

REVIEW

By Assoc. Prof. Gabriela Staneva Tsankoova, PhD

Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov", Varna

By Order № P-109-515/30.11.2023 of the Rector of I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury and according to Protocol № 1/12.12.2023 I present my review.

Regarding: Academic concourse for acquiring an academic position of „Associate Professor “in the field of higher education 4. Life Sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional direction 4.3. Biological sciences, specialty „Medical genetics “, announced in the Government Newspaper №83/03. 10.2023 with a single candidate Senior assist. Prof. Mariya Levkova, MD, PhD.

Professional and personal biography

Dr. Mariya Levkova was born on 17.12.1991 in Varna. In 2016, she was graduated with a Master's degree in medicine at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna as the winner of "Vipusk 2016". In 2016 - 01. 2017, she was a "part-time Assistant-Professor" in the Department of Medical Genetics at MU--Varna. After a successful competition, from 2017 until now he has been working consecutively as "Assistant Professor" and "Senior Assistant Professor" at the Department of Medical Genetics, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna. Currently, Dr. Levkova works as a medical doctor in the Laboratory of Medical Genetics of the University Hospital "St. Marina" Varna. Her carrier of scientific and practical experience has resulted in the successful defense of PhD thesis: "Molecular-genetic and immunological biomarkers in the medical-genetic counseling of families with infertility". Dr. Levkova has a medical specialty in "Medical Genetics" since 2021.

Regulatory documentation for participation in the competition

Dr. Levkova has presented all legally required documents for participation in the competition: CV, diploma for the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", diploma for acquired specialty, list and copies of publications and scientific works, list and evidence of participation in scientific forums

in Bulgaria and abroad, list of citations of scientific publications, certified by the library of MU-Varna, as well as author's reference for contributions of published scientific works.

Research analysis of the candidate

Dr. Levkova presents an author's reference for scientific works, distributed as follows: dissertation - one issue on "Molecular-genetic and immunological biomarkers in the medical-genetic counseling of families with infertility", full-text scientific publications a total of 22 issues, in 9 of which Dr. Levkova is the leading (first) author, second and further author in 13. A very good impression comes from the fact that 15 of these presented publications are in English, included in authorized scientific editions and 8 of them having a real impact factor. The participation in scientific forums in Bulgaria and abroad of the candidate are a total of 42 in the period 2017-2022, and participation in research projects - 6, in one of them Dr. Levkova is in the role of the administrative and financial manager.

Compliance with the requirements for granting the academic position of "Associate Professor" to the applicant, according to the minimum national requirements set out in the ZRASRB and PRZRRB, and according to the mandatory requirements at the Medical University-Varna.

Dr. Levkova presents for her participation in the current competition:

- Dissertation (PhD thesis) on the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" on the topic "Molecular-genetic and immunological biomarkers in the medical-genetic counseling of families with infertility" (criterion A- 50 pts).
- Scientific publications in publication source, referenced and indexed in world-established databases with scientific information (Web of Science and Scopus) - a total of 5 by criterion B4 - 107 points.
- Scientific publications in publication source, referenced and indexed in world-established databases (Web of Science and Scopus) - a total of 15 by criterion G7 - 216 points.
- Citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-established databases (Web of Science and Scopus) according to criterion D - 25 citations, equivalent to 50 points.
- Full-text publications in scientific journals and anthologies, beyond the minimum science-metric requirements for the post of Associate Professor - 2 copies.

During her scientific development, Dr. Levkova contributes actively in several directions with practical significance: Reproductive genetics, Pediatric genetics and dysmorphology, Neurogenetics, Medical genetic counseling.

The 5T variant in the CFTR gene was investigated as a risk factor for impaired spermatogenesis for the first time among Bulgarian patients. The need to evaluate molecular genetic mutations and polymorphic variants in the CFTR gene in men with impaired spermatogenesis has been confirmed.

Polymorphic variants in genes involved in the regulation of the immune system with a potential role in the successful ending of pregnancy were investigated for the first time in Bulgarian women with recurrent miscarriages; in particular, the 14 bp ins was associated with a higher risk for unsuccessful pregnancy, while the TNF-alpha 308 GA polymorphism was not associated with a higher risk of unsuccessful pregnancy.

Molecular genetic selective screening for Fragile X syndrome (FXS) among high-risk children with intellectual disability/developmental delay/autistic behavior was conducted for the first time in our country.

Among all the scientific production, I have to point out the contribution to general practitioners with the detailed overview on the essence of medical-genetic counseling, as well as the various currently available molecular-genetic analyses.

I highly appreciate the presented research activity and its practical significance.

Teaching and learning activities

Dr. Levkova participated in the educational and teaching activities in conducting practical classes for students of Medicine (in Bulgarian and English), Pharmacy, Midwife, Nurse, Medical laboratory assistant with general classroom employment, exceeding the regulatory requirements of MU-Varna.

Conclusion

The professional qualification, scientific research and teaching activities of Dr. Levkova fully comply to the requirements of the Regulations of the conditions and procedure for the acquisition of scientific Degrees and for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the

Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna. Her publications, submitted for the competition, fully comply with the quantitative criteria for this position.

I declare that I will vote positively for the election of Dr Maria Kostadinova as Associate Professor in the field of higher education 4. Life sciences, mathematics and informatics, professional direction 4.3. Biological sciences, specialty „Medical genetics " and I would dare ask the members of the scientific jury to do the same.

9 February 2024

Varna

Sincerely:

Assoc. Prof. Gabriela Tsankova, PhD

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