

**Health Sector Reform - Improving Health System Quality and Efficiency Project - IBRD Loan no. 8362-RO
International Competitive Bidding No. G/C1/2.1 - Procurement of diagnostic imaging medical equipment**

CLARIFICATIONS and AMENDMENTS TO THE BIDDING DOCUMENT – 2nd round

A. GENERAL CLARIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR ALL THREE LOTS:

No.	Request for clarification	Clarification Response	Clarification or Amendment to the Bidding Document
<p>Addendum no. 2 to the Bidding Document</p>	<p>We respectfully request that the deadline for bidding and clarifications for subject tender be extended by 2 weeks to provide sufficient time for bidders to review the tender's amended specifications and to prepare bids in accordance with the World Bank's procurement guidelines.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health recently issued Addendum no. 1, which sets the new clarification deadline for tomorrow, Friday, 4 August 2017 (A.N. letter of August 3rd, 2017), and the bidding deadline to Friday, 25 August 2017. However, we still have not received a response to our original clarification letter submitted on 11 July 2017 in which we requested modifications to 19 technical specifications which, if left unchanged, would lock Company X from participating in this tender. In addition, we had 16 questions where additional details and specificity to the bidding document will be appreciated. We are reattaching this letter for ease in reference.</p> <p>We understand the Ministry will be responding to all clarification questions in short order, and we request that the new clarification deadline be pushed to Friday, 18 August 2017, and the bidding deadline to Friday, 8 September 2017. This minor adjustment will provide bidders with sufficient time to review the amended specifications and to prepare additional clarifications as needed, and will not create significant delay.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this letter, and we look forward to receiving your response to our original clarification letter and your extension of the clarification and bidding deadlines. Company X is interested in participating in this important tender to improve public health in Romania.</p>	<p>The bid submission deadline is extended until September 14th, 2017, 14:00 local time.</p> <p>See also Addendum no. 3 to the Bidding Document.</p>	<p>Amendment</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Due to the complexity of the offer in question as well as the changes arising from your answer to the requested clarifications, we feel that there is not sufficient time assigned to make a competitive technical and financial offer. Even more so, in order to submit a high-quality offer at a low cost, we</p>	<p>See above clarification 1.</p>	<p>Clarification</p>



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	need an extended period of time to negotiate with our providers. In order to present a complete and competitive offer, we respectfully ask you for an extension of the term for the submission of offers.		
3.	As a potential bidder, having in mind the complexity of the Clarifications to the Bidding Document and Addendum no. 2, sent today 16.08.2017 and also considering the bidding documents (ITB 7.1, page 29), we kindly ask you to change the submission of the bid to <u>30.08.2017</u> or a later date.	See above clarification 1.	Clarification
4.	With regard to the ITB 7.1 of the BDS sheet "The purchaser will respond in writing to any request for clarification received no later than twenty one (21) days prior to the deadline for submission of bids", we kindly ask you to extend the deadline set for August 25 th in order to be compliant with the bid documentation.	See above clarification 1.	Clarification
5.	Please have in mind that in accordance with para 2.18 from World Bank Procurement Guidelines 2011 version " <i>Any modification to the bidding documents shall be introduced in the form of an addendum. If necessary, the deadline shall be extended</i> " we would like to highlight that in similar situations such as "Procurement of equipment for Intensive Care Units (ICU) – ICB No. G/CI/5.2", the deadline was extended even though the tender was smaller in terms of volume and complexity. Although understanding the time constraints related to the project, we kindly ask you to extend the deadline to allow reaction time related to the possible clarification which may be generated by Amendment no.2 and also the minimum 10 days stipulated in ITB 7.1 Section II Bid Data Sheet for the proper bid preparation.	See above clarification 1.	Clarification



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B. SPECIFIC CLARIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR EACH OF THE THREE LOTS:

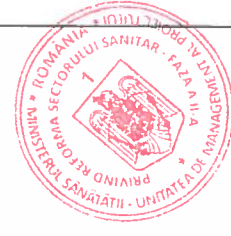
LOT 2 – MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING EQUIPMENT

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<p>Section VII. Schedule of Requirements – Technical Specifications</p>			
1.	<p>After carefully analyzing the Amendment no. 1 issued on August 15th, we would like to express our serious concern regarding the diminishment of the initial technical specification for LOT II - MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING EQUIPMENT</p> <p>1. Revising the following technical specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradient amplitude on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 30 mT/m on axis - Growth rate (slew-rate) on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 100T/m/s <p>you created a significant advantage for SIEMENS HEALTHCARE, which is the only manufacturer of MRI systems, that still has in its portfolio such a low-end equipment that matches the current version of the technical specifications. Moreover, this statement is supported by the fact that only one manufacturer addressed this specific question.</p> <p>The gradients performance, together with other parameters like magnet homogeneity and field of view are factors that define the image quality and technology level for the MR systems available on the market. Higher gradients deliver artifact reduction, extended coverage and the overall image quality required for demanding applications.</p> <p>Our understanding of the aim for a technical specification is to define a certain technology level, but also to ensure a fair access and competition amongst similar products available on the market. Such an approach is in line with paragraph 2.20 from World Bank Procurement Guidelines, which explicitly stipulates that <i>“The specification shall permit the acceptance of offers for goods which have similar characteristics and which provide performance at least substantially equivalent to those specified.”</i></p> <p>We would like to, hereby, express our concern regarding the reason which drove the Purchaser to accept such a revision based on the judgment <i>“so that no Whole Body MR system available on the market would be excluded from the tender”</i>.</p>	<p>Having in mind that higher gradients ensure a better quality of the image, reduced artifacts and a better coverage, we have made a more thorough analysis with a view of both,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring a wide competition among potential bidders offering equipment similar in performance, and - buying a performing MRI to serve the needs of all 21 large emergency county hospitals, and we've reached the following conclusions: - out of 28 models of 1,5T MRI currently on the market, 27 of them have at least the gradient amplitude and slew-rate values of minimum 33 mT/m on axis, respectively minimum 120 T/m/s, as originally required in the Bidding Document, confirming that by choosing these minimum requirements we'll have a better equipment and a fair competition among models similar in performance; - the MRI equipment is intended to be used for a wide diagnostic range, including the diagnosis of neurological and cardiovascular diseases, which need better image quality and implicitly higher gradient amplitude and slew-rate values. 	<p>Clarification</p>



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	<p>The above-mentioned reputable manufacturer has already in its portfolio a system which fulfills all the technical specifications as initially published by the Purchaser, named MAGNETOM AMIRA. Please find attached the extract from https://www.healthcare.siemens.com/magnetic-resonance-imaging/0-35-to-1-5t-mri-scanner/magnetom-amira/technical-details, as Appendix no. 1 of the present letter. In line with the above judgment, we kindly bring to your attention that the vast majority of 1.5T LCC MR systems available on the Romanian market are capable of producing Whole Body MR images and most of them having higher gradients than 30 mT/m on axis and minimum 100T/m/s. Under these circumstances, none of them should be prevented from being offered in a tender of such magnitude.</p> <p>The request of the reputable manufacturer to reduce the gradient amplitude performance by 10% and the slew-rate performance by almost 20% was meant to obtain a pure competitive advantage, ignoring the clinical needs of the Purchaser of investing in technologies which will not become obsolete during the normal life cycle of the product. Such a competitive advantage is essential taking into account the lowest price evaluation factor. Nevertheless, we would like to mention that many of the end users are clinical hospitals located in university centers, requiring a certain level of clinical diagnostic confidence.</p> <p>We strongly consider that your decision to accept such a low gradient performance specifications, in a procedure where not all the manufacturers are able to offer their low-end systems will represent a controversial trend in the market for future procurement procedures.</p> <p>Therefore, to set up a sound quality level for the products to be offered and to ensure fair competition, we kindly ask you to revert to the previous version of gradients specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradient amplitude on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 33 mT/m on axis; - Growth rate (slew-rate) on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 120T/m/s. 	<p>Therefore, we have decided to revert to our original requirements regarding the gradient amplitude and slew-rate minimum values.</p> <p>The article 28 of Addendum no. 2 to the Bidding Document is hereby modified and it will be read as follows:</p> <p>“Gradient System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradient system with active shielding; - Gradient amplitude on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 33 mT/m on axis - Growth rate (slew-rate) on each axis (for maximum FOV): minimum 120 T/m/s” 	<p>Amendment</p>



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