Law and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, candidates for the academic position

of „Associate Professor“ are evaluated according to **a set of criteria and indicators for scientific and research activity** .

I would like to emphasize in advance that **the issues of „Marketing - Product Innovations“ are extremely rich and diverse**. On the one hand, marketing is so widely used in socio-economic research and forecasts that there are no clear boundaries to its application, except outside the framework of ownership, outside which the market operates (and TNCs and especially technological corporations reached in the 21st century such dimensions that surpass – in each of them – in volume what is produced in 1/3 of the nation states); on the other hand, the concept of „product innovations“, although based on several principled requirements and indicators, still has a vague systemic characteristic (innovations can be based on creative activity, but can be associated with market manipulations and fraud). In this way, marketing (the „inside-out“ view and functioning based on market forecasts) meets management (the „inside-in“ view and functioning according to a strict plan). These circumstances allow researchers to freely „migrate“ from one scientific territory to another, to „jump“ from question to question and from problem to problem, especially in moments of crisis for the demographic system, for the economic system, for the system of science, to maintain the sustainability (and proportionality!) of the supersystem. That is why marketing specialists are one of the most common scientific „migrants“, which is valuable in itself, but also very risky in terms of competence.

I accept all submitted publications as academic works. **The dissertation** for the award of the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ and **the published book based on the defended dissertation** for the award of the educational and scientific degree „doctor“ are counted in the points, but are not subject to review.

I focus my attention on **the monograph**: Katerina Y. Kozludzhova. 2024. *Product Innovations. An Integrated Model of an Innovation Process for the Development of Successful Product Innovations*. Paisii Hilendarski University Publishing House, Plovdiv. 367 pages. The reviewers were Prof. Dr. Ivanka Kostova and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teofana Dimitrova-Staneva, and the Department Council of the Department of Marketing and MIE accepted and approved the monograph for printing (Protocol No. 143/12.10.2023).

Product policy is the foundation of the marketing mix (regardless of whether it is the 4Ps, 7Ps, 9Ps, or more Ps, as is pointlessly argued in many mediocre marketing manuals). The „production“ of **product innovations** is one of *the goals* of management, and their market implementation is one of *the means* for marketing success. In XIX-XX-XXI century, it was precisely product innovations, combined with the socialization and collectivization of economic

systems, that led and continue to lead to progress in both the tools and objects of labor (intermediate production X_{ij} and the expansion part of Y_i from the system of national accounts), as well as in the volume and structure of consumer goods (the other part of final production Y_i). Of course, far from all inhabitants of planet Earth, but the analysis of these „indirect victims” of the underdevelopment of social systems is beyond our analysis. It is for these reasons that curiosity about product innovations is ubiquitous and widespread, and in a narrow sense – valuable for corporations (and nation states – in another sense) as *a means of displacing competitors* and creating *monopoly positions* that bring differential rent. With one clarification: ready-made product innovations are released on the market only when *the potential of the conventional nomenclature* (the existing product portfolio) is exhausted, i.e. not immediately, but „when the time comes”. Additional tension in the European Union was brought by the report of 17.09.2024 by Mario Draghi „The future of European competitiveness”, which revealed the tragic abandonment of the Union in terms of innovation and competitiveness – far behind what has been achieved in the USA, China and other countries. So, product innovation is no longer just a corporate, national or regional issue, but a question of survival and the comparative advantages of different social systems. This is a „phase” question of which system is more progressive, and not just a business, marketing, or market problem; it is also not just a question of more „abundant” funding for research and development.

These preliminary clarifications are important for understanding the relevance and the **content of the monograph**. In this case, I am not reviewing the monograph (this is done perfectly by the official reviewers), but rather looking for its most interesting ideas and contributions. I accept the three-part structure as a logical and solid architecture of the study itself.

I highly appreciate the research lens in *the first chapter*, which provides a theoretical overview of the issue of product innovation (a distinction is correctly made between the concept of „innovative product” - a product that is in the process of development until the moment of the implementation stage, at which this innovative product becomes a „product innovation“, p. 106). The two models of the innovation process examined in the monographic work - „Innovation driven by results” and „Stage-Gate model of innovation process” have basic characteristics and principles that allow product innovations to be assessed and developed from many sides.

The methodology is moved from the research methodology in *the second chapter*, leading to a comprehensive research program. The seven product innovation profiles are correctly presented, as well as the principle that conducting empirical research requires the use

of a mixed research strategy, which includes the application of qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection.

The solid foundations laid in the first and second chapters naturally continue and conclude in *the third chapter*, dedicated to „product innovations: presentation and analysis of the obtained data. development of an integrated model for successful product innovations“. I will allow myself to draw attention to item 3.3. „Verification of research hypotheses“, because a part of economic research ends up as hypotheses, and not as verified and proven theses. Moreover, the author's integrated model for successful product innovations presented below is a bearer of significant benefits for marketing management.

The contributions in the monographic study are obvious and concrete:

1. Based on a study of 174 theoretical sources and facts, a clear picture of *the essence and characteristics of product innovations*. Basic theoretical propositions regarding the nature of product innovations from different perspectives have been studied, critically analyzed, summarized and integrated. A classification of the forms of innovations has been made; their economic nature for corporations has been analyzed in depth, and the development of product innovations in global markets and industries, including those in the European Union and in Bulgaria, has been described.

2. The typology of strategies for generating such type of innovations has been assessed. A toolkit for designing marketing product innovations has been proposed. A comprehensive *methodology for evaluating product innovations has been developed and tested*. The research methodology uses various marketing management methods, specific methods and techniques of marketing engineering, research tools and statistical methods. It has been verified to what extent such a methodology is successful for evaluating product innovations – quantitative and qualitative.

3. *Conceptual integrated model for successful product innovations* is proposed, bringing significant benefits to marketing management. The conclusions drawn can be used in making strategic marketing decisions for the creation, verification, and implementation of product innovations.

At the same time, I have **questions and suggestions** regarding the monograph. They are included in the first and second questions.

A peculiar monographic work, in my opinion, is the textbook „Katerina Y. Kozludzhova. 2021. **Innovations in Business**. University Publishing House „Paisii Hilendarski“, Plovdiv.“ The textbook fully meets all the criteria for an independent monograph, despite the fact that it contains assignments and practical questions. I also find interesting and

useful findings in it that are not included in the main monograph, although the textbook precedes it.

I will refer to some of my favorites among **the studies and articles** presented by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova. As an extension and enrichment of the ideas for product innovations, I highlight the work: „Barriers this Product Innovations: A Theoretical Knowledge and Research Framework”. The author of this article introduces two groups of barriers to product innovation – general barriers and specific barriers, thus providing an original and new aspect of researching barriers to product innovation. Here, new directions are given for researching barriers to product innovation – examining the different stages of the product innovation process and searching for obstacles in them that companies struggle with. In another study „Key Aspects Of Product Innovations: Theoretical Knowledge And Research Study” aims to explore and establish an understanding of key aspects of product innovation, which represent an important aspect of product innovation theory. The paper also aims to validate the literature by conducting and presenting the results of a primary study. A partial development of the ideas on product innovation is found in „Closing Techniques For Selling Software Innovations” and in „Research Methodology for Studying Innovations in the Software Industry“, valuable to the software industry. The articles are also rich in content, focused on product innovations.

I accept all submitted publications as having **a direct or indirect relation to the competition for „associate professor“** for the following reasons: they prove a high degree of knowledge of the methodology and methodology of scientific research in the field for which she is applying - „economics“ (in particular - marketing and product innovations); they are based on personal research (library, scientific or practical), which can be used directly in the candidate's possible teaching activities; the publications testify to and illustrate the evolution in the academic growth of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova, which led to publications in specialized publications, which in itself is a guarantee of a sufficiently high scientific level; in the monograph, textbook, studies and articles, classical and new moments for the theory and practice of product innovations are developed and expressed. The candidate's scientific publications contain original authorial achievements that have determined a place for the candidate in academic circles; they are a personal product of the author, and all significant works presented have been peer-reviewed.

As is clear from the above, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova **covers the required quantitative and qualitative indicators.**

7. Contributions to scientific research

The scientific interests, respectively **the scientific contributions**, expressed in her personal and collective publications, can be subdivided into the following important areas, and I will attempt a synthesis:

6.1. *Further development and refinement of the theory of innovative approaches to the management of product innovations in corporations.* The author has delved very deeply into the theory, research methodology, and analysis of marketing innovation management, through a systematic study of opportunities, advantages, risks, and challenges arising from the introduction of product innovations.

6.2. *Theoretical models for the study and classification of product innovations in the context of marketing management are summarized.* Similarly, the key factors determining the degree of novelty of different types of product innovations are analyzed. On this basis, new forms of innovations are identified and their effects and impacts on the market and corporate success/failure are assessed.

6.3. *The applicability of a conceptual integrated model for successful product innovations, providing positive impacts and improvements in business activity, has been proposed, argued with appropriate scientific evidence and investigated.*

The candidate's publications can **serve the educational process in several academic disciplines.**

In general, **the scientific achievements of Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Kozludzova, PhD**, can be attributed to the group of „enrichment of existing knowledge“ and „application of new scientific achievements in practice“, as well as obtaining new data and facts about studied economic and organizational objects.

What has been said so far gives me reason to do conclusion that the works presented by the candidate for the academic position of „associate professor“ in content and quantity are **sufficient for occupying this position** . In addition, it must be considered that the chosen scientific profile meets the need for conducting scientific research and teaching in the indicated scientific specialty. The presented scientific works and the teaching activities of the candidate cover the profile of the announced competition.

8. Characterizing the candidate's academic reputation

19 references to the author's publications have been identified. (Appendix 6.3. Citations - Evidence). 4 are citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in the world databases of scientific information Scopus and WOS. 15 are citations in other world

databases of scientific information (OAJI, SJI Factor, Open Access Library, DOAJ, Crossref, Semantic Scholar, BASE, Digital object identifier, SCIMAGO, ROAD, Mendeley, Google Scholar, etc.).

The number of citations is impressive. They do honor not only to the author, but also to the department, and also to Plovdiv University.

9. Critical notes and recommendations

Every candidate for „associate professor“ can be challenged to further evolve their views and scientific ideas. I allow myself the following **recommendations**. They are from the best collegial feelings, from the idea that through them the candidate can (and should) think about both her future and the future of science, which she will continue to develop in her academic pursuits:

8.1. Regarding the monograph. The basic concepts are always controversial. This is also the case with the concept of „**product innovation**“. The assumption that it is „a new or improved product (goods or services) that is significantly different from the company's previous products and that has been introduced to the market“ (p. 22-23 of the monograph) raises additional questions: (1) if the new and/or improved product is a non-product (e.g., a new technique or new technology used within the corporation), is it a product innovation? (2) if the new or improved product is not introduced to the market because competitors have outdone the corporation with something better, is it an innovation? (3) if the new or improved product is introduced to the market and has solid commercial success due to the well-known „corporate greed,“ but harms the consumer, is it an innovation (if it brings „value“ – what is it? – as some articles say, but does not bring „benefits“); etc. „Scientific wars“ are still being waged over these essential clarifications... I urge the candidate to seek an original solution to the issue, especially since she alluded to it on pp. 27, 68 et seq.

8.2. The author's research is dominated by the study of endogenous factors and conditions for creating product innovations – corporate ones, bringing market results (against competitors and for profits from customers). No less important are, and after 35 years of almost „free markets“ in Bulgaria, **exogenous factors and conditions** regarding product innovations come to the fore. In the sense: waterfalls of „product innovations“ are „pouring“ into the markets, related to sucking more profits from „customers“, but causing harm and damage to „people“. Such „innovative“ corporate behavior is ubiquitous – in the food and beverage industry, in pharmacy, in the software industry, in marketing communications, and everywhere. A higher-ranking question: how to put an external barrier in front of millions of similar product

innovators, causing harm and damage to people and societies? I encourage the candidate for „associate professor“ to boldly enter this issue and responsibly continue the research of colleagues on these issues.

8.3. It is desirable that the work of the candidate for „associate professor“ be even more accessible, more diverse and more up-to-date. As can be seen from the list of publications, they are concentrated in recent years, some of them are closely related, published in print or online publications. From this point of view, it is advisable for the candidate for „associate professor“ to promote her work even more representatively and on a larger scale through personal appearances by **participating in conference discussions** - at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“, but also more outside of it. I will emphasize that it is at conferences that the „reconciliation of scientific clocks“ with the collegium takes place. And as an addition: it is good that some of the scientific studies and articles, as well as possibly popular scientific articles, are in Bulgarian; the state pays for the development and education of Bulgaria, and not of English-speaking countries (although then it insists on citations in a foreign language). I am writing this recommendation to avoid the office anonymity and even impersonality that is characteristic of a significant portion of Bulgarian teachers.

These remarks are not of such a nature as to challenge the contributions of the candidate for the academic position of „associate professor“.

CONCLUSION

Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Katerina Kozludzhova in her capacity as a candidate for the academic position of „associate professor“ meets the accepted recommended scientific and scientometric formal requirements. The candidate's **scientific output** contains results representing scientific and applied scientific contributions; is aimed at improving science and in particular marketing as a theory and practice; contains summaries of results obtained through research activity.

I have no family ties with the candidate. We have no joint publications. I know her indirectly as a conscientious, correct and thorough researcher, valued and respected in the academic community.

No plagiarism was detected during the review of the publications .

Based on my familiarization with the scientific works provided, their significance, and the scientific and applied contributions contained therein, **I find sufficient reasons to propose that Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova be elected to the academic position of „Associate Professor“ in the field of higher education 3. „Social, Economic and**

Legal Sciences“, professional field 3.8. Economics (Marketing - Product Innovations), for the needs of the Department of „Marketing and MIE“ at the „Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences“ at Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“.

I am convinced that occupying the academic position of „Associate Professor“ will be well-deserved and will open up very good opportunities for her future scientific creativity and performances as a teacher.

Review author:

February 5, 2025

(Prof. Dr. Boyan Lyubomirov Durankev)