

Minimum Requirements for a Project Charter

Module 1: Introduction & Template Overview

Topic 4: Node Readiness Self-Assessment



This assessment serves two purposes:

1. **Diagnostic:** Identifies Charter development priorities.
2. **Strategic:** Informs realistic submission timeline.

Unlike binary pass/fail checklists, this uses a **maturity framework**: where you are on a development continuum guides timeline and resource planning.

The Maturity Framework

Each dimension uses four maturity levels:

- **Level 1 (Nascent):** Early stage, significant development needed
- **Level 2 (Developing):** Progress made, gaps remain
- **Level 3 (Established):** Solid foundation, minor refinements
- **Level 4 (Mature):** Advanced capability, continuous improvement

You don't need Level 4 everywhere. Level 3 is solid. Level 2 with clear development path is acceptable for many dimensions.

Four Readiness Dimensions - Organisational Readiness

Question 1: Institutional Mandate

Do you have formal institutional/national mandate for EOSC participation?

- Level 1: No formal mandate; Node is individual initiative
- Level 2: Informal support; recognized but not formally chartered
- Level 3: Formal mandate (board resolution, national strategy inclusion)
- Level 4: Multi-institutional

If Level 1-2: Secure institutional endorsement before Charter submission. Requires executive briefing, board approval (allow 2-3 months).

Question 2: Node Governance

Does your Node have defined governance distinct from institutional governance?

- Level 1: No Node-specific governance
- Level 2: Informal coordination among service providers
- Level 3: Formal governance with decision processes
- Level 4: Mature governance with advisory boards, user representation

If Level 1-2: Establish minimum governance: Coordinator with authority, service provider coordination mechanism, decision-making process, user feedback channel.

Question 3: Service Portfolio Coherence

Do services constitute coherent portfolio serving identifiable communities?

- Level 1: Disconnected services without strategic connection
- Level 2: Partial overlap, unclear portfolio strategy
- Level 3: Coherent portfolio with clear thematic/functional focus
- Level 4: Strategic portfolio with complementary services creating

If Level 1-2: Identify unifying theme (disciplinary, geographic, functional, workflow). Articulate how services collectively address stakeholder needs. Consider excluding services that don't strengthen positioning.

Four Readiness Dimensions - Technical Readiness

Question 4: TRL 7 Service Maturity

How many services meet TRL 7 (operational with real users)?

- Level 1: No TRL 7 services (all development/pilot)
- Level 2: 1-2 services at TRL 7; majority at TRL 5-6
- Level 3: Most services (>70%) at TRL 7
- Level 4: All services at TRL 7 with

- If Level 1: Delay enrollment until services reach TRL 7 OR include only TRL 7 services in Charter with TRL 6 in roadmap.
- If Level 2: Acceptable if 3-5 core services are TRL 7 + credible TRL 6→7 roadmap for others.

Question 5: AAI Integration Status

What is your authentication infrastructure status?

- Level 1: No institutional AAI; service-specific authentication only
- Level 2: Institutional AAI (SAML) but not eduGAIN federated
- Level 3: eduGAIN federated; EOSC AAI pathway clear
- Level 4: EOSC AAI pilot

- If Level 1: Realistic EOSC AAI timeline is 12-18 months (join eduGAIN 3-6 months, configure 2-4 months, test EOSC AAI 1-2 months, production 1-2 months).
 - If Level 2: Timeline 9-12 months (configure for eduGAIN, test EOSC AAI, production).

Question 6: Service Metadata Readiness

Are service metadata documented in structured format?

- Level 1: Unstructured (PDF docs, web pages)
- Level 2: Internal database without standard schema
- Level 3: DataCite or similar schema compliance
- Level 4: Already registered in national/domain catalogue with

If Level 1-2: Allocate 1-2 weeks per service for metadata documentation. Module 5 provides EOSC schema specifications.

Four Readiness Dimensions - Resource Readiness

Question 7: Sustained Funding

Do you have secured funding for 24+ months post-enrollment?

- Level 1: No secured funding; dependent on future grants
- Level 2: Annual allocation (renewable, not guaranteed beyond 12 months)
- Level 3: Multi-year commitment (24-36 months)
- Level 4: Sustained funding model (institutional core budget, national infrastructure funding)

If Level 1-2: Options: (a) Secure multi-year commitment before submission, (b) Acknowledge as CRITICAL risk with diversification strategy, (c) Position as pilot Node with production-phase funding dependent on success.

Question 8: Staffing Capacity

Do you have dedicated staff for core operational functions?

- Level 1: All volunteer or <20% time allocation
- Level 2: Some dedicated (1-2 FTE) but critical gaps
- Level 3: Adequate dedicated (3-5 FTE)
- Level 4: Full operational team (5+ FTE)

Minimum viable: ~2.2 FTE (1.0 Operations, 0.5 User Support, 0.5 Coordination/Communications, 0.2 Legal/Cybersecurity shared).

Four Readiness Dimensions - Community Readiness

Question 9: Existing User Community

Do you currently serve an established user community?

- Level 1: No current users (projected)
- Level 2: Small base (<50 active users) from pilots
- Level 3: Established base (50-500 active users)
- Level 4: Large, diverse base (500+ active users)

- If Level 1: Consider delaying enrollment until pilot community established (6-12 months).
- If Level 2: Frame as build-up phase expanding pilot to operational scale.

Question 10: Engagement Mechanisms

What mechanisms for user communication exist?

- Level 1: No formal mechanisms (ad-hoc email)
- Level 2: One mechanism (e.g., quarterly newsletter)
- Level 3: Multiple mechanisms (newsletter + workshops + surveys)
- Level 4: Comprehensive engagement ecosystem

Minimum for Criterion #2: Regular communication (quarterly newsletter), user feedback mechanism (annual survey minimum), training/onboarding (documentation minimum).

Gap Analysis (traffic light approach?)

CRITICAL gaps
(address BEFORE submission):

- No institutional mandate (Q1)
- No TRL 7 services (Q4)
- No existing users (Q9)

HIGH PRIORITY gaps
(address during development OR acknowledge in Charter):

- No Node governance (Q2)
- AAI Level 1-2 (Q5) → 12-18 month roadmap
- Level 1 funding (Q7) → CRITICAL risk with mitigation
- No engagement mechanisms (Q10) → launch minimum, demonstrate 3-6 months

MEDIUM PRIORITY gaps
(address post-enrollment in build-up):

- Metadata Level 1-2 (Q6)
- Staffing Level 1-2 (Q8) → recruitment plan acceptable

Timeline Implications

Predominantly Level 3-4?

- Ready for Charter development now (Modules 2-8)

**Multiple Level 2 gaps?**

- 3-6 months preparation recommended
- Focus: Institutional mandate, governance, engagement launch

**Any Level 1 CRITICAL gaps?**

- 6-12+ months preparation required
- Focus: Service TRL 6→7, pilot community, institutional commitment

Strategic principle: Sustainability matters more than speed. Rushing with CRITICAL gaps creates post-enrollment failure risk.

Download: [Node Readiness Assessment Tool](#)

Document in your notes:

- Your top 3 gaps (CRITICAL or HIGH priority)
- Estimated timeline to address each gap
- Realistic Charter submission target date

If you have CRITICAL gaps: Schedule organisational conversations (institutional leadership, funding discussions, service team meetings) BEFORE investing significant Charter development effort.

Instructions:

- Make a copy to your own Google Drive
- Answer all 10 questions (select your level for each)
- Review auto-calculated maturity summary
- Check "Gap Analysis" tab

Thank you!