

R E V I E W

On the materials presented for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Management; Entrepreneurship and Innovations; Brand Management - in Bulgarian and English), announced in State Gazette No. 96 of 17.11.2023

The review is prepared on the basis of Order RD-38-673/21-12-2023 issued by the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Sole participant in the competition for Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Management; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Brand Management – in Bulgarian and English) – SG No. 96/17-11-2023 – for the needs of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Raya Nikolova Kanazireva.

Brief introduction of the candidate. Chief assistant prof. Dr. R. Kanazireva is a graduate of the AUBG (BA – 2001) and Sofia University's Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (MA – 2003; PhD – 2015). She teaches at Sofia University St. "Kliment Ohridski" ("the University") since 2012; and since Oct. 2016 – as a chief assistant professor. She has extensive teaching experience and extensive professional experience in various organizations outside the University. It is also evident from the submitted CV that she has worked as: Financial analyst (2001-2005); Senior manager and department head (2005-2009); Head of Marketing and PR (2009-2011); Director of Strategy and Outsourcing (2011-2016); Project manager (2016-2018); Director of Marketing and Communications (2018-2020); Member of the Board of Directors and Executive Director of SCC EAD (2021). This enables her to combine practical work in business and management with teaching in the field.

The examination of the documents for participation in the competition (reference on the fulfilment of the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of the Law for Development of Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria in the field of **Social, Economic**

and Legal Sciences) shows that the candidate fulfils (and exceeds) the requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor. This conclusion was confirmed by the Admissions Committee, which gave an affirmative conclusion.

Description/evaluation of the scientific works. For participation in the competition, Dr. Raya Kanazireva has submitted 14 (fourteen) publications as follows: a habilitation thesis on entrepreneurship in the public sector (No. 2; 2023); a published book (monographic in nature), which is based on her PhD thesis – "Corporate Entrepreneurship. Research of Bulgarian Software Companies" – 2022; No. 3); No. 4 – an independent article accepted for publication in Economic Studies (SCOPUS); articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals (including edited collective volumes) – 9 (No. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13); studies – 2 (No. 14, 15). Of the above publications R. Kanazireva is the sole author of the two monographs (Nos. 2, 3), 8 articles and two studies. Two of the articles are co-authored. It can be concluded that the significant part of the presented publications is the author's own work. What are the most distinguishing features of the evaluated works?

- The scientific work of R. Kanazireva is consistent – she has a clearly stated field of scientific research and publishes exclusively in this field – the keys for its delineation are:
entrepreneurship – corporate entrepreneurship – innovation – socially responsible and sustainable investing – management (organizational behavior).
- In the process of scientific inquiry there is continuity, upgrade and development – this is especially visible in the relationship between the author's doctoral dissertation and the habilitation thesis. In the articles and studies, there is an individual focus on topics that are present to one degree or another in the main line of research.
- The analysis of the publications shows that R. Kanazireva is well aware of the achievements in the outlined areas; she presents the sources of ideas correctly and uses them conscientiously and creatively. This is evident both in her dissertation and habilitation thesis; in the other published texts.
- R. Kanazireva does not (necessarily) follow well-trodden paths – the study of entrepreneurship opportunities in state-owned enterprises is a topic, the research of

which does not assume predetermined results. But the topic turns out to be a fruitful one – her research reveals both a wide range of opportunities for innovation and corporate entrepreneurship, as well as many specifics related to the status of these organizations, the legislation (its compliance/non-compliance); the political context, etc.

- R. Kanazireva's extensive professional experience in and out of the University positively influences the quality of her research. This professional experience combined with a good research background creates the opportunity for scientific results to conform to high standards and to bring tangible value.

In summary, I evaluate the presented scientific results as well defended and valuable. The publications and the scientific results presented in them are completely sufficient to meet the requirements of the competition.

The reference to citations shows that four publications of R. Kanazireva's publications have been cited (two of them more than once). This indicates a certain recognition of her scientific results. Given the quality of the results, R. Kanazireva should make more efforts to make them reach a significantly wider range of stakeholders; to this end, I recommend that in the future she should target more widely recognised publications (the first step has been taken - see publication No. 4).

Evaluation of the scientific contributions. The report prepared by R. Kanazireva, contains 11 claims for contributions in the section SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS and a series of contributions of practical-applied nature. I accept in principle the claims made and confirm what has been stated. At the same time, I would make the following comments:

- The claimed scientific contributions are real and can be traced precisely in the publications – they refer to the study – arrangement – conceptualization – use of approaches and models for corporate entrepreneurship and innovation (incl. entrepreneurial intensity); specific conceptual models are verified on the basis of examples in Bulgarian socio-cultural environment – their viability is proven. The collected and processed data are transformed into new knowledge, which is reliable and useful for both the studied organizations and the researchers.

- Sustainable investment and socially responsible investing are a separate research direction – a large number of financing organizations use such criteria in their lending decisions. Drawing entrepreneurs' attention to this aspect of their projects is useful and timely.
- A significant group of contributions relate to opportunities for CE and innovation in state-owned enterprises. These can be traced in the main habilitation work. It has been proven that, despite their 'special status', SOEs can generate innovations with high newly created value; at the same time, the main factors that influence this process have been identified – among them, the leadership qualities of the managers as well as political factors play a significant role. The national context and the international context are also important.
- As far as practical-applied contributions are concerned, I think things should be divided into at least two: (a) the theoretical contributions mentioned above have multiple real "outputs" to corporate practice in specific industries; b) the results have particular significance for researchers and research development in the fields of CE, innovation, sustainable entrepreneurship, etc. c) there are significant opportunities – some of which have been realised – to transfer the research results to education and teaching (this is noted) – I would attribute this part of the contributions to the educational – pedagogical and methodological work of R. Kanazireva.

In summary: the contributions are valid, clearly stated – they are quite sufficient for the needs of the step in academic growth that we discuss and confirm here.

Teaching, pedagogical and methodological activity. According to the references submitted, Dr. R. Kanazireva has extensive teaching experience (measured by years of teaching experience; variety of academic courses; teaching in different faculties and to different audiences – undergraduates, graduate students). She teaches both stand-alone lecture courses (assigned to her as a Ph.D. in Business Administration) as well as practicum and seminar classes. Her portfolio of academic courses is rich – entrepreneurship and innovation; digital brand management; organizational culture management and

development; fundamentals of management, etc. The overall assessment of her teaching is positive.

A characteristic feature of her teaching is didactic innovation. I claim from the first hand that Dr. R. Kanazireva is inventive in the use and application of didactic formats through which she engages students and achieves good academic results.

Due to her research results, she continuously develops and enriches the academic courses. On her initiative and suggestion, new courses are created and introduced (a fresh example is the course on "Managing the Commons and Sustainable Business", created on the basis of her experience in the management of state property in the Republic of Bulgaria and the study of opportunities for CE in state-owned organizations).

In summary: the results of her teaching, pedagogical and methodological work have been consistently positive. This is an important argument in favour of the final overall assessment.

Other activity. According to the CV and other documents submitted for the competition, R. Kanazireva has participated and is participating in numerous projects of different nature. This enriches the opportunities for continuous learning and development and transfer of contemporary knowledge in teaching and research. In addition, she is an active and thinking citizen with her own position – this is especially valuable for the civic education of students, professors, society.

Personal impressions. I know R. Kanazireva for more than 10 years. We work as a team in teaching academic disciplines. I regard her as a professional with high standards for her own work. Socially engaged. Critical thinker. I rely on her.

In view of the above, I have reason to draw the following conclusions and inferences: the candidate (including the procedure and the materials submitted for the competition) meets all the requirements set out in Section IV – Conditions and Procedure for Holding the Academic Position of Associate Professor (Regulation on the Conditions and Procedure for Obtaining Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Art. 105 – 114. For the candidate (Art. 105):

- the candidate holds the academic and scientific degree "Doctor";

- has held the academic post of *chief assistant* for at least 2 years;
- a monographic work has been submitted (University Press "St. Kliment Ohridski") which does not repeat publications used in previous competitions;
- meets (exceeds) the minimum national requirements for the specific scientific field;
- there is no evidence of unauthorised use of others' achievements.

This provides me with the grounds to vote YES and to recommend that Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Raya Nikolova Kanazireva be appointed to the academic position of Associate Professor in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Management; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Brand Management – in Bulgarian and English) – SG No. 96/17-11-2023.

Sofia, March 4, 2024

Signature: