

INTonomous

Call for interest: Acceleration Programme & Participation to the USA Mission

**To participate to the Acceleration Programme aimed at preparing European
SMEs and start-ups to approach USA (09/21-12/21)**

&

**To participate to the mission to USA (Winter 2022) for
European SMEs and start-ups
interested in USA Autonomous Driving market**

24th June 2021

**NOTE: the application has to be submitted through the online tool:
>> [CLICK HERE](#) <<**

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Acronyms and useful definitions and references

- Automotive market: companies and organisations involved in the design, development, manufacturing, marketing, and selling of motor vehicles. i.e. automakers, solutions and service providers, system integrators, etc.
- COSME: EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
- EU: European Union
- ESCP-4i: European Cluster Partnerships for Going International
- Internationalisation: within the scopes of COSME and INTonomous project, it is intended as the development of business and technological opportunities in extra-EU countries. For this Call, the internationalisation opportunities regard USA.
- INTonomous: Internationalisation for Autonomous Driving actors
- INTonomous Network: SMEs and start-ups participating to the INTonomous Acceleration and Internationalisation programmes, selected through the project open calls
- INTonomous Value chains: groups of SMEs and start-ups with complementary technologies, services and products aimed to a certain target market
- Autonomous Driving Segments in USA (not exhaustive list):
 - Public and private investments
 - Technology transfer
 - Testing opportunities
- Target Markets in USA (not exhaustive list):
 - Traffic management & Logistics
 - Demand management
 - Clean fuel and low emission vehicles' related solutions
 - Smart Cities Solutions

1. An overview

1.1. About INTonomous

Internationalisation for Autonomous Driving Actors (**INTonomous**) is a 24-month project started in September 2020 and aimed at supporting the launch, the initial implementation and the first development of the INTonomous Internationalisation Strategy.

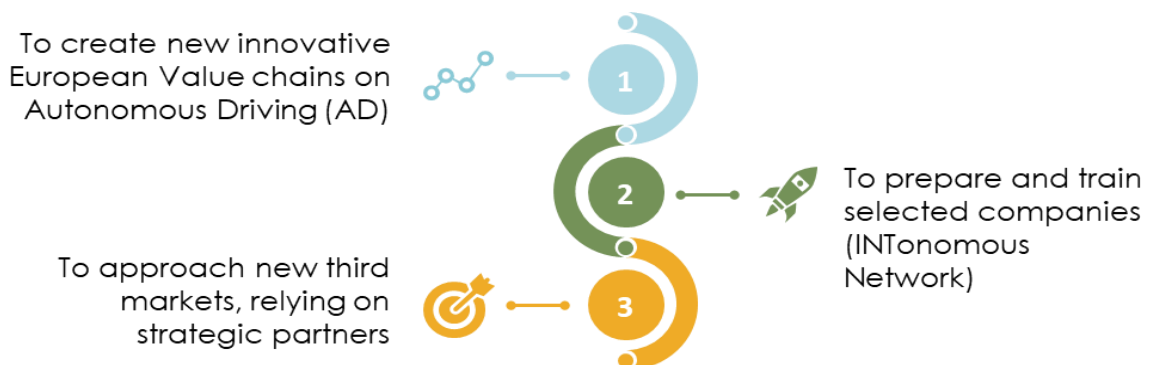
It takes input from MobiGoln Internationalisation Strategy, developed by some of the partners of this partnership in a previous project that received funding from the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020). MobiGoln strategy was tested during the MobiGoln-Action project aimed at Smart Mobility companies from Europe interested in the USA-Canadian and Chinese-Singaporean Smart Cities and Automotive markets.

Given its success, its lessons-learned and the good partnership developed by the partners, a new Consortium was formed to continue improving the internationalisation strategy and to test it in a new area: **Autonomous Driving**. The project gathers now 6 European Automotive & ICT clusters: Autoklastr (Czech Republic), Baden-Württemberg: Connected e.V. (Germany), Media Evolution (Sweden), NextMove (Mov'eo, France), Torino Wireless (Italy), and Zone Cluster (Hungary).

During the INTonomous project, these clusters will test and carry out a first implementation of INTonomous Internationalisation Strategy in three identified Target countries: **1. USA**, 2. Canada and 3. United Arab Emirates.

INTonomous will build partnerships with international stakeholders and support European Autonomous Driving SMEs and start-ups in initiating business collaborations in Autonomous driving target markets.

This call addresses the USA Acceleration & Internationalisation Programme to be delivered from September to December 2021, following this process:



INTonomous objectives are to:

- Build a **European collaborative network of SMEs** based on opportunities on all sectors and topics related to **autonomous driving**, technological and commercial complementarity, and developing European competitiveness
- Give opportunities to these SME's to **better understand identified strategic international markets and train them** to access these countries (1. Canada, 2. USA, 3. United Arab Emirates)
- Organise for them **targeted business missions** to the selected countries and give them the opportunity to understand the market on real site as well as to access strategic key players and relevant partners.

1.2. Autonomous Driving focus

INTonomous targets **European SMEs and start-ups** with solutions, services and applications relevant for the **USA Autonomous driving market**. The selected SMEs will meet the traffic management, demand management low emission transportation challenges and all product and services related to the correlated sectors. They will look to attract public and private investments and identify technology transfer and testing opportunities in the target country.

EU SMEs are usually working on various fields related to Automated Driving, addressing the needs of Level 1, 2 and 3 automation (solutions to enhance the quality of driving such as cruise control, assisted steering and acceleration, monitoring of operations based on LiDAR, etc.), but they also develop innovative solutions addressing levels 4 and 5 (Driver monitoring and transition phases, HMIs, Vehicle-Driver and Vehicle-Environment interactions, V2V, V2X, etc.).

Among the major sub-topics where the EU companies are actives, we have:

- ADAS
- Driver monitoring
- Innovative HMIs
- AI based solutions
- Testing and validation algorithms
- Radar, Lidar and sensors
- Virtual environments for simulation purpose
- V2V & V2X communication
- Data management & Cybersecurity
- Vehicles/VRUs interactions
- Autonomous mobility services
- Autonomous vehicles for last mile delivery, Autonomous trucks and logistics
- Parking management
- Drones

This is an open list that could welcome other Autonomous Driving solutions that meets the USA market needs.

The SMEs and start-ups participating to the INTonomous Acceleration and Internationalisation programmes will compose the INTonomous European Network.

1.3. The INTonomous approach

INTonomous aims at supporting the development of European SMEs and start-ups' internationalisation strategy through concrete potential technological and business partnerships and opportunities. In specific by:

- **Creating an innovative European Value Chain**

INTonomous believes that, at an international level, the main strengths of European SMEs are innovation, diversity and complementarity. INTonomous will leverage on these elements to build a European innovative value system covering the identified Autonomous driving segments. Based on each target country's needs and requirements, different INTonomous value chains will be created for each Target Market. This will be carried out by taking into consideration the competences and solutions offered by the companies within INTonomous Network, meaning the companies (SMEs and start-ups).

Furthermore, the project aims at creating a joint communication and marketing strategy for each value chain in order to promote INTonomous solutions and technologies "as a whole". An online tool presenting a catalogue of the main competences of the INTonomous participating companies will be created on the project website, allowing foreign entities, companies, potential customers and investors to find out the best solutions offered by INTonomous Network.

- **Preparing and training companies**

The project supports companies by offering an Acceleration Programme, which consists in a portfolio of support services aimed at preparing SMEs to approach an international (extra-EU) market. The content of these services will be tailored according to the profile of the companies participating in the Acceleration Programme, which will be selected through this Open Call.

A set of different activities will be offered according to SMEs' different maturity levels towards internationalisation (as described in paragraph 2.3).

- **Developing strategic partnership in new third markets through business missions**

Taking advantage of strategic partners located both in Europe and the targeted third countries (USA, Canada and United Arab Emirates), INTonomous will promote SMEs' solutions, expertise and competences at international level; companies will participate to tailored international missions that will facilitate the contacts and dialogues with new international commercial and/or technological partners.

As mentioned, INTonomous offers these opportunities to European SMEs and start-ups through 2 different but interrelated programmes: An **Acceleration programme** and an **Internationalisation Programme**. SMEs can access these Programmes by participating to this call.

1.4. Market opportunities in USA¹

The global autonomous cars market is expected to grow from \$719.94 billion in 2020 to \$809.15 billion in 2021 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.4%. The growth is mainly due to the companies resuming their operations and adapting to the new normal while recovering from the COVID-19 impact, which had earlier led to restrictive containment measures involving social distancing, remote working, and the closure of commercial activities that resulted in operational challenges. The market is expected to reach \$1383.89 billion in 2025 at a CAGR of 14%.

In more details, the United States Autonomous Car Market was valued at over USD 3 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach over USD 8 billion by 2026 registering a CAGR of more than 17% during the forecast period (2021 – 2026).

Of course, also in USA, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has hit the overall automotive industry, compelling automakers to cut down the output at their production plants. COVID-19 has also impacted the operations of many OEMs, from production to R&D creating short-term disruption delaying Autonomous vehicles development and rollouts.

However, with more stringent regulations by the government to increase road safety, more autonomous vehicles are being developed with highly advanced technologies integrated with smartphones through the internet creating new interest among market players to attract customers. Due to rising health concerns and changing commuting patterns, demand amongst private consumers is also increasing for personal cars. According to Euromonitor's Voice of the Industry survey, 13% of respondents indicated they plan to permanently increase usage of cars for commuting short distances.

Moreover, rise in the development of smart cities is a key factor driving the growth of the autonomous cars market too. The electric autonomous cars help reduce air pollution in smart cities and also help to fight climate change. By using driverless cars, traffic accidents can be decreased by 90%, significantly improving the safety of the roads. Several countries including United States are deploying and digital infrastructure to promote communication between vehicles and networks to collect essential information, thereby reducing traffic congestion and improving road safety. Furthermore, more local and national policies are aimed to increase the fight to climate change. Therefore, rise in the development of smart cities is expected to drive the growth of the autonomous cars market too.

Following the vision of the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), fully autonomous cars and trucks that drive people instead of people driving them will become a reality. These self-driving vehicles ultimately will integrate onto USA roadways by progressing through six levels of driver assistance technology advancements in the coming years. This includes everything from no automation (where a fully engaged driver is required at all times), to full autonomy (where an automated vehicle operates independently, without a human driver).

¹ Reference: The information reported in the section 1.4 are taken from:
[UNITED STATES AUTONOMOUS CAR MARKET - GROWTH, TRENDS, COVID-19 IMPACT, AND FORECASTS \(2021 - 2026\) – Autonomous Cars Global Market Report 2021: COVID-19 Growth and Change to 2030](#)

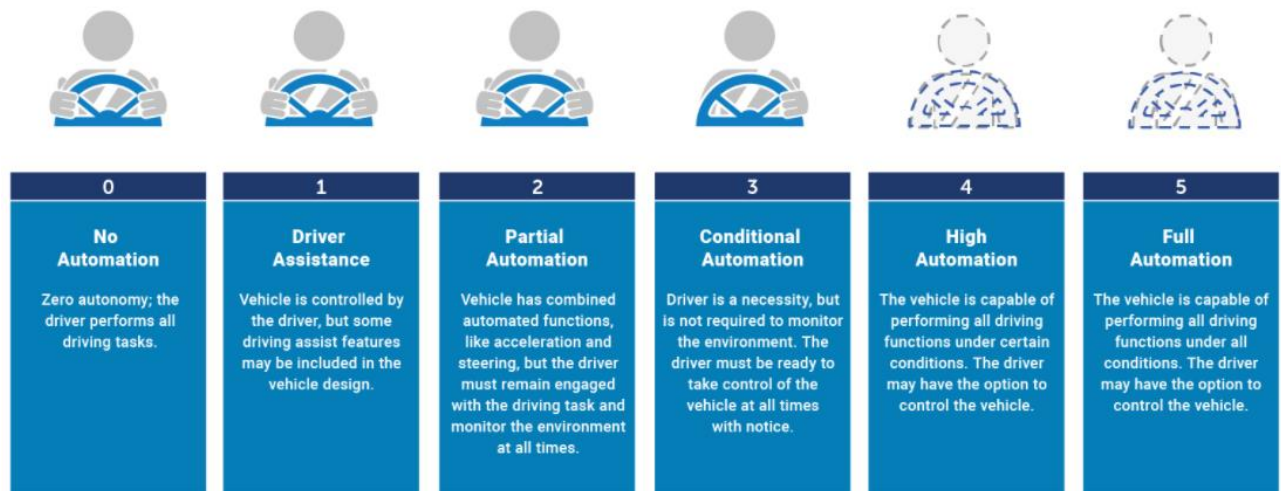


Figure 1 - Technology Roadmap according to SAE²

At this stage, more than 1,400 self-driving cars, trucks, and other vehicles are currently in testing by more than 80 companies across 36 U.S. states (including California, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, Massachusetts) and Washington DC. Recently, Companies [Lyft](#) and [Aptiv](#) has successfully provided 100,000 commercial robotaxi rides in Las Vegas where 98% of these paying passengers have given 5 stars to their self-driving ride experience, with most stating this first-of-a-kind experience is something they are eager to try again indicating growing preference of people towards autonomous cars over others.

Just to share some last developments, in January 2021, [Baidu Apollo](#) announced that the [California Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV\)](#) has issued a permit to Baidu. The permit will authorize the company to test driverless vehicles on public roads in the state. In February 2021, [Aurora](#) announced that it has entered into a strategic collaboration with Toyota and Denso to build and deploy self-driving cars on a large scale. The collaboration will develop and test driverless vehicles equipped with the Aurora Driver, starting with the Toyota Sienna. By the end of 2021, companies are expecting to begun testing an initial fleet of Siennas.

In terms of area of excellence and presence of Autonomous car (driving) cluster, several USA states are quite active. Below a not exhaustive list of initiatives present in some US States.

² <https://www.nhtsa.gov/technology-innovation/automated-vehicles-safety>

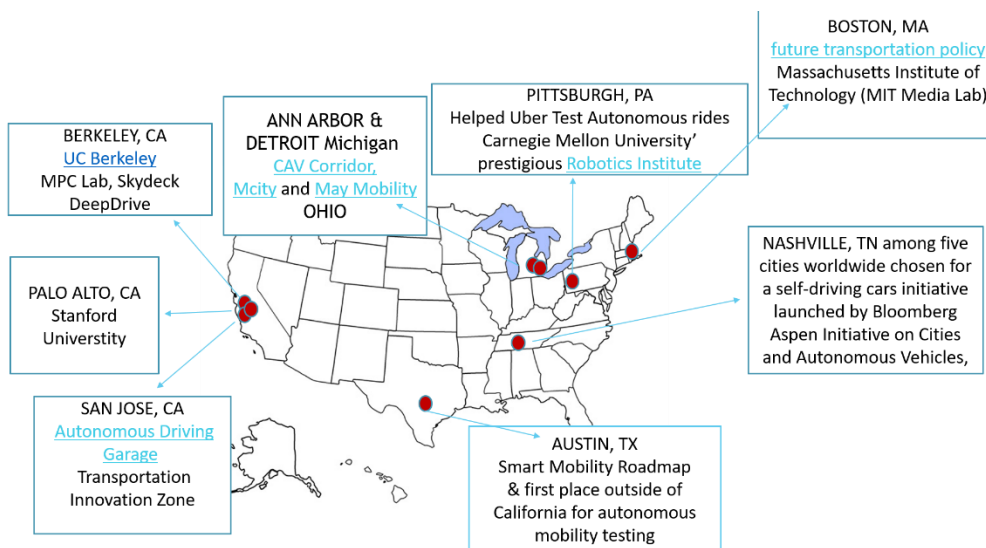


Figure 2 - Example of Autonomous Driving Initiatives

2. Open call

The open call is focused in gathering the European companies interested in internationalisation opportunities in USA regarding the Autonomous driving markets.

The selected companies will first participate in a series of **training and coaching activities (through webinars)** aimed at preparing the companies to approach the target markets, providing internationalisation competences and skills, market trends analysis, and focused information about market entry and how to better approach a potential buyer/partner.

The acceleration activities will last about 4 months and will end with an online **European matchmaking event** where the companies from around Europe that participated to the Acceleration Programme will have the opportunity to meet in person and talk about potential collaborations and cooperation opportunities. It will be also a moment of consolidation of INTonomous Value Chain for USA and a further opportunity to receive focused training.

Secondly, the top ranked selected companies will actually go to USA. The **Mission** provides the opportunity to take part to a structured business programme, to meet in person potential partners and local market experts, and to develop potential collaborations and cooperation opportunities with different stakeholders.

2.1. Conditions of eligibility

This open call is addressed to companies that meet the following criteria:

- To be a European SME or start-up,
- To have at least one Autonomous driving solution, such as the ones described

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- in section 1.2, already marketable,
- To be interested in approaching the Autonomous driving markets in USA,
 - To be committed in taking part to the Acceleration Programme, including the online EU matchmaking event, assuring the participation to the planned activities.

Eligible countries

SMEs and start-ups established in the Member States countries of the European Union (EU) or part of the COSME countries list (https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/other_eu_prog/cosme/legal/3rd-country-participation_en.pdf) are eligible to apply to INTonomous Open Calls.

SMEs definition

INTonomous considers as SME any Micro-Small-Medium Enterprise fulfilling the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003H0361&locale=en>) and the SME user guide.

In short, the criteria that define a SME are:

- Independent, partner or linked enterprises, with financial and staff figures calculated in accordance to the instructions given by Recommendation 2003/361/EC to fulfil SMEs criterion.
- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.
- Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.

Start-ups that have already a product, solution and/or service in the market can also apply to this Open Call.

Marketable solution

A product / service / application that is already commercialised, at least in the local market.

2.2. Expression of interest

To participate to this Open Call, each interested company must fill in the application form available at the link: [Call for Interest Form](#).

The form will allow the profiling and mapping of the company and its solution(s) in order to have a better knowledge and understanding of its offering, competences and experiences in terms of internationalisation. The provided information will help to analyse the company, classify it within the INTonomous Value chains, and better organise and execute the acceleration services.

The application form is divided in 5 sections, addressing different aspects of the company:

- Company general information
- Section 1: Company profile
- Section 2: Autonomous Driving solution(s)
- Section 3: Internationalisation activity
- Section 4: International perspectives going international: USA
- Section 5: Commitment to Acceleration programme

Applicants have to provide the description of the Autonomous Driving solution they're going to propose to the USA market. Up to 3 solutions can be submitted.

Conditions for the submission

IMPORTANT: when filling in the online form, **it is not possible to save the answers and modify them in a second moment;** all fields have to be filled at the same time. To easily prepare your answers, **you can download** the fac simile document. It shows all the questions and information you will need to answer when filling the form. We strongly suggest gathering all the requested information before starting the submission to avoid any trouble in the submission. When doing so, filling out the Application form should require about 20 minutes.

Language

The application form must be filled in English. Applications received in other languages won't be taken into consideration.

Deadline

The application form will be available online from 30th June 2021 12:00 until **7th September 2021 at 12:00.**

2.3. INTonomous services beneficiaries

The selected companies will become the **beneficiaries of the INTonomous Acceleration Programme and**, if highly ranked and participated to at least 3 Acceleration Services and the online EU matchmaking event, then **also of the International Programme for USA.**

The programme includes different activities, workshops and other formats of training and mentoring focused on **USA**'s target markets. The content of these activities will be tailored according to the profile of the companies participating in the Acceleration Programme. These activities will be organised by each partner of the INTonomous Consortium and held in webinars and in one online European Match- Making Event.

The services are provided to support the companies on one side with information and expertise delivered by INTonomous Consortium or external partners/experts and on the other side the workshops with the selected Teams helps the Consortium to collect the needs and wishes in preparing a tailored mission.

The dates of the mentioned activities will be published in the GOING INTERNATIONAL section of the project website with due time and will also be communicated to the companies participating in INTonomous Acceleration Programme.

The Draft Acceleration Programme consists in the following part. Slight modification due to availability of experts and inclusion of additional relevant topics not identified at this stage might occur. The timeframe and the overall type of services (training, EU Matchmaking event, Mission) are fixed.

1. Training, coaching and mentoring, EU matchmaking event (Webinars from September to December 2021)

- Training on **Internationalisation and new market entry strategies**
- Training on **Autonomous driving market trends and opportunities**
- Training on **USA cultural, legal and fiscal features – How to enter the market**
- **Online EU Matchmaking event** with INTonomous SMEs participating in the USA programme (ideally linked to other European event)

2. International Mission in USA (Winter 2022)

A) Mission activities

The target country is **USA**, and especially **California and/or Ohio**, during **Winter Semester 2022**.

Preparatory training specifically focused on the Mission will be provided: one-day pre-departure workshop (on webinar, for all European SMEs involved in the mission) structured in 2 modules, carried out by qualified professionals, market and sector experts.

- **Commercial:** overview and business tips about the potential partners / buyers / clients that European companies will meet in the mission
- **Technical:** doing a successful business: (i) contracts and legal issues; (ii) customs and fiscal procedures; (iii) non-tariff barriers if any.

The **business mission activities** will include (the list is not exhaustive):

- Customised B2B and matchmaking sessions with potential buyers and partners
- Site visits/meetings to potential partners/companies/cities interested in collaborating with the European companies
- Business networking with local players, institutions and large companies
- EU SMEs Pitch session with potential buyers or investors
- Collective sessions on Autonomous driving opportunities, strategic market insights
- Participation to an international sectorial fair (not mandatory, only if content related to the INTonomous scope)

B) Mission costs

The participation to the **Mission's activities is free for the selected SMEs/start-ups**. Only 1 person per SME/start-up can participate.

Each company must cover its own traveling expenses, accommodation and foods (lunch and dinners). Some lunches (dinners) **could** be included as part of the mission

10 companies will be selected to receive reimbursement for covering part of the travelling and accommodation costs (1000€/SME).

Reimbursement is assured only for European Union and COSME SMEs (responding to the EU definition: see Conditions of eligibility) attending **the entire mission programme (USA)** and only if expenses **are supported by the original receipts**.

3. Conditions of participation for the selected companies

3.1. Open Call publication and FAQs

The Open Call has been published on 30th June 2021. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), gathered via e-mail at info@intonomous.eu from the day the call is published until 5 days before the submission deadline, will be shared, and updated regularly, in the Open Call webpage.

3.2. Applications reception

Only online applications will be considered eligible. The final deadline for submission is on 7th September 2021 at 12:00.

3.3. Evaluation criteria

Table 2 - Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
SECTION 1 – Company profile	20
Focus on Autonomous Driving	10
Presence of sales/marketing staff	10
SECTION 2 – Proposed Solution/competence	40
Defined value proposition	20
Clients/customer profiling	10
Competitors	5
Solution readiness for internationalisation (i.e. in English or in process, in line with the standards, etc.)	5
Section 3 – International activity	15
International experience	5
Website in English	10
Section 4 – International perspectives - Going international: USA	25
Presence of an internationalisation plan/strategy/objectives	10
Motivations to expand to the target international markets	10
Knowledge of the target market	5
TOTAL SCORE	100

3.4. Evaluation procedure

The evaluation will be carried out by the Consortium Partners of the INTonomous project. It will take into consideration the defined criteria and will last 15 -30 days from the submission deadline (depending on the number of candidatures).

3.5. Selection

A minimum score of 50 points is required to be admitted to the Acceleration programme. The first **15 companies** in the ranking will be eligible to participate to **Acceleration programme**, and the **10 first companies** to receive reimbursement for covering part of the travelling and accommodation costs (1000€/SME) for the **International Mission**. The eligibility criteria (e.g. full participation to the acceleration programme and EU matchmaking event, most promising USP for USA market etc) are valid to select the first 10 companies for the mission.

All applicants will be informed of the final results of the evaluation procedure for the Acceleration programme within 15 -30 days.

In case of a tie score between different companies, the companies from the less represented European country will prevail over the ones of already represented country to assure a balanced participation from companies coming from different European countries.

Each selected company will have to confirm its commitment to follow the Acceleration Programme and International Mission, assuring its participation to the planned activities.

Companies highly ranked will have to take part to at least 3 acceleration services and participate to the online EU matchmaking event in order to take part to the mission to USA.

3.6. Important dates and deadlines

The following table summarises the main dates and deadlines for the Open Call application, evaluation and results' communication process.

Table 3 - Main dates for Open Call – WR2

Open Call – USA	Date / Deadline
Publishing date	30 June 2021 at 12:00
Deadline for submission	7th September 2021 at 12:00
Evaluation period	7 th September 2021 – 30 th September 2021
Selection communication	Latest 23 rd September 2021
Acceleration services	15 October 2021 – 31 December 21
EU Matchmaking event	Oct/Dec 2021
International Mission	Winter 2022

4. Contact Point

For any information please send an email to info@intonomous.eu specifying the topic of the request and the question/doubt/information needed.

Answers will be published on INTonomous project website www.intonomous.eu and communicated to the applicants by e-mail.

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