

## POSITION PAPER

by Professor D.Sc. Tsvetan Parvanov Davidkov  
member of the scientific jury by virtue of Order No. RD 38-  
195/21.05.2020 issued by the Rector of the Sofia University  
St. Kliment Ohridski

for the open call for the academic position of ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR in professional field 3.7 ADMINISTRATION AND  
MANAGEMENT (Management, Organizational Behavior,  
Leadership - in Bulgarian and English), announced in SG,  
issue 21/March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with the only applicant Iya  
Todorova Petkova-Gourbalova

### 1. General principals and biographical record.

Senior Professor Iya Todorova Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD is the only applicant in the open call for the academic position of Associate Professor in 3.7 Administration and Management (Management, Organizational Behavior, Leadership - in Bulgarian and English). The call has been opened for the needs of the Department of Business Administration (Faculty of Economics and Business Administration – Sofia University).

Iya Petkova-Gourbalova graduated from a humanitarian high school with advanced study of English (Plovdiv, 1998); obtained a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration (Sofia University, 1998 - 2002) and also obtained a MBA degree with a specialization in strategic management (Sofia University, 2002 - 2003). In 2013 she was awarded the academic degree of PhD of Administration and Management (scientific supervisor Prof.D.Sc. Tsvetan

Davidkov). She has gained additional qualifications and specializations - digital marketing, protocol and ceremony, media, excellence in education in and for multicultural communities, etc.

She has worked for international organizations in Bulgaria and the United States with a varied professional experience: as a human resources management specialist, bank expert, analyst and project management specialist. During the period 2015 - 2020 she was in charge of the strategic unit of the National Palace of Culture. Also, she has experience in the administration of the European Parliament.

Teaching experience - as a part-time and full-time lecturer at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (disciplines: "Organizational Behaviour", "National and Organizational Cultures", "Management and Development of Organizational Culture", "Organizational Management Models for Quality and Organizational Excellence", "Leadership in a multicultural environment." She has been a Senior Assistant Professor at the Sofia University since 2016. She is the lead of the discipline: "Leadership in a multicultural environment".

Skilled and experienced in many diverse areas.

## 2. General description of the submitted papers.

The scientific papers and teaching aids submitted for participation in the call are a total of 30, distributed as follows:

- 2.1. Dissertation paper – 1 (No. 1 from the list; independent authorship; volume: 184 pages);
- 2.2. Monograph – 1 (No. 2 from the list; independent authorship; volume: 150 pages);
- 2.3. Articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals – 5 (No. No. 3, 7, 13, 15, 22 from the list; 4 – independent authorship and 1 – co-authorship; total volume: 68 pages);
- 2.4. Published articles and reports from international scientific conferences – 14 (No. No. 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 from the list; 6 – independent authorship and 8 – co-authorship; total volume: 73 pages);
- 2.5. Published reports from scientific conferences and theoretical seminars – 1 (No. 4; independent authorship; volume: 8 pages).
- 2.6. Studies published in peer-reviewed scientific journals – 2 (No. No. 23, 24 from the list; independent authorship; total volume: 49 pages);
- 2.7. Published chapters from collective monographs – 6 (No. No. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30; 1 – independent authorship and 5 – co-authorship; total volume: 50,75 pages).

The submitted documents for participation in the call assure me that the required documents and evidence have been presented. The reference (it also includes lecture hours, citations, participation in projects) shows that the *applicant meets the minimum requirements for applicants to open a procedure* for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR.

The quantitative characteristic of the submitted scientific papers is a solid initial evidence for a significant scientific work. The author of this position paper has common publications with the applicant. The comparison of the applicant's texts for participation in the call for associate professor with the general list of publications provides arguments to argue that her professional activity could be characterized as sustainable and consistent in the researched issues; *continuity and upgrading* could be found in the texts.

### 3. General characteristics of the applicant's research and applied scientific work.

The essence of the social management point of view in the interpretation of topics and problems (mainly) in the field of *management and organizational behavior* could be defined as a common denominator of the research, applied scientific work, expert-consulting and teaching activity of the applicant. The main research and interpretive focus - no doubt - is *leadership* (and the related phenomena). The following labels also describe the direction and interests of the professional research and applied scientific work: organizational culture, communication, training and development of managerial staff, tools for business development, motivation factors, value optics, etc. Given the nature of the texts and the projects in which I. Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD has participated, as well as taking into account the volume and nature of her teaching work, the following conclusion can be made: the applicant completes the research, applied scientific work, expert-consulting and teaching activities with a strong desire to follow best examples and meeting the highest standards. There is a clear linkage between efforts in scientific research and the updating / development of the curriculum of academic courses and external teaching classes. The problem-thematic field of research activity and applied scientific work of the applicant can be described by the already mentioned labels: organizational behavior, management, leadership, organizational culture, communication, training and development of managers, tools for business development, motivational factors, value optics, etc.

My general assessments and conclusions regarding the submitted papers are as follows:

- The applicant declares good competence in the field of leadership, she interprets the source material convincingly.
- The work with the sources is competent, correct, professional.
- The texts allow us to presume that the author has a high general and professional culture.
- The logic of the authors' theses is well defended and could be traced.

The following characteristics seem important for the evaluation of the presented papers:

- The author is following the latest research trends. She discusses topics / problems, the study of which is of an immediate necessity for the organizations in the economic and public sector, the society, and the consulting practice.
- The author develops purposefully in the chosen field (in accordance with the needs of the academic institution) - this can be traced based on the continuity between what was done in the doctoral dissertation and the subsequent research papers and authorial developments.
- The created by Senior Assistant Professor Iya Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD finds a variety of realization fields: for the needs of teaching in an academic environment (including methodological activities); in external trainings; in project, expert-consulting and publishing activities.

I have no doubts about the authorship of the submitted scientific papers.

#### 4. Evaluation of the pedagogical level and activity of the applicant.

I evaluate positively the pedagogical level and activities of the applicant. Arguments:

- Senior Assistant Professor Iya Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD is well experienced academic lecturer.
- She teaches a variety of (still consistent over time) academic disciplines. Their focus and content correspond to the scientific profile presented above, as well as to the professional field and the scientific specialty of the open call. The applicant has a full workload.
- The content analysis of the applicant's participation in the projects *Creating a sustainable capacity for application of electronic distance learning for the students from the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"* and *Creating a sustainable mechanism for continuous adaptation of the curricula and programs to the real needs of the labor market at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University" St. Kliment*

*Ohridski'* provides arguments to confirm the above conclusion regarding the updating of the curriculum of the taught academic disciplines, as well as illustrates the methodological activity of the applicant.

- I know the work of the applicant outside Sofia University - I could confirm that this part of the activities of Senior Assistant Professor I. Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD also meets the highest professional standards.
- The feedback about her work based on a survey of student opinion at the Sofia University shows that students appreciate the lecturer I. Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD.

#### 5. Major research and applied scientific contributions.

I accept the research and scientific applied contributions<sup>1</sup>. The analysis of the peer-reviewed scientific papers provides arguments to substantiate the conclusion that the applicant's contributions are mainly in the following areas: a) management and organizational behaviour; b) leadership.

Publications in the field of management and organizational behavior cover a wide range of specific organizational, socio-psychological and other phenomena. The results can be assessed as a systematic and comprehensive disclosure of the functioning and importance of these phenomena for a better understanding of organizational reality and effective management of organizations. There is both a summary of existing knowledge and new data and facts (based on research work) with a reasonable interpretation. The results have the potential to justify follow-up research projects; expanding and deepening the existing knowledge. Leadership publications can be a useful source of knowledge for leaders, teachers, consultants, and more. A valuable result is the achieved synthesis between the system-conceptual knowledge of leadership and the practical-applied level.

#### 6. Significance of contributions to science and practice.

Monitoring the functioning of the described contribution results in different social contexts gives grounds to defend the following assessment: they are significant, useful, working. Evidence: a) the author is relatively recognizable (see citation references); b) the systematic activity of the applicant, which is manifested in well-accepted writing, academic teaching,

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<sup>1</sup> See "Author's report on scientific contributions...".

participation in trainings, projects, etc. The applicant enjoys a good reputation in the research and teaching community.

### 7. Critical remarks and recommendations.

The conclusions in this section should be perceived primarily as recommendations for the future work of the applicant.

- The most significant work (among those submitted for participation in the open call) is undoubtedly the monograph on current trends in leadership development. This is a valuable text with lots of merits. I presume that the thesis presented in the monograph would be even more convincing if supported not only by a variety of theoretical arguments and research finding by other authors, but also comparing the results of the study with similar studies in other countries. It would be interesting to discuss to what extent the cultural context (and ownership of the company) influences leadership. Given the fact that the need for such knowledge in Bulgaria is growing, I assume that in the future the author could offer us a continuation of the text and verification of other models, including e-leadership (one of the latest research papers of the author).
- Iya Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD uses scientific informational sources in a foreign language (mostly English) - this is "visible" in her texts in Bulgarian. There is an opportunity to improve her texts from a linguistic and stylistic point of view.
- The work of I. Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD would benefit if she prepared and published a textbook (as a start) dedicated to leadership.
- I. Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD has serious professional expertise and experience and can successfully direct her texts for publication to distinguished publishers and prestigious periodicals.

In the spirit of the review style, "these recommendations do not in any way detract from the applicant's credentials".

### 8. Personal impressions.

I have known Senior Assistant Professor Iya Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD as a colleague from the Department of Business Administration (FEBA, Sofia University). We work together as a teaching team on various academic courses. I follow closely her publishing activity. I know a significant part of her non-university activities. I would also conclude that she is: a) collaborative and accurate; b) a great friend and a 'team player' who can be relied on; c) kind-hearted, empathic; D) ready to help.

## CONCLUSION.

Based on the above, the following can be argued: Senior Assistant Professor Iya Todorova Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD meets all the requirements provided in the Development of the academic staff Act and the relevant regulations for taking the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, in particular:

A) Senior Assistant Professor Iya Petkova-Gourbalova, PhD has acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of philosophy" since 2013;

B) She has been working as "Senior Assistant Professor" for at least 2 years;

C) She has solid experience as a teacher, incl. methodical activity;

D) She has developed a monograph with undoubted scientific merits and contributions, and she has presented enough other publications (which do not repeat the presented ones for obtaining the educational and scientific PhD degree) with proven impact on scientific development and clear applications.

D) The applicant actively participates in different project, publication and public activities that contributes to the professional development of various communities.

This gives me reasons to recommend to the members of the respected scientific jury to vote with YES for the assignment of the applicant to the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in professional field 3.7 Administration and management (Management, Organizational Behavior, Leadership - in Bulgarian and English). I will vote YES.

Sofia, 27 August 2020

Signature: