M.4 Non-Price Technical Evaluation Factors

The technical proposal will be evaluated on compliance with providing the specified items and services outlined in the Section C Statement of Work (SOW). The evaluation factors below are listed in their **strict order of relative importance**.

Factor 1: Technical Performance & Capability

Degree to which the proposed 7T system meets and beneficially exceeds required performance, particularly local gradient performance (≥200 mT/m, ≥900 T/m/s), RF performance, image quality, reconstruction performance, stability, homogeneity, and demonstrated high-resolution/SMS/EPI capability. **Additional evaluation credit will be assigned only where an enhancement provides a meaningful, demonstrable research benefit to the NIH—not merely because a numerical specification is higher.**

Factor 2: Research Capability, Openness & Development Environment

Quality and completeness of pulse-sequence/reconstruction development environments; source-code availability; access to raw data; APIs/tools/documentation; ability to develop custom sequences, coils, and reconstruction methods; vendor research support; and the clear identification of any restrictions, licensing, or dependencies affecting baseline NIH research parameters.

Factor 3: Compatibility, Integration & Research Continuity

Compatibility with existing NIH MRI systems, protocols, data workflows, coils, and software where applicable; networking interface architecture; researcher workflows; and the overall ability to transition existing studies and longitudinal protocols with minimal clinical disruption.

Factor 4: Turnkey Installation, Transition & Schedule

Technical soundness and completeness of the site-preparation, facility construction, removal/trade-in extraction, installation, commissioning, testing, and transition plan; overall schedule credibility across the 18-to-24-month performance window; proactive management of

operational risks; and the ability to avoid adversely affecting other active MRI systems in the facility at system handover.

Factor 5: Relevant Experience & Technical Risk

Demonstrated successful corporate and subcontractor experience delivering comparable human 7T systems incorporating local high-performance gradients at or above the specified performance; evidence that the proposed technology is mature, feasible, supportable, and technically sound within an active medical research center envelope.

Factor 6: Training, Warranty, Service & Lifecycle Support

Quality of clinical applications and sequence development training; baseline and extended warranty coverage; field engineering response and support capabilities; software upgrades; parts availability matrices; system upgradeability; and the long-term ability to support the system throughout its anticipated research life.

M.5 Technical Qualitative Rating Rubric

The Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) will evaluate each of the six factors above by mapping observed strengths, weaknesses, and risks directly to the following consensus definitions: **Rating**	**Definition**
Outstanding	Exceeds requirements in multiple meaningful ways and provides exceptional benefit to NIH research goals; very low technical/performance risk.
Good	Exceeds requirements in meaningful ways that provide an identifiable, beneficial asset to the facility; low technical risk.
Acceptable	Meets all mandatory baseline requirements; demonstrates no material strengths or deficiencies; acceptable risk profile.
Marginal	Has weaknesses or technical gaps that create appreciable performance risk but may be correctable through clarifications.
Unacceptable	Fails to meet a material requirement or presents an unacceptable level of technical, physical, or performance risk