*The following is a list of sample TechStat questions. They are not arranged in any particular order or by priority. These questions are supplied as reference material to give TechStat participants a flavor of the types of questions that may come up while preparing for a session or during a session. This is not an exhaustive list and not all questions will apply to every investment. Investment stakeholders should be prepared to discuss these questions with the understanding that additional questions will likely be asked.*

## Business Case

* What is the business case (including cost/benefit analysis)? Do the cost and FTE trends make sense?
* How has this changed/evolved over time? Are there parts of the business case (and cost/benefit analysis) that are no longer relevant? What has been added to the business case (and cost/benefit analysis)?
* Is the business case aligned with program mission, goals, and performance measures?
* Is the project’s purpose aligned with the agency’s overall business strategy?
* Is there alignment with the agency’s mission, vision, goals, etc.?
* What is the priority of this investment to the program and to the agency? How has this changed over time (moved from minor to major, etc.)?
* What is in the scope of the project? What is not in the scope of this project?

## Performance

* Are the investment goals well-defined? Have performance goals been met by the investment? If not, why?
* What are the major user-oriented metrics being tracked to monitor and evaluate ongoing success (adoption, usage rates, customer service surveys, etc.)? How does the business measure success?
* What is the investment’s score on the IT Dashboard? Cost Variances? Schedule Variances? CIO Rating? Why?
* Was an IBR conducted? If yes, what were the results?
* What product has been delivered to the customer and how many dollars have been spent?
* What will be delivered to the customer in the next 6 months?
* Are there any barriers to user adoption and use of the product?
* Have there been any GAO or OIG reports? If so, were recommendations implemented?

## Risk Management

* What are the major risks (prioritized by probability of occurrence and impact)? How are the major risks being mitigated?
* What level of resource risk has been accounted for in the risk analysis?
* How severe would be the result of late delivery?

## Project Management

* Is there a dedicated project manager?
* Is there a dedicated contracting officer?
* What is the stability of leadership (turnover)?
* Does the investment have an Integrated Project Team (IPT)?
* What percentage of the IPT is co-located?
* What major personnel risks exist within this project?
* Are there any conflicts of interest?
* Do personnel incentives (performance plans) of the IPT membership align with project goals?

## Alternatives Analysis

* Was an alternatives analysis performed? Is it current?
* Why was the chosen alternative selected? What is the ROI and payback time period of the chosen alternative?
* Was a cloud-first solution evaluated in the alternatives analysis?  If not, why was a cloud alternative not a feasible option?
* Does the cost benefit analysis include adjustments for risk? Is the cost/benefit estimate appropriate given the investment’s scope? How many years of cost/benefit data were included in the alternatives analysis?
* What are the benefits (tangible / intangible) of the alternative selected?

## Rebaseline

* What is the driver for the current rebaseline request?
* What are the proposed changes from the original baseline? Is there a transition plan?
* What is the rationale for deviating from the original baseline?
* How many rebaselines has the investment undergone?
* What was the rationale behind the previous rebaselines?
* What were the impacts of the previous rebaselines?
* What controls are in place to keep the project within tolerable variance of the new baseline?
* What is the impact if the rebaseline is not approved – can the additional scope be managed in another iteration instead?

## Governance

* Does the investment show evidence of senior management buy-in?
* How does (and how quickly does) the project manager know when the project is off track (behind schedule, over cost, or performing poorly)? How soon does the executive sponsor know about problems? What happens when the project is off track?
* What governance bodies regularly evaluate this investment’s progress? What was the result of the latest review? Were any issues/action items identified that the investment is currently addressing?
* What governance bodies (for example, TechStat) review this investment if the investment gets off-track? Are there too many layers of governance?
* How engaged is the business owner / executive sponsor of this investment?

## Acquisition / Contract Strategy

* How does the acquisition strategy manage procurement risks and address accountability?
* Does the investment involve use of commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) products?
* Does the investment employ a “cloud first” policy?
* How does this investment integrate with other agency and government-wide systems to promote efficiency, connectivity, and economies of scale (Enterprise Architecture)?
* What type of contract(s) currently exist (i.e. fixed price, incentive, etc.)?
* In the midst of poor performance measures, have current contractor(s) been reassessed?
* What controls are in place to support an early warning system to allow for improvements?
* What are the costs, benefits, and risks of remaining with the current contract?
* What are the costs, benefits, and risks of introducing a new contract?
* What are the costs, benefits, and risks of a revised contract (i.e. a subcontractor for a portion of the scope, revising task orders, explicitly improving management controls)?
* If multiple contracts are planned or exist, how do they relate to each other? How well are the vendors working together?

## Security

* Is the investment compliant with law, OMB policy, and NIST guidance?
* Have all appropriate security controls been incorporated into the investment during the planning and development phase?
* What dollars are being spent on IT Security?
* What IT security management, operational and technical controls are continuously monitored to ensure adequate Cybersecurity?

## Change Management

* Do you have a change management board?
* What are your change management procedures?
* Do your change management procedures cover: Logging? Approving? Rejecting? Planning? Scheduling? Communicating? Coordinating? Monitoring? Evaluating?
* How many new requirements have been proposed to, accepted and rejected by the board in the last two months?
* What are the thresholds for which the change management board is authorized to make decisions– when are decisions raised to another governance level?

## User Experience

* Who is the audience/user of this project? Do you have a user experience plan incorporated into your overall project plan?
* How have you assessed user satisfaction on both existing systems and future systems?
* How have you measured user performance (usage rates, error rates, time to complete tasks, percentage of tasks completed successfully, etc.) on both existing systems and future systems?
* How are you engaging users throughout the design, development, and implementation stages?

## Budget

* Are the investment’s full costs covered within their current budget level? (If the current budget level was straight-lined, would that be adequate?)
* Does the investment budget include all needed interfaces with other systems?
* Explain any cost variances that exist on the IT dashboard
* If there is a spike in need (i.e. for replacement/development), how many years is it projected to continue?
* How is the ‘management reserve’ controlled?

## Development Methodology

* Does the investment deliver customer-facing outcomes at least every six months (modular approach)? If not, what is the cadence of customer-facing deliverables?
* Does the investment employ a waterfall development methodology?
* Are agile development methodologies being used? How well is the organization adapting to agile methodologies?
* What is the amount of time that passed between the requirements being finalized and the first customer-facing deliverable? Are the requirements still valid?
* What is the data migration strategy (movement from the legacy system)?