

STATEMENT

in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 4.1 Physical sciences, specialty "Astronomy and Astrophysics", announced in GN, No54 / 29.06.2021 for the needs of Faculty of Physics at Sofia university, with candidate: Vladimir Bozhilov, Ph.D. , Head assistant

Member of the scientific jury: Evgeni Ovcharov, PhD, Associate Professor

Assistant Professor Dr. Vladimir Veselinov Bozhilov - Department of Astronomy, Faculty of Physics, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the sole candidate who has applied for the announced position.

The documents submitted by the applicant comply with all the requirements and regulations in accordance with the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The candidate Vladimir Bozhilov has submitted a list of 22 publications in total for the application purposes. Publications 1, 2 and 3 are used to prove the scientific degree of "doctor", publications 1 - 5 are used to prove the academic position of "chief assistant". Publications 6 - 9 are used as "Indicator 4: Habilitation work - scientific publications in journals that are referenced and indexed in international databases of scientific publications (Web of Science and Scopus)" in a group of Indicators B, according to the Reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements. Publications 10 to 22 are used to fulfill the National Requirements and the Additional Requirements of the Faculty of Physics of Sofia University for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor". Most of the publications presented by the candidate are related to the study of some of the most exotic objects in the universe - the different types of active galactic nuclei. Original optical data obtained with the telescopes in NAO Rozhen, as well as SAO Plana were used. Most publications are a result of the organization of multi-wave international observation campaigns by WEBT (The Whole Earth Blazar Telescope, <https://www.oato.inaf.it/blazars/webt/>). The implementation of such initiatives with the participation of scientists from many institutions around the world is in fact the only possible way for the qualitative study of quasars, blazars and other similar objects and related astronomical phenomena. There is a contribution to the study of at least 10 sites, as most of the publications presented on the topic are in publications with a high impact factor (MNRAS, A&A, etc.), and publication 7 is in

Nature. Another significant part of the presented publications refers to gamma-astronomy - a scientific field in which very few scientists in Bulgaria are currently working in. The publications on this topic are related to the candidate's participation in large-scale projects for new space observatories, in the development of new gamma-ray astronomy detectors, ground-based telescopes of the future - the CTA complex (Cherenkov Telescope Array). The applicant has a significant contribution in the field of astrobiology (publication 4). Furthermore, he participated actively in the implementation of the SAO Plana of Sofia University (publication 5).

In addition to the submitted publications, Dr. Bozhilov is a member of the Bulgarian team for studying and researching novae in the galaxy M31. He has co-authored 13 astronomical telegrams on the subject, which have gathered more than ten citations, including in high-impact journals, such as MNRAS. The candidate also has publications of pedagogical and scientific value in Bulgarian journals and publications without an impact factor.

The teaching activity of the applicant is considerable. There is a regular overtime workload - both classroom and extracurricular. In the recent years Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Vladimir Bozhilov has been a lecturer in basic and specialized courses in the specialties with which the Department of Astronomy is engaged. So far, he has supervised 13 graduates and participated in 20 projects, managing nearly half of them (as a lead project officer). He is a member of the program council of the Master Program of Astronomy and Popularization of Astronomy, and the courses "Communication of Astronomy" and "Practical Communication of Astronomy" in the two master's programs of the department have been implemented and taught by him in recent years.

Apart from the strong publishing and teaching activity, the candidate has participated in a remarkable number of conferences and symposia between 2008 and 2019.

Vladimir Bozhilov is extremely active as a communicator of astronomy and science in general. His media experience comprises hundreds of participations in radio and television broadcasts, whereas he discussed diverse topics, such as space, astronomy and astrophysics. He has a significant experience as a scientific journalist and editor of scientific manuscripts mainly in the period 2012 - 2018. He is author and lecturer of a series of popular lectures in physics and astrophysics for the general public. He has served as translator and scientific editor of 10 popular science books. He is the winner of second place in the national competition "Laboratory for Fame - FameLab" 2010, winner of the international competition "Hall of FameLab 2014". Dr. Bozhilov's activity in terms of communicating science contributes greatly to building and maintaining a good image of Bulgarian science and in particular of the scientific and educational activities at the Faculty of Physics at Sofia University to society and institutions. Informing the public by using an appropriate approach and

accessible language about the successes of science and career opportunities is of crucial importance today.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, and on the basis of the analysis of their significance and the scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained within, I confirm that the scientific achievements meet the relevant requirements of the Regulations of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" for holding the candidate for the academic position "Associate Professor". The candidate satisfies the minimum national requirements in the professional field and no plagiarism has been established in the scientific papers submitted at the competition.

I give my positive assessment of the candidacy.

CONCLUSION

The presented scientific papers contain enough and impressive scientific and applied contributions. On the basis of the acquaintance with the presented scientific works, their significance, the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it justified to propose Vladimir Bozhilov to acquire the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 4.1 at the Faculty of Physics, Sofia university.

Date: 17 Oct 2021

JURY MEMBER