

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Binka Georgieva Karaivanova
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regarding the competition for the academic
position of "Associate Professor"

in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of Teaching...,(Methodology of teaching music), announced in the State Gazette No. 38 dated April 28, 2023.

1.Competition Information

The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in "Methodology in teaching music" was announced in State Gazette, No. 38 dated April 28, 2023, to fulfill the needs of the Department of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogy at Trakia University - Stara Zagora. The sole candidate is Assistant Dr. Diana Veskova Petkova.

All requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Community in the Republic of Bulgaria, its implementing Regulations, and the Regulations of Trakia University for the development of academic community, including the required scientific metrics - the total score from indicators A, B, C, D groups is 470, with a requirement of 400, have been met.

The documents submitted for the competition provide a basis to conclude that no procedural violations have occurred.

2. Candidate Information

Diana Petkova was born on March 22, 1970, in Nova Zagora. In 1993, she graduated from the Academy of Music and Dance Arts in Plovdiv with a major in Music Pedagogy (level according to the national classification NQF Master's level). After obtaining her degree, she worked as a music teacher in Nova Zagora and Plovdiv, continuously enhancing her educational qualifications through various qualification courses and specializations: she specialized in Music Methodology at Academy of Music and Dance Arts - Plovdiv; obtained a Second Professional Qualification Degree at Centre of Information and Development - Sofia, and a qualification as an Instructor in basic and specific computer skills for teaching teachers of "Visual Arts" and "Music" at the Training Center of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

From 2007-2013, Diana Petkova was a part-time doctoral student at the Music Department of Faculty of Elementary and Preschool Pedagogy at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the scientific specialty Teaching Methodology in Music, and after successfully defending her dissertation on the topic: "Optimizing the Process of Music Education through Specialized Music Software" in 2013, she was awarded the academic title of "Doctor" in professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of Teaching...

At the present moment, she holds the position of an assistant professor at the Faculty of Pedagogy at Trakia University - Stara Zagora, within the Department of Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy. Additionally, she serves as a senior music teacher at the Humanitarian High School "Saints, saints Cyril and Methodius" in Plovdiv.

Part of her rich professional biography includes the successful realization of national and regional programs and projects, which serve as evidence of her musical creativity and social engagement. Among these, five projects funded by the National Culture Fund, for which Diana Petkova served as the project leader, and her participation in two international projects under the "Erasmus+" program stand out.

Diana Petkova's professional journey portrays her as a focused scholar, a modern and socially engaged researcher, practitioner, and educator.

3. Description of Scientific Works

The presented body of scientific work delineates the comprehensive and convincing preparation and expertise of Assistant Professor Dr. Diana Petkova in the field of the competition. In the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor," the candidate has submitted 17 publications, as follows:

- 1 monograph submitted as a habilitation thesis;
- 1 monograph (co-authored), not presented as the primary habilitation work;
- 1 book based on a dissertation for the award of the academic title "Doctor";
- 1 publication in a scientific journal, peer-reviewed and indexed in globally renowned databases of scientific information;
- 13 articles and reports published in unreferenced journals with scientific review or in edited collective volumes.

A total of 13 citations have been noted – 4 in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes, and 9 in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific review.

Assistant Dr. Diana Petkova's scientific production focuses on specific issues in informal music education, the application of specialized music software in music teaching, and the modeling of an intermedial environment in the context of the education of future elementary and preschool teachers. The presented works are distinguished by a modern conceptual vision and an original authorial style.

The habilitation work of Assistant Dr. Diana Petkova, titled "**Design for Informal Music Education**", presents an innovative idea for the pedagogical design of informal music education within an art organization context. The monograph highlights an authorial teaching model that provides opportunities for the systematic, long-term development of children's musical abilities from an early age through an original set of educational programs and events that encourage their active participation in various public and representative activities.

The model harnesses the creative potential of project activities to develop new educational spaces and implement innovative educational structures through participation in educational and socially engaged activities.

The monograph "**Intermedial Horizon for Literary and Musical Education**" presents the authors' concept of achieving synergistic education through the modeling of an intermedial environment. The phenomenon of intermediality and its functioning in the context of literary and

musical arts within the framework of the education of future elementary and preschool teachers is clarified. The didactic parameters of the intermedial educational perspective are derived.

The results of Assistant Dr. Diana Petkova's dissertation work have been published in the book **"Musical Computer Technologies in Education. A Model for Communicative Interaction."**

The monograph presents the author's position on the application of specialized software (in technological, organizational, and methodical aspects) in music education within the context of contemporary educational process design in secondary and higher education.

The articles and reports included by the candidate in the competition list represent various aspects of the targeted research areas in which her monographic studies are conducted. They popularize her ideas among the broader scientific community and demonstrate her scientific qualities and expertise in the field of the competition.

4. Scientific Contributions

Diana Petkova is applying for the position of "Associate Professor" with compelling and categorical contributions in her scientific, methodological, and pedagogical activities.

In her monograph **"Design for Informal Music Education"**, she has constructed an innovative model of education through a system for early childhood music development and advanced musical activities. I admire the idea of methodical and practical development of an educational space that includes children from the earliest age. This idea resonates with the contemporary understanding of using music as a means for optimal pedagogical interaction by involving the child in music education activities from birth. Scientific developments and access to such informal education in Bulgaria are severely limited, making the early childhood period the least provided with methodological literature, music education services, and good pedagogical practices. In this sense, through the developed educational programs and the provision of systematic music activities for children aged 0 to 6 in a private art organization, the importance of early childhood music development is popularized among the public in the most attractive way, meeting the needs of parents and children by immersing them in an artistic environment with opportunities for diverse musical and artistic interactions.

I highly appreciate the developed ART concept for advanced musical education, where each educational program is created in relation to others and has a building, consolidating, and developing function.

Diana Petkova's innovative and original thinking is also reflected in her concept for implementing educational and social projects as a kind of laboratory for conducting original and non-standard musical events. Special attention deserves her initiative to involve children and students who use residential social services in the world of music and to popularize practices that are unfamiliar to them and to social institutions.

In the monograph **"Intermedial Horizon for Literary and Musical Education"**, the idea that the realization of intermedial interaction between literary text and music presupposes the homogeneity of synthetic perception of works and the possibility of forming a new creative context that reflects in construction synthetic artistic image is indisputably and categorically defended.

A conceptual construct has been modeled to achieve synergistic education through music and literature, introducing intermediality as a phenomenon in the Bulgarian educational environment. An intermedial methodological system has been developed and tested, including: a curriculum for applying an intermedial approach in education; educational resources; and an

instrumentarium for diagnosing intermedial competence in future preschool and primary school teachers.

Among the contributions of the monograph "**Musical Computer Technologies in Education. A Model for Communicative Interaction**" I would highlight the precise analysis of the possibilities for integrating computer technologies into the music pedagogical interaction; the methodological system for using specialized music software in music education in primary and secondary schools; and the proposed design of musical performance activities in the education of students studying preschool and primary school pedagogy in synchronous and asynchronous electronic environments.

5. Teaching Activities

Assistant Diana Petkova conducts lecture courses, seminars, and practical exercises in bachelor's and master's programs at the Faculty of Pedagogy at Trakia University. All of these activities are in line with the profile of the announced competition. The candidate has initiated the creation of four elective courses included in the curricula of pedagogical specialties, which are evidence of modern and high-quality education. These courses address topics closely related to her special scientific interests, and her ideas are tested among future preschool and primary school teachers.

From the presented data, it is evident that the teaching engagement of the candidate fully meets the profile of the competition for the position of "Associate Professor".

6. Conclusion

The presented scientific production, in terms of volume, content, and quality, as well as the overall research, teaching, and project activities of Assistant Dr. Diana Petkova, fully meet the requirements of the Law of the development of the academic community in Republic of Bulgaria and the internal Regulations of Trakia University for the appointment to the academic position of "Associate Professor."

Based on the findings and assessments made, I confidently express my positive vote for Assistant Dr. Diana Veskova Petkova to be appointed to the academic position of "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of Teaching... scientific specialty "Methodology of Music Education."

August 28, 2023
Karaivanova

Assoc. Dr. Binka