

FOUNDER CHECKLIST —

THE RAISE READINESS CHECKLIST

Everything a technology company should have in place before the first investor meeting. Work through it before you start outreach, and your raise moves faster at every stage.

READY BEFORE YOU RAISE

Most raises that drag on for a year do not fail on the idea. They stall on preparation: a deck that does not match the model, a data room built during diligence instead of before it, or an investor list that was never matched to the company.

This checklist covers the eight areas investors test. Tick each item honestly. Anything left open is a question an investor will ask, usually at the worst possible moment.

O1

The story

Why this company, why now, and why you will win.

O2

The deck

A tight narrative investors can follow without you in the room.

O3

Financials and model

Numbers that reconcile everywhere they appear.

O4

Traction and metrics

Evidence the business works, presented the way investors read it.

O5

Corporate and legal

A clean company with no surprises in diligence.

O6

Data room

Organised, complete and ready before the first call.

O7

Investor targeting

The right investors, matched on stage, size and sector.

O8

Process and team

A timeline, an owner, and the time to run it properly.

STORY, DECK AND NUMBERS

01 THE STORY

- ☐ **One sentence** that explains what the company does and for whom.
- ☐ **The problem**, who has it, and what it costs them today.
- ☐ **Why now**: what has changed that makes this the moment.
- ☐ **Why you**: the founder and team advantage investors cannot easily find elsewhere.
- ☐ **A clear ask**: amount, instrument, use of funds and the milestones it buys.

02 THE DECK

- ☐ **12 to 15 slides** that read on their own, without a voiceover.
- ☐ **Traction early**, within the first few slides, not saved for the end.
- ☐ **Market sized bottom up**, from customers you can actually reach.
- ☐ **Competition shown honestly**, with a clear reason you win.
- ☐ **A short teaser version** for first contact, and the full deck for meetings.

03 FINANCIALS AND MODEL

- ☐ **Historic financials** for the last two to three years, or since launch.
- ☐ **A monthly model** for at least the next 24 months, with clear assumptions.
- ☐ **Every number in the deck** traceable to the model.
- ☐ **Runway** today, and runway after this raise.
- ☐ **Use of funds** broken down by category and tied to milestones.

TRACTION, LEGAL AND DATA ROOM

04 TRACTION AND METRICS

- ☐ **Revenue and growth** month by month, not only annual totals.
- ☐ **Retention or churn** by cohort, the first thing serious investors ask for.
- ☐ **Unit economics:** customer acquisition cost, lifetime value, payback, gross margin.
- ☐ **Pipeline** with stages and realistic conversion.
- ☐ **Customer references** who have agreed to take an investor call.

05 CORPORATE AND LEGAL

- ☐ **A clean, current cap table**, including options and convertibles.
- ☐ **Incorporation documents** and shareholder agreements in one place.
- ☐ **IP assigned** to the company by every founder, employee and contractor.
- ☐ **Key contracts** with customers, suppliers and partners.
- ☐ **No surprises:** disputes, debts or obligations disclosed upfront.

06 DATA ROOM

- ☐ **Built before outreach**, not during diligence.
- ☐ **A logical folder structure** investors recognise (see our Data Room Template).
- ☐ **Access tracking** so you know who has opened what.
- ☐ **Version control:** one current copy of every document.

INVESTORS AND PROCESS

07 INVESTOR TARGETING

- ☐ **A shortlist** matched on stage, ticket size, sector and geography.
- ☐ **A lead investor profile:** who can set terms and anchor the round.
- ☐ **Beyond the usual cities:** family offices and funds in the GCC are active backers of European and North American technology.
- ☐ **A warm introduction path** to each investor on the list.
- ☐ **Reference checks** on investors before you take their money.

08 PROCESS AND TEAM

- ☐ **A realistic timeline:** most raises take several months from first meeting to close.
- ☐ **One owner** of the process, with the time to run it.
- ☐ **Outreach in waves** so meetings cluster and momentum builds.
- ☐ **A pipeline tracker** with every investor, stage and next step.
- ☐ **A plan for the business** to keep growing while you raise.

YOUR SCORE

All eight sections complete: you are ready to start outreach. Two or more sections open: fix them first. Investors rarely give a second first impression.

READY TO RAISE? WE RUN THE PROCESS WITH YOU

Malahide Partners advises technology companies on raising \$1M to \$100M in equity and debt, and on M&A. We prepare the materials, build the investor list, make the introductions and run the process to close, with investors across Europe, North America and the GCC.

Every mandate comes with a client portal showing your full investor pipeline, weekly reports and every piece of feedback, as it happens.

If you are raising in the next twelve months, book a call. We will tell you where you stand against this checklist, and which investors in our network fit.

BOOK A CALL