

PEER REVIEW

by Prof. Dr. Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv

for the contributions of the proposed habilitation work, as well as the scientific and practical activity of

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Stoyanova Kazashka

for participation in a competition for occupation of the academic position of “Professor”,

Specialty “**Financial Management and Project Financing**”

under Professional field 8.1 “Theory of Arts”

at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv
(announced in SG, Issue 88 dated 20.10.2023)

Biographical presentation and general description of the activity

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Kazashka has a Master’s degree in the specialty “Teacher of Bulgarian and Russian Languages”, a second Master’s degree in the specialty “Macroeconomics”, and a doctorate in the field “Special Pedagogy” on the topic “*Positive Stigma Towards People with Disabilities*”. Her research interests are in the field of “Psychology of the Management of Arts and Scientific Organizations”, “Project Financing and Financial Management of Projects”, “Policies and Programs in the Field of Science and Art”, and “Working with Children with Special Educational Needs and Art Therapy Practices”.

Her professional training in the field “Financial Management and Research Projects Management” has been accumulated since 1998. Associate Professor Kazashka has exceptional experience in the management of scientific projects, the creation of documentation, the organization of various forums, and the dissemination of research results. She is the coordinator and manager of projects financed under various national and European programs. She is also the head of a department at the Center for Excellence of the Center of Plant Systems Biology and Biotechnology (CBSBB) in Plovdiv. Vesela Kazashka is the author of over 25 publications, as well as of the books “Inclusive Education – Introduction” (2019), “Motivation for Career Development and Teamwork in Modern Research Infrastructure” (2020), and “Cultural Policies. Opportunities and Challenges” (2022). She has completed internships and specialization in Russia – in Tula and Moscow, the Czech Republic – in Prague, and Norway – in Trondheim. Kazashka has been a local contact person for the European Network of Researchers EURAXESS since 2010. Associate Professor Kazashka is a highly educated and communicative person, as well as an established educator, who successfully implements project and innovative activities. The style of the monographs and publications she submitted for this competition is precise and accurate, and her theoretical developments have practical applicability.

Assessment of the compliance with the minimum national requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Under Group of indicators **A**, Vesela Kazashka achieved **50 points**, due to a successfully defended dissertation work and an acquired educational and scientific degree “Doctor” (*“Positive Stigma Towards People with Disabilities”*)

Under Group of indicators **C**, under Indicator 3 specifically – *published monograph in the relevant scientific field* – Kazashka, V. (2022), *“Cultural Policies. Opportunities and Challenges”*, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Rakursi Publishing House – Plovdiv, ISBN 978-954-2963-93-6, 180 pages – **100 points**.

Under Group of indicators **D**, under Indicator 9 specifically – *Articles and reports published in specialized publications in the field of arts*, Assoc. Prof. Kazashka presents 16 publications, for which she receives **217.5 points (195 and 22.5)**, and under Indicator 11 – *Studies published in specialized publications in the field of arts*, 11.1 **Kazashka, V.** (2020), *“Motivation for Career Development and Teamwork in Modern Research Infrastructure”*, Plovdiv, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, ISBN 978-954-2963-66-0, p. 100, she realizes **30 points**.

So, from Indicators 9 and 11, she collects **247.5 points** of the required **150**.

Under Group of indicators **E**, under Indicator 17 specifically – *Citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review*, Assoc. Prof. Kazashka presents 15 citations, which are supported by evidence. Thus, **150 points** out of the required **80** are realized.

Under Group of indicators **F**, under Indicator 22 specifically – *Participation in a national scientific, educational, or artistic project*, the candidate presents four projects financed by the Scientific Research Fund, which are evaluated with **60 points**. Under Indicator 24 – *Management of a national scientific, educational, or artistic project*, Assoc. Prof. Kazashka presents five projects. **150 points** are realized. Under Indicator 25 – *Management of an international scientific, educational or artistic project*, the candidate presents two European projects, from which **80 points** are realized. Under Indicator 27 – *Published university textbook or a textbook that is used in the educational network*, **Kazashka, V.** (2019), *“Inclusive Education – Introduction”* (2019), Plovdiv, Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, ISBN 978-954-2963-53-0, 202 pages, **20 points** are realized. Thus, according to Group of indicators **F**, Assoc. Prof. Kazashka collects **310 points**, out of the **120** required for the position of Professor.

Under the current competition Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Kazashka presents a really serious and in-depth activity, fully sufficient to meet the requirements for the occupation of the position of “Professor”.

Research, scientific, and scientific and applied activity

The monograph *“Cultural Policies. Opportunities and Challenges”*, presented by Vesela Kazashka, is a study of our cultural policies, which has the task of making a theoretical analysis of the normative base related to culture in our country. The researcher aims to investigate the position of experts in the field of culture through an empirical study. Vesela Kazashka has the following tasks to solve:

- To study the normative base related to culture, at national, European, and global level, by carrying out an analysis with a projection for the future development of the sector;
- To explore the specifics of cultural policies and to develop a concept;
- To compile a statistical analysis of the data and to evaluate the obtained results.

The *object* of the research is the cultural policies of Bulgaria, the evaluation of managers, artists, and experts in the field of culture for the financing in the sector, as well as their recommendations to the state cultural policy, analyzed through surveys. The *aim* is to have a two-way dialogue. The *subject* of the study is the legislation in the field of culture and art and the financing of the cultural sector. The author is looking for ways to use new sources of funding in order to motivate those working in the field of culture, and thus to attract young people to the sector. According to her, culture needs funding to guarantee the fulfillment of the goals set in the regulatory framework. She believes that without a strategy and without human resources, the goals will not be achieved. 80 people working in the field of culture participated in the research. Kazashka comes to the conclusion that the main commitment to the preservation and development of culture in our country lies with the state. This will be achieved by providing a state subsidy to the responsible institutions, as well as through project financing. Prof. Kazashka's book is extremely useful for managers, students, doctoral students, and those interested in this subject. The developed in-depth research questionnaire, which was distributed to art managers and through which research materials and documentary data were surveyed and analyzed, was of a contributory nature. Kazashka develops and enriches the theoretical positions related to the financing of art and culture in Bulgaria, brings out a terminological apparatus and analyzes the available literature, creates cultural policies, motivates teams with an active civic position on the issues of culture and art, and works to protect the free will of the creator.

As an educator Assoc. Prof. Kazashka strives to increase the financial literacy of students from the field of Arts, by providing them with knowledge about alternative ways of financing and market realization of their creative product. The total number of participants in conferences organized by Assoc. Prof. Kazashka is 497 people, of which 206 are young scientists and doctoral students and 94 – foreign participants. A certain success was the appearance of 6 collections of reports from conferences and 34 books by colleagues from Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, the publication of which became possible after a successfully implemented project by Associate Professor Kazashka. She is credited with creating interdisciplinary and international contacts and participating in networks for science, culture, and education through joint publications, joint projects, and participation in the COST Action. Associate Professor Kazashka manages and implements a number of national and international projects related to art management, with international scientific activity, of which 6 national, 4 intra-institutional and 2 international projects.

Educational and teaching and public activity

Vesela Kazashka is a lecturer in the disciplines: “Inclusive Education”; “Financial Management and Control”; “European Policies and Programs in the Field of Art”; “Financing of an Art Product”; “Language Culture and Communications”. She is the scientific supervisor of 3 current doctoral students in the scientific field “Art Theory”. Assoc. Prof. Kazashka is also a member of: the *Permanent Expert Commission for Monitoring, Evaluation and Analysis of the Scientific Research Activity*, carried out by universities and scientific research organizations (Order No РД-09-2821/09.10.2020 of the Minister of Education); the *Management Committee of the COST Action CA 22156 – Transformations International Experience and Research Network for Sustainable Futures (TransformERS)*; the *Union of Scientists in Bulgaria* (2019); the *Union of Psychologists in Bulgaria*, UIN BG RP 2395 - 2634 (6001) – 2020; the *Local contact person of the Network of European Researchers EURAXESS* (2010); *Registered mediator in the Unified Register of Mediators in Bulgaria under No 20200717001*.

I personally know Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vesela Kazashka as a colleague extremely devoted to the profession and our university. She is the person, with whom we have created and developed a number of successful projects, international conferences, and scientific forums. I would like to emphasize my high assessment of her scientific and teaching qualifications. I recommend to the Scientific Jury to support Associate Professor Vesela Kazashka for her election to the academic position of “Professor” under Professional field 8.1 “Theory of Arts”, Specialty “Financial Management and Project Financing” at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv.

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Prof. Dr. Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak