

Investor Questions for 2026



A practical checklist for founders preparing to raise funding

Hello - thank you for requesting this guide

Fundraising in 2026 is harder than it has been for over a decade. Political uncertainty, shifting global priorities and a concentration of capital into certain sectors have reduced funding availability for many otherwise strong businesses. Exits are taking longer, recycling less capital back into the system, and what was once a relatively predictable 12-month funding cycle is now often stretching to 18–24 months.

In this environment, the quality of your conversations matters more than ever.

Most founder–investor regret does not come from valuation. It comes from misaligned expectations that were never properly addressed at the beginning of the relationship. Founders are often asking themselves, “Do I like this investor?” Investors are quietly asking, “Will this founder survive reality?”

The strongest fundraising pitches anticipate investor concerns before they are voiced. Equally, funding is more likely to go to founders who are confident enough to ask thoughtful, commercially grounded questions of their potential investors.



This checklist is designed to help you prepare for both sides of that conversation.

About Su

- 30+ years marketing experience, inhouse & agency
- Managing Director B2B telemarketing agency
- 10 years CEO of Priddey Marketing
- Specialist in STEM-sectors
- Business adviser for UK government programmes

What makes Su different?

- Strength in marketing and sales
- Knows what its like to be the boss
- Avoids jargon
- Always curious



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1. Questions Founders Should Ask Investors

Fundraising should be a mutual due diligence process. You are choosing a long-term partner, not just accepting a cheque.

Investment Parameters

- What ticket size is too small, and what is too large, for you?
- Which sectors are you actively focusing on at present?
- How much of your fund is already deployed?
- In what timeframe do you expect a return?
- How do you see this investment fitting within your wider portfolio?

Risk and Commercial Realism

- What happens if it takes twice as long and costs 30% more?
- Where do you typically see investment being burned in businesses like mine?
- What would make this a bad investment for you?
- What happens if another portfolio company pivots into my space?
- How do you handle commercial exclusivity?
- Are you able to help in ways outside of investment, such as introducing me to people in your network when we're ready to scale?

Follow-on funding

- Do you reserve capital for follow-on rounds?
- How many companies in your portfolio have successfully raised again?
- What happens if the next round is flat or down?



Control and governance

- What decisions require investor consent versus founder/ board discretion?
- Have you ever replaced a founder? Why?
- What are the expectations of your LPs (Limited Partners)?

Communication

- How frequently do you expect formal updates?
- What does good investor communication look like to you in practice?

2. Questions Investors Expect Founders to Answer

While you are qualifying them, they are assessing you.

Market and Customers

- Can you clearly explain your market fit?
- Why do customers choose you over alternatives?
- Can they speak with your customers?

Economics and Scale

- What happens to margins as you scale?
- Where will capital be absorbed?
- What are the genuine constraints to growth?
- How are you planning to scale?

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Governance

- How big is your board? (an optimal board size is 4-5 people)
- Can I speak with your board advisors?



3. The Internal Questions

These are the questions that both parties are unlikely to openly voice at the beginning of the relationship. A founder who understands these can choose to address them as part of their pitch.

Investors are asking themselves:

- Has this founder got a genuine learning and growth mindset?
- Can I trust this founder with bad news?
- Does the executive team and board have the depth to mitigate risk and deal well with issues when they hit a rough patch?
- Will they contact me at the right time with information I should know?
- Will this founder listen?
- Is this a lifestyle business in disguise?
- Is this founder prepared to step aside or appoint others when the time is right?

Founders are asking:

- How demanding / hard are you going to be to work with?
- How much are they going to interfere?
- Will they add pressure or clarity when things get uncomfortable?

Both are asking:

- Can I trust you?
- Are you going to be easy to communicate with?
- Do I like you, and can I work with you for several years?

THANK YOU!

For downloading this Guide



If you are preparing to raise funding, the quality of your positioning, messaging and internal alignment will directly influence the quality of investor conversations.

If you would value a sounding board before you begin those discussions, you are welcome to book a conversation.

Contact. Follow. Explore

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