

# OPINION

by **Silvina Dimitrova Ilieva PhD – Assoc. Prof., Technical University of Sofia, Plovdiv Branch**  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of "**Associate Professor**"  
at **Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv**

Field of Higher Education: 8. Arts

Professional Field: 8.2 Fine Arts (Typography and Type Design)

In the competition for the position of "Associate Professor," announced in the State Gazette, issue no. 98 of 19.11.2024, and on the website of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, is intended to meet the needs of the Department of Aesthetic Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy. The sole candidate participating in this competition is Ch. Assistant **Nadezhda Nedyalkova Angelova PhD** from the Department of Aesthetic Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

## 1. General Overview of the Procedure and the Candidate

By Order No. P22-84 of 17.01.2025, of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of "**Associate Professor**" in the field of Higher Education **8. Arts**, Professional Field **8.2 Fine Arts** (Typography and Type Design), announced for the needs of the Department of Aesthetic Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy.

**One candidate has submitted documents** for participation in the announced competition: Ch. Assistant **Nadezhda Nedyalkova Angelova PhD** from the Department of Aesthetic Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The set of materials submitted by **Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD**, in both paper and electronic format, **complies with the Regulations** for the Development of the Academic Staff at PU and includes the following documents:

- A standard application to the Rector for admission to the competition;
- A curriculum vitae in European format;
- A diploma for higher education with a Master's degree qualification;
- A diploma for a Doctoral degree;
- A list of scientific publications;
- Copies of the scientific publications;
- A list of citations;
- A report on compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements;
- Abstracts of the materials under Art. 65 of the PU Academic Staff Regulations (in Bulgarian and a foreign language);
- A self-assessment of contributions;
- A declaration of originality and authenticity of the submitted documents;

- A certificate of professional experience;
- Documents related to teaching activities;
- Documents related to research activities;
- Documents pertaining to artistic and creative work;
- Documents in accordance with the additional requirements of the respective faculty;
- Other relevant documents.

The candidate, Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD, has submitted a total of eight scientific works, including one monograph, three articles and conference papers published in scientific journals indexed in global databases, and four articles and conference papers published in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals (including in the National Centre for Information and Documentation). Regarding artistic and creative activities, she has provided a list of three realized original works in the field of arts and one supporting creative expression or participation in a collective artistic product. She has participated in five research projects. The distribution of the scientific works is as follows: six in Bulgarian and two in English. Among them, only one is co-authored with another researcher, while all others are single-author publications.

#### *Brief Biographical Information on the Candidate*

Nadezhda Angelova was born in Plovdiv. In 2000, she completed her secondary education at the National High School of Arts "Tsanko Lavrenov" in Plovdiv, specializing in Mural Painting. She graduated with the Highest Academic Achievement Award of her class and received a State Scholarship for Outstanding Academic Performance. In 2010, she earned a Bachelor's degree in Communication Design from the University of Applied Sciences in Düsseldorf, Germany, where she was awarded a German national scholarship for outstanding academic performance, professional achievements, and significant social engagement during her studies. In 2014, she obtained a Master's degree in Communication Design from the same university. In 2020, she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in the field of Higher Education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, Professional Field 1.3. Methodology of Teaching Fine Arts, on the topic: "Teaching Typography and Type Design in Graphic Design Higher Education."

Her creative career began as early as 1996, and since 2007, she has been working as a freelance communication designer. Between 2008 and 2014, she gained professional experience in communication design while working for various employers in Germany, including a film studio, a design bureau, advertising agencies, and an architectural studio. She began her teaching career in 2014 upon returning to Bulgaria. Initially, she taught at the private college "Omega," followed by the Academy of Music, Dance, and Fine Arts in Plovdiv as a part-time lecturer from 2014 to 2016 and as an assistant professor from 2017 to 2018.

In 2018, she was appointed to the position of Assistant Professor at the Department of Aesthetic Education within the Faculty of Pedagogy. Since 2023, she has held the position of Chief Assistant in the same department and faculty. She is a member of various research and professional organizations.

I have known Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD, for nearly a decade as a highly respected, motivating, and inspiring educator who not only follows but also actively shapes contemporary trends in education. She is also an outstanding professional and colleague, possessing boundless energy, an elegant sense of humor, and excellent teamwork skills, which greatly enhance her work with students in the field of graphic design. As both a scholar and an artist, she consistently adheres to the highest contemporary standards, as evidenced by her academic and artistic contributions.

## **2. General Characteristics of the Candidate's Activities**

### *Evaluation of Teaching and Pedagogical Activities*

Ch. Assist. Prof. Nadezhda Angelova, PhD, teaches nine specialized courses in the "Graphic Design with Advertising" program, seven courses in the "Pedagogy of Fine Arts Education" program, and two additional courses in the "Primary School Pedagogy" and "Primary School Pedagogy with a Foreign Language" programs. All courses are part of the full-time Bachelor's degree curriculum and are directly related to the visual arts (Field 8.2), with most of them focusing on design – Typography, Book Design, Periodical Design, Advertising Design, Presentation Design, Graphic Design, Computer Applications in Graphic Design, Portfolio and Presentation, among others.

She actively supervises undergraduate students, having mentored 18 successfully defended Bachelor's theses during the specified period and reviewed three theses at both the Bachelor's and Master's levels. She also serves as a scientific consultant for students developing research publications.

Ch. Assist. Prof. Angelova leads and organizes the artistic and creative activities of students in the "Graphic Design with Advertising" program, including exhibitions, competitions, and other initiatives. She is the initiator, organizer, and facilitator of the DESIGN-DIALOGUE project – an interactive platform fostering discussions and collaboration between students from the "Graphic Design with Advertising" and "Pedagogy of Fine Arts Education" programs within the Faculty of Education and professionals in the field.

Her teaching activity includes over 900 hours of in-class and extracurricular workload in the past academic year, covering disciplines directly aligned with the announced academic position. In her teaching practice, Ch. Assist. Prof. Angelova applies innovative methods based on contemporary science and educational technologies, contributing to the enhancement of both the quality of the educational process and the overall cultural development of students.

### *Evaluation of Research and Scientific-Applied Activities*

Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD is participating in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor with a total of eight scientific publications. The distribution of her academic work is as follows: a habilitation work – a monograph (Indicator B); three conference papers (two single-authored and one co-authored with one additional author) published in peer-reviewed journals indexed in global databases (Scopus); four independent articles and papers published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals (Indicator G); a list of three completed original creative projects in the field

of arts; and one additional artistic contribution or participation in a collective artistic project (Indicator G). The candidate has also provided a list of 12 citations – one in monographs and collective volumes with peer review, and the rest in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals (Indicator D). Additionally, she has participated in five research projects – four national and one international (Indicator E).

The monograph is professionally structured and divided into three parts. It explores key aspects of the artistic design of printed books and presents an original methodology for creating high-quality professional book design. Theoretical perspectives on the historical development of book aesthetics are thoroughly examined, alongside discussions on the significance and future of the book as a medium. The study extensively analyzes book design methodologies employed by renowned designers, with a particular focus on work processes and quality criteria. The methodology developed in the monograph is subjected to experimental verification, demonstrating its applicability in professional book design and specialized education in this field. The analysis of experimental results confirms the methodology's effectiveness. The study concludes with key findings and perspectives for further research on the topic.

The candidate's research publications indexed in Scopus focus on several key areas: integrating a competency-based approach into arts education, exploring technological processes, and defining methodologies and criteria for creating high-quality digital educational illustrations for children.

The non-refereed peer-reviewed publications emphasize three main topics: intellectual property and copyright in artistic disciplines, typography and the design of highly legible text, and the innovative integration of artificial intelligence in interdisciplinary education through the arts.

Dr. Angelova's creative contributions listed under Indicator G include three completed original design projects: the visual identity and promotional materials for the book *Galactic Tales*, advertising materials for "Orane Factory," and a campaign for "14 STEPS." Additionally, she has contributed to a collective artistic project through her participation in the group exhibition *Inspiration* featuring faculty members from the "Aesthetic Education" Department at Plovdiv University.

Her academic activities also include participation as a team member in four university and national educational and research projects, as well as one international project. She has taken part in national seminars and international scientific conferences. The submitted documentation demonstrates the candidate's high level of activity in two key areas: teaching and research (including artistic and creative work), between which a constant exchange of knowledge and expertise takes place.

#### *Contributions (Scientific, Applied, and Practical) and Citations*

Summarizing the content of the scientific output presented in the competition, the main contributions can be grouped as follows:

##### ***Scientific (Theoretical) Contributions:***

- The monograph [1] provides a theoretical foundation for the artistic design of printed books through a historical review, an analysis of the evolution of book appearance, and an outline of future perspectives in the field.

- Publications [5] and [6] analyze students' attitudes and the state of education on intellectual property and copyright in creative disciplines. These studies highlight existing gaps and the need for increased awareness and professionalism.
- Publication [8] presents a new conceptual analysis and proposal for integrating artificial intelligence into interdisciplinary education, discussing its potential and limitations within the educational environment.

***Scientific and Applied Contributions:***

- A set of evaluation criteria, supported by a ranking scale, has been developed for objectively assessing text readability. Experimental verification demonstrates new typographic parameters that enhance the objective evaluation of typographic quality. [7]
- Surveys analyze students' opinions and provide empirical confirmation of the need for training in intellectual property and copyright issues within artistic disciplines. The study presents quantitative data supporting the identified problems. [5] and [6]

***Applied Contributions:***

- Practical experience with implementing the competency-based approach is presented through a poster design project where typography and layout play a crucial role. The project results demonstrate the practical applicability of the new approach and confirm its effectiveness in arts education. [2]
- Publications [3] and [4] describe technological processes and criteria for creating digital educational illustrations that simulate the real workflow of a graphic designer, aiding students' training. The studies develop specific technological processes and evaluation criteria, with experimental verification confirming the successful application of these methods.

***Methodological Contributions:***

- The methodological section of the monograph [1] presents a systematic methodology for the artistic design of printed books, including specific design criteria and an evaluation of experimental results. New methods and criteria for book design assessment are formulated, with experimental verification confirming their effectiveness.
- Publication [7] introduces an evaluation tool for typographic design using a checklist and ranking scale. A systematic evaluation framework has been developed, serving as a methodological tool for quality control and assessment.

The presented overview and my positive evaluation of the submitted materials for the competition indicate clear evidence of significant scientific, applied, and methodological contributions in the field of design and design education. I confirm that the scientific works are the author's own.

The significance of Nadezhda Angelova's scientific contributions is further demonstrated by the documented citations, indicating recognition among the scientific community. The candidate has submitted a list of 12 citations—one in monographs and collective volumes with scientific peer review and 11 in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals.

According to the provided report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements, it is evident that Ch. Assist. Prof. Nadezhda Angelova has earned 50 points for Indicator A, 100 points for Indicator B, 235 points for Indicator C, 60 points for Indicator D, and 80 points for Indicator E, totaling 525 points, which exceeds the required 360 points. Additionally, she has earned 85 points from the Additional Requirements of the Faculty of Education. This demonstrates full compliance with the minimum national requirements and a significant surpassing of the points for certain indicators. Moreover, there is complete fulfillment of the additional requirements set by the Faculty of Education at Plovdiv University for the respective academic position.

### 3. Critical Remarks and Recommendations

I have no critical remarks regarding the submitted competition materials.

However, I offer two recommendations:

- The self-evaluation report on contributions could be structured more clearly, categorizing the main types of contributions according to the latest classification and excluding those unrelated to the competition criteria.
- Future research and publications should prioritize indexed scientific journals, particularly those included in internationally recognized databases, to enhance their academic impact.

### CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by **Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD** fully meet the requirements of the **Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB)**, its implementing regulations, and the relevant rules of **Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski."**

The candidate has provided a sufficient number of scientific publications produced after obtaining the PhD degree and the academic rank of Assistant Professor. These works contain original scientific, applied, and methodological contributions, which have been recognized through publication in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings indexed in global scientific databases. Theoretical developments also have practical applicability, with some directly related to teaching. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Dr. Angelova **are indisputable.**

Dr. Angelova's achievements in **teaching and research** fully meet the national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Education at **Plovdiv University.**

After thoroughly reviewing the competition materials and scientific publications, analyzing their significance and contributions, I find it fully justified to give my **positive evaluation** and **definitely recommend** that the Scientific Jury submit a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Education for the appointment of **Ch. Assist. Nadezhda Angelova PhD** to the academic position of **Associate Professor** in Higher Education Field **8. Arts, Professional Field 8.2 Fine Arts (Typography and Lettering).**

March 11, 2025

Prepared by.....

*Assoc. Prof. Silvina Dimitrova Ilieva PhD*