



Call for Application

Innovation Tour to San Francisco, Sacramento and Silicon Valley

January 15th – 19th, 2018

A pilot service offered by NearUS

Call opened: October 5, 2017 | Call closed: November 12th, 2017 – 23h59 CET

1. Purpose of NearUS

NearUS is an initiative funded in the framework of Horizon2020, the most comprehensive EU Research and Innovation funding program to date. The NearUS initiative will increase European and US research and innovation collaborations while strengthening the position of Europe as the world's leading partner in science, technology and innovation. Its overarching aim is to create a sustainable network of centers with US and EU-based nodes, to enable cross-continent R&I partnerships.

During its pilot phase, NearUS proposes a variety of services for researchers and entrepreneurs. The pilot activities will be evaluated to inevitably retain the initiative's most successful components to ensure a sustainable plan for NearUS in the future.

Services will target various, commercially viable technology maturity levels: Research2Research (R2R), Research2Market (R2M) and Business2Business (B2B) stages. This includes research connection symposia, business matchmaking opportunities, working visits and innovation tours to US organisations to explore technology/product partnerships and/or business development middle / long term opportunities, pitching to potential investors, R2M and B2B bootcamps, work space access, hands on business acceleration programmes, media promotion service and more.

The pilot services will be offered separately in specific calls. **This call only refers to the NearUS West Coast Innovation Tour taking place January 15th – 19th, 2018.**

This first Innovation Tour is open to EU Member States and Associated Countries¹ **early stage entrepreneurs, researchers, research organizations, and clusters**

¹ See http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf. As of 01 January 2017, the following countries are associated to Horizon 2020: Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia, Armenia.

looking for market information, partners, investment opportunities and feedbacks for their **ICT and ICT Convergence innovations**.

2. Services offered in this specific call

NearUS is launching its first West Coast Innovation Tour as vehicle for commercialising promising EU research and technologies. Join us to discover the Silicon Valley and its surroundings next January 15-19, 2018.

This service gives you the opportunity to:

- **Understand the local US ecosystem (West Coast focus) that supports Innovation;**
- **Have live feedbacks on your project/prototype/business plan;**
- **Explore opportunities of funding in the US;**
- **Meet potential partners;**
- **Understand & better leverage NearUS support.**

The tour will introduce 10 selected participants to accelerators, renowned US university research gems, and successful US and EU scale-ups and unicorns located in San Francisco Bay, Sacramento and the Silicon Valley. Participants will receive guidance on visa/immigration/IP/pitch support and will be introduced to potential partners including corporations and potential investors.

Additionally, state and city officials as well as the NearUS West Coast Hub (San Francisco Centre and associated partners) will be visited that can provide EU participants with soft-landing solutions and future guidance on local business trends practices and programs.

Tentative schedule

- **Monday: San Francisco**
 - Meeting at the NearUS West Coast Centre
 - Workshop on the Silicon Valley Ecosystem and Business Culture
 - Workshop on Silicon Valley Pitches
 - Meeting with San Francisco's Mayor's office and Economic Development Corporations officers.
 - Meeting with the local SelectUSA team
 - Tours of SF Universities
 - Welcome and Networking Party with local NearUS associate partners
- **Tuesday: In the San Francisco Bay (including Oakland and Berkeley)**
 - Tour and pitching sessions at local Equity based accelerators
 - Tour of UC Berkeley and its R&I ecosystem
 - Meeting with Oakland's Economic Development Corporations officers
 - Meeting with NIH and SBIR (funding research/innovation in the US) representatives



- Wednesday: In Sacramento
 - Meeting with California State Economic Development Organization officers
 - Meeting with California State cluster network (iHub) Officers
 - Meeting with Sacramento's mayor's office and Economic Development Corporations officers
 - Tour of the Sacramento R&I ecosystem
- Thursday: In the Silicon Valley (Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and San Jose, among other cities)
 - Tour of the Stanford University and its R&I ecosystem
 - Meeting with San Jose's Economic Development Corporations officers
 - NearUS Pitch night co-organized with NearUS associated partners. Global Venture Capital firms are invited.
- Friday: In the Silicon Valley (Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and San Jose, among other cities)
 - Visits of GAFAs and other unicorns
 - Visit of European successful R&I projects/initiatives/scale-ups
 - Visits of Large Corporation's Open Innovation Centers
 - Business2Business one-on-one introductions on special requests

Expected outcomes and impact per participant

- ≥ 5 meetings/discussions with potential partners
- ≥ 3 meetings/discussions with investors
- ≥ 1 Follow up calls/meetings that same week/month for expression/validation of interest
- ≥ 3 next meetings/calls in the next twelve months
- ≥ 1 "deal" or "partnership" with US/international prospected targets met that week - in the next 24 months.

3. Target Group of this Call

- Individual EU Research actors who are highly interested in exploring the US market as a middle to long term vehicle for commercialising promising EU research;
- Early stage start-up founders spun out of universities or research labs or licensing related technologies;
- Researchers looking for market opportunities and funding for their R&D project;
- Representatives of a research organization looking for market opportunities for a specific portfolio of R&D projects;
- Representatives of research ecosystems looking for market opportunities for a specific portfolio of R&D projects; including cluster managers, research lab managers, tech transfer office managers, etc.

4. Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the provided services, applicants have to be:

- Based in EU Member States or Associated Countries
- Industry focused in ICT and/or ICT convergence, such as Smart Home, Smart City, Autonomous Vehicles, Manufacturing, Drones, R/AR/360/Simulation, and Security
- Able to communicate (read and speak) in English
- Pitch deck provided as part of the application

5. Funding Principle

This call will fund 10 participants. The costs for the venue, materials, guest speakers, catering during the event and transportation within the US are covered.

Participants will however have to cover the costs for flights to and from the United States, as well as other costs not mentioned above (e.g. ESTA/VISA application costs, health insurance, accommodation, dinners, etc.) by themselves. A package for the hotels will be proposed at a negotiated price.

6. Submission Procedure

All applicants must register at the electronic submission tool PT-Outline https://secure.pt-dlr.de/ptoutline/app/nearus_Services . It is highly advised that applicants submit no later than two days before the application deadline. NearUS staff will assist with questions or portal issues for applicants. Besides basic information, applicants must mark checklist for actual criteria and must complete each section of the application.

The Online Submission Form is structured in four different pages, each one including various sections that need to be filled in by the applicant.

In PT-Outline the applicant is asked to fill in general information, such as the service for which the application is made, personal information (such as name, institution, organization type, contact details, and specific questions referring to the organization type if it is a business). SME´s have to confirm that they are aware of EU-Regulation no. 651/2014 by the European Commission as well as other relevant regulations. All applicants have to select that they accept the privacy policy and are made aware that some costs have to be covered individually.

On page four you will find the "Application form" and "Pitch deck", which have to be uploaded at the final submission stage.

Additionally, there is a fifth page for checking and submitting the application.

7. Evaluation and Selection Procedure.

7.1. Procedure

The fundamental principles governing the evaluation of the applications are:

- **Transparency:** The process for selecting applicants will be clearly described and made available to any interested party.
- **Fairness and Equality of treatment:** All applications shall be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the applicants.
- **Ethical and Legal considerations:** Any application that contravenes ethical principles and legal regulations may be excluded from being evaluated and rejected at any time.

The evaluation process involves three steps:

- 1) Eligibility Check: Will be done by the NearUS staff following the criteria defined in section 4.
- 2) Evaluation panel: will be comprised of a committee of NearUS representatives, Institutional Investors, consultants and corporate experts in ICT and industry convergences; for rating of applications and down-selection of 20 candidates. The application matches to an evaluation rubric the evaluation panel will utilize to scale/rate strong proposals from those that require more information/improvements. You can download the rubric - link - to ascertain what you should submit in your application to provide thorough and fair review of your business/product/technology.
- 3) Interview: the 20 selected candidates will be interviewed to present their submitted pitch deck (30 min face-to-face or web-conference) for the final selection of 10 participants.

7.2. Criteria

The applicant must:

- Demonstrate a business/licensing model in place (or soon in place)
- Demonstrate the actions taken to fund / start / grow the business idea (i.e. already talking to their government for funding, and/or banks for guaranteed loans, and/or to investors)
- Demonstrate an interest in the US Market itself even if long term
- Have an understanding of the competition landscape, the US market and the opportunity

8. Time Schedule

Deadline	Step
October 5, 2017	Call opens
November 12, 2017 (at 23h59 CET)	Submission of application and call closes
November 20, 2017	Selection of 20 applicants
November 21-29, 2017	30-minutes interviews
November 30, 2017	Information for the applicants if they were chosen or not
January 15-19, 2018	Innovation Tour to San Francisco, Sacramento and Silicon Valley

9. Contacts

For questions regarding the Innovation Tour, please contact:

Name	Contact Details
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For questions regarding NearUS Network, please contact:

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