

Technology Readiness Level (TRL) Self-Assessment

This worksheet is designed to help you assess where your innovation currently sits on the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) ladder. Read each TRL description and use the guiding questions to determine the highest level you can confidently claim based on evidence, not intention.

TRL Ladder with Guiding Questions

TRL Level	Stage Description	Can you say “Yes” to this?
TRL 1	Basic principles observed	Have you identified a scientific principle or insight?
TRL 2	Technology concept formulated	Have you defined the idea and how it could work?
TRL 3	Experimental proof of concept	Have you done lab tests or modelling to show it might work?
TRL 4	Technology validated in lab	Have you built and tested a lab-scale prototype?
TRL 5	Technology validated in relevant environment	Have you tested your solution in a relevant, real-world setting?
TRL 6	Technology demonstrated in relevant environment	Have you demonstrated a working version in the field with real users?
TRL 7	System prototype in operational environment	Is your solution operating in real conditions, as a full prototype?
TRL 8	System complete and qualified	Is your solution final, fully functional, and certified (if needed)?
TRL 9	Actual system proven in operational use	Is your solution being used commercially or at scale with real impact?

Reflection Questions

- What evidence do you currently have for your TRL level?
- What is your riskiest assumption?
- What would help you move to the next TRL?
- Who could help you test or validate your solution further?

This worksheet was developed as part of the MAIA Business Development Programme, supporting innovators and project partners from Horizon-funded climate projects.

Further Resources

TRL Frameworks and Explainers

These help clarify and deepen understanding of TRL stages beyond the basic 1–9 ladder.

Official EU & Horizon Europe TRL Definitions

Source: [European Commission TRL Definitions](#)

Use this to offer a formal reference to TRL stages as used in EU research programmes.

Introductory Video: TRL Explained in Under 5 Minutes

- **Suggested Video:** [Technology Readiness Level \(TRL\)](#) – Innovation Management

TRL Assessment Tools

Useful for structured or automated evaluation of readiness.

NASA TRL Calculator

Tool: [NASA TRL Assessment Tool](#)

Online Self-Assessment Tools

- <https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/store/trl-assessment>

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