FUNDRAISING 101™

Investment Readiness for Early-Stage Founders

Raising Venture Capital for Climate Innovation

Ten critical factors for founders · Future Makers, Eagle Labs Glasgow · 17 September 2026

+1. Match the capital to the business model: venture capital only fits companies chasing a very large, venture-scale exit. Many excellent climate businesses (place-based, steady-growth, community-interest, infrastructure) are better served by grants, debt or blended finance. Take the non-dilutive money first.

2. Investors fund returns, not impact: impact is necessary but never sufficient. Strip the "green" out and the commercial case must still stand on its own. Sustainability is the wedge that opens the door; it is not the investment case.

3. Beware policy and subsidy dependency: know which regulations, carbon prices and grants drive your window, but show the economics reach standalone viability as costs fall, not because of a subsidy a change of government could remove.

4. Know your unit economics and respect the "valley of death": climate hardware and infrastructure are capital-intensive with long timelines. The gap between a working pilot and first commercial scale is where most die. Show believable margins and a credible path to scale-up capex.

5. Proof beats narrative: letters of intent, pilots, paying customers and offtake agreements move valuation and shorten the raise. Raise off traction, not off a deck.

6. Be investment-ready before you ask: clean cap table, a proper data room, a specific use of funds, and a raise sized to reach the next real value inflection. Most deals are lost on avoidable housekeeping, not on the idea.

7. Understand the investor's own maths: VCs need a small number of outcomes to return the whole fund, which drives their push on ownership, follow-on and scale. Match your ambition to the right pocket of capital.

8. Protect resilience through dilution discipline: over-raising and a punchy valuation come back to bite at the next round. A blended stack of grants and debt alongside equity keeps more of the company and de-risks the journey.

9. Pick the right investor, not just the cheque: the wrong investor on your cap table costs more than money. Look for sector understanding, follow-on capacity and behaviour under pressure.

10. The UK's climate ecosystem is strong, so plug into it: programmes like the National Climate Tech Accelerator (co-hosted by Barclays and Sustainable Ventures), Zero Waste Scotland, the Net Zero Technology Centre, Circular Glasgow, IBioIC and Undaunted exist to help you sharpen the proposition, find non-dilutive funding and reach investors. Use them before you spend a penny on advisers.

Investors aren't buying your planet-saving story. They're buying a business that happens to save the planet. Get the business right and the capital follows.

ABOUT FUNDRAISING101

We help early-stage tech and climate founders become genuinely **Raise-Ready**, not just deck-ready. We pressure-test your pitch, business plan and numbers the way an investor will, then point you at the right funders and the grants worth chasing. Support runs from a free initial deck scan, through forensic reviews with a targeted investor list, to the Raise-Ready Bootcamp and ongoing aftercare. Based in Glasgow, working with founders across Scotland and the North of England.

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