

OPINION

by **Dr. Romyana Ivanova Bakalska,**

Associate Professor at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition

to occupy the academic position of "**Associate Professor**"

of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

in: higher education field 4 Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics

professional direction 4.2 *Chemical Sciences, Science Specialty Organic Chemistry*
(*Organic Analysis*)

In the "Associate Professor" competition, announced in the State Gazette, no. 98 of 19.11.2024 and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Organic Chemistry Department at the Faculty of Chemistry, as the **only candidate** participated Chief Assistant Professor **Stanimir Petrov Manolov**, PhD, from the Organic Chemistry Department, Faculty of Chemistry, "Paisii Hilendarski" University.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. PD-22-80 of 17.01.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for ensuring a procedure for the selection of an "associate professor" at PU in the field of higher education 4 Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.2 Chemical Sciences (Organic Chemistry, Organic Analysis) for the needs of the Department of Organic Chemistry at the Faculty of Chemistry of PU. The set of materials on an electronic medium presented by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Stanimir Manolov is in accordance with Art. 36 (1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU and includes all required documents.

The candidate, Dr. Stanimir Manolov, has applied a total of **20** scientific papers, which are outside the dissertation, and **1** published book based on a defended dissertation, published by *Lambert Academic Publishing*. All of them are in the field of organic chemistry. The dissertation for the acquisition of the ONS "doctor" is based on 5 articles. According to the data

provided by Dr. Manolov, **13** of the articles have been published in publications that are referenced and indexed in the world-famous databases *Web of Science* (WOS) and/or *Scopus*, with **6** of them having a quartile of **Q1**, **1** paper with **Q2**, **4** articles with **Q3**, and **9** with **Q4**. The results of the scientific research have been published in specialized international editions: in the journals *Molecules* (5 articles), *ACS Omega* (1 paper), *Antioxidants* (1 paper), *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society* (1 paper), *Biotechnology & Biotechnological Equipment* (1 article), *Molbank* (6 articles), and *Indian Journal of Chemistry* (B) (1 paper). Four of the articles have been published in national publications. All scientific publications are co-authored, which is common for the chemical field, as in **8** of the publications, as well as in the published book (43%), the candidate is the first and/or corresponding author. 49 citations have been noted.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

Evaluation of teaching and pedagogical activities.

Chief Assistant Professor Manolov has 13 years of teaching experience at the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Plovdiv. The attached report on his teaching and pedagogical activity testifies to a high teaching workload, not only in lectures and practical classes, but also in independent research work with students. He has led lecture courses in the disciplines - *Organic Chemistry* with bachelor's students from the Faculty of Physics and Technology and *Organic Analysis* with a specialty in Chemical Analysis and Quality Control. In the master's programs of the department, Dr. Manolov leads specialized lectures on *Chemistry of Steroids*, *Stability of Medicinal Products*, *Drug Design*, *Organic Chemistry* (for non-specialists). In addition, he has conducted exercises in the following disciplines: for bachelors - *Organic Chemistry*, *Chemistry of Medicinal Substances*, *Bioorganic Chemistry*, *Chemistry of Narcotic Substances*; for masters - *Organic Synthesis*, *Organic Chemistry*, *Stability of Medicinal Products and Methods and Approaches for the Study of Biological Activity*. He has supervised the research practice in *Organic Synthesis* of students from master's programs and has provided invaluable assistance in the preparation of their course projects. He has been the scientific supervisor of **13** successfully defended diplomas theses.

I know my colleague, Chief Assistant Professor Manolov, as a dedicated young man in his work with students who finds the right approach and path to their hearts, manages to motivate them, and engages them in scientific pursuits, and it is no coincidence that he is a favorite of the students. With his excellent command of English (C1), Dr. Manolov leads the English-language practical training in *Organic Chemistry* with foreign students from the Medical University in Plovdiv. These qualities of his also support his work as Erasmus+

coordinator for the Faculty of Chemistry and scientific secretary for international cooperation and work with doctoral students, students and candidate students at the faculty.

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and applied scientific activities.

According to the author's assessment, the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Dr. Manolov's works can be grouped into the following areas: i) application of established methods, their modification, and the development of alternative approaches for the synthesis of organic compounds with potential biological activity; ii) synthesis, isolation, and identification of new organic compounds of interest in the context of medicinal/pharmaceutical chemistry; iii) full spectral characterization of new organic molecules, including ^1H and ^{13}C NMR, ultraviolet (UV), infrared (IR), and mass spectral analysis; iv) conducting *in vitro* analyses of new organic compounds. The main contributions of Dr. Manolov are in enriching, expanding, and deepening the knowledge in the research area, and in particular, in obtaining organic compounds unknown to practice and determining their properties, in the development and improvement of innovative and ecological methods of synthesis with the aim of applying in practice some of the obtained compounds with potential biological activity and valuable therapeutic properties. In this sense, a series of interdisciplinary studies have been successfully implemented, which include organic chemistry, bioorganic chemistry, microbiology, computational chemistry, and bioinformatics, and this immensely broadens the horizons of the candidate. Work in scientific teams with foreign participation also contributes to this.

Dr. Manolov has been invited as a guest editor for 3 special issues of the scientific journal "*Processes*" (MDPI, Q2). He has been a reviewer of 25 scientific manuscripts in the last 2 years, mainly for journals published by MDPI but also for 3 by WILEY.

In the period after the defense of his dissertation for the acquisition of the ONS "doctor," Chief Asst. Prof. Manolov participated in the implementation of 10 projects, three of which were funded by the National Fund "Science Research," one by the European Union through the National Plan for Recovery and Sustainability of the Republic of Bulgaria (DUEcoS)", and the remaining 6 by the university fund.

The results of his work have been presented at numerous scientific conferences—over 80! His activity is manifested not only in organizing scientific conferences at the Faculty of Chemistry of Plovdiv University but also outside it, in organizing a number of events such as "Evening of Chemistry," "Light Show," and "Night of Scientists.". He actively participates in the promotion of the faculty in candidate student exchanges and campaigns.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks about the materials presented to me; on the contrary, the competition documentation is well-prepared, which not only facilitates the work of the scientific jury but also confirms the overall excellent impression of the candidate's creative presentation.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Stanimir Manolov **meet** all the requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ZRASRB, and the relevant Regulations of the PAISIY HILENDARSKY PU. The required number of scientific publications and contributions therein, as well as the candidate's teaching experience, are available. I am convinced that with his overall scientific work and teaching experience, Dr. Stanimir Manolov meets the criteria for occupying the position of "Associate Professor" at the PU. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Dr. Stanimir Manolov **are undoubted**.

The results achieved by Dr. Stanimir Manolov in academic and research activities (with a total of **492** points from the scientometric indicators) **correspond** to the minimum national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Chemistry, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv for the implementation of the Law on the State Academic Research and Development of the Republic of Bulgaria.

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition and analyzing their significance and the scientific, applied science, and applied contributions contained therein, I find it reasonable to give my **positive** assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Chemistry for the selection of **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Stanimir Manolov** to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the "Paisiy Hilendarski" University in the field of higher education 4 Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.2. Chemical Sciences (**Organic Chemistry, Organic Analysis**).

02.02.2025

Prepared the opinion:

(Dr. Romyana Bakalska, Assoc. Prof.)