

## OPINION

by **Assoc. Prof. Borislav Alexandrov Yasenov, PhD**

**AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv**

Regarding the materials submitted for the competition  
for the academic position of Associate Professor  
at AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv,  
in Area of higher education 8. Arts,  
Professional field 8.1. Theory of Arts,  
Scientific major *Management and Project Finance*

The competition for the academic position of *associate professor* in the area of higher education Arts 8., professional field 8.1. Theory of Arts, scientific major *Management and Project Finance* was announced on the request of the Department of Choreography at the Faculty of Music Folklore. There is only one applicant who has submitted documents for taking part in the competition, namely Assistant Professor Vesela Stoyanova Kazashka from AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv.

The documents and publications submitted by the applicant meet the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Statute of AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv.

Attached are: one study legally equal to a monograph, two books based on a doctoral dissertation, a list of publications and copies of research papers – four articles published in Bulgaria (2010-2013), two of which are co-authored and three articles published abroad – two in Russia (2012 and 2013) and one in the Czech Republic (2013) co-authored. With impact factor in 2012 at Thracian University - Stara Zagora. From 2014 to 2018, Vesela Kazashka has twelve publications, four of which are authored by her alone (in the field of pedagogy at international conferences - 2014, 2015 and in the field of arts - 2016, 2017) and the rest are co-authored (in the field of science and art – four in 2017 and four in 2018).

The evaluation for the competition takes into account one scientific work, published after the dissertation in co-authorship, which is legally equated to a monograph, the candidate's

scientific and pedagogical activity and research projects. The ten research papers related to the dissertation are not evaluated.

Vesela Kazashka completed her secondary education at the High school of economics *Vasil Levski*, Plovdiv, in 1989, and received her higher education degrees at Plovdiv University *Paisii Hilendarski* as follows: in 1998 - Master's Degree in Teaching Bulgarian language and literature and Russian language and literature, in 2002 received a master's degree majoring in Macroeconomics, specialization Organization and technology of accounting, and in 2014 she was awarded PhD degree for the defended dissertation on the topic *Positive stigmas towards people with disability*.

The work experience of the applicant includes the following: from 1998 till 2015 incl. she was Director of the Scientific and Applied Activity Unit at Plovdiv University *Paisii Hilendarski*; from 2001 till 2012 worked as an economist in the judiciary system; from January till May 2006 she was a teacher of Bulgarian language and literature at *Hristo Gyulemetov* Vocational school. In 2018 she was a part-time lecturer at the European Higher School of Economics and Management, Plovdiv, and from 2016 to the present she has been working at AMDFA *Prof. Assen Diamandiev* – Plovdiv in the position of head of the Professional Training Centre, and since February 2017 as an assistant professor.

The submitted curriculum vitae shows that Kazashka has long-term experience in the field of higher education, as a teacher and practical specialist in the field of management and project finance, which is in favour of her participation in the present competition.

The research work *Plovdiv – art-organizations and their management profile* was published by AMDFA *Prof. Assen Diamandiev* – Plovdiv and has a volume of 358 pages. The work is co-authored by Assist. Prof. Vesela Kazashka, PhD, Assist. Prof. Vasil Kolev, PhD, and Assoc. Prof. Margarita Ruseva, PhD. According to a division statement dated 03.12.2018 each author has 119 pages of his own with a minimum of 1800 characters per page.

The researchers' interest is incited by the fact that the creative and cultural industries are a real sector of the economy, however, some of the managers in art-organizations do not have sufficient theoretical knowledge and experience to carry out projects and have difficulties in both their development and implementation. The monograph provides the necessary information and guidelines for resolving these issues.

The monograph structure comprises an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, annexes, and a bibliography including 201 sources. The subject of the study are the art-organizations registered in Plovdiv, and the topic of research is their management profile, which includes - forms of management, financial management and project management. The goal of the study is to analyse the status quo in the sector while identifying the difficulties it faces in its work. The results of the study determine the practical relevance of the monograph.

Chapter One presents Plovdiv and the development of art and culture in the city over the centuries and research projects related to archaeological and National Revival heritage. A detailed analysis of the documented budgets of the Ministry of Culture for policies and programs for a twelve-year period from 2007 until 2018 is carried out. Outlined is the role of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts *Prof. Assen Diamandiev* - Plovdiv in the provision of training in art management.

Chapter two is related to the financial management and control of art-organizations – state subsidies, European funds and other sources in their budgets; to identifying typical gaps in project implementation and proposing solutions for their elimination. Chapter three presents the results of the empirical studies conducted in order to obtain the necessary analytical information about the art-organizations in Plovdiv and clarifies the specifics of applying a methodology in project management.

The content of the individual chapters of the monograph formulate and substantiate different conclusions. Some of them derive directly from the problems identified, others relate to the results of the research and theoretical work carried out, and still others have the character of guidelines for further research in the field.

The theoretical and practical contributions of Assistant Professor Vesela Kazashka are expressed in the development of a system for implementing more efficient financial management and control in art-organizations, with an emphasis on project financing; preparation and approbation of an adequate methodological toolkit, including an "Information Card for Expert In-depth Interview " for the study of the management profile of art-organizations. For the first time the specific management profile and peculiarities of 105 organizations in the city of Plovdiv in the period 2016-2018 were studied and analysed.

The recommendations made in the monograph can benefit the research, educational and practical activities of students, doctoral students, teachers and art managers; as well as the development of local and national policies in the field of art.

The publications in the *Web of Science* global scientific database enrich the image of AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv, as an equal partner of leading international scientific organizations and contribute to raising the value of the scientific activity of the Academy by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The candidate has taken part in the preparation and implementation of national and international projects related to scientific activities and art – two international (as project leader in 2016 and as a team member in 2019) and three national ones in 2016, 2017, and in 2019 as a leader. She was manager of six projects in the period 2011 till 2015 and financial manager of five in the period 2009 - 2019.

The additional funds obtained for the Academy through projects funded by external sources in 2016-2018 amount to 79 620 BGN.

A Financial Management module was adapted for the *Art Management* programme, as well as *Innovations*, *Creativity* and *Business models* modules for the *Cultural Entrepreneurship* programme, which are applicable to secondary schools of arts and centres for professional education and training in Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and the United Kingdom. Training and approbation of the curricula was done at the National High School of Performing Arts and Media in Plovdiv.

The submitted reference for meeting the mandatory minimum national requirements in the area of *Arts* shows that they are fully covered by the candidate.

Regarding the additional indicators: Assistant Professor Vesela Kazashka actively teaches; she is a member of editorial boards; member of scientific organizations; participates in the organization, management and carrying out of seminars and scientific conferences.

All the above mentioned is an evidence that the applicant has a significant contribution to the pedagogical, scientific and applied activities at the Academy, and also as a specialist in the field of management and project finance. The candidate's rich professional experience and extensive research in the field of science and arts, with proven original scientific and applied contributions, have been recognized and some of them have been published in international journals and scientific proceedings. Kazashka's theoretical developments

have practical applicability, and the results achieved in the educational and research domains meet the specific requirements of the scientific major *Management and project finance*.

After considering the materials submitted for the competition and analyzing their significance, scientific, applied and practical contributions, I find it reasonable to present to the distinguished scientific jury my positive assessment in support of the approval of Assistant Professor Vesela Stoyanova Kazashka, PhD, for the academic position of *associate professor* at AMDFA Prof. Assen Diamandiev – Plovdiv, area of higher education 8. Arts, professional field 8.1. *Arts theory*, scientific major *Management and project finance*.

20.08. 2019

**Author of the opinion:**

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