

# The road to IPO: 5 questions to assess your readiness

Companies [considering an initial public offering](#) can position themselves for success by setting the stage months or even years prior to the IPO. Here are five key questions leadership teams should consider as they begin planning their IPO strategies.

## WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

A company's story sets the stage for investor discussions in the marketplace. This story might include the origin and vision for the business, its investment journey, and milestone achievements. Leaders need to tell this story in an engaging way, without making it so complex that the market loses interest.

## IS YOUR TEAM TOP-NOTCH?

A strong management team conveys confidence to investors. If your life sciences business is lacking in investor relations, accounting, sales and marketing, or other teams, fill those needs now. You also need to assess [your external team](#) of investment bankers, lawyers, auditors and other advisors to ensure quality and make sure they all share your focus on the IPO.

## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE COST OF GOING PUBLIC?

Companies sometimes underestimate the hefty costs associated with going public. These costs might include fees related to accounting, stock option management, legal, compliance and more. Work with your advisors in these areas to fully understand the financial impact and risks of going public.

## ARE YOUR SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS READY?

Private companies might lack adequate processes and controls to meet the demands of being a public company. Business leaders should evaluate and upgrade systems and operations in tandem before an IPO, to prepare for the more intense scrutiny and accountability that come with being a public company.

## ARE YOU ALLOWING ENOUGH TIME FOR IPO PREPARATION?

Your IPO's success depends on careful planning, which should begin two to three years before the anticipated date of the offering. This lead time allows businesses to keep IPO costs to a minimum, avoid surprises, prepare the company for the due diligence process and the public scrutiny associated with an IPO, and increase the chances of good market timing.