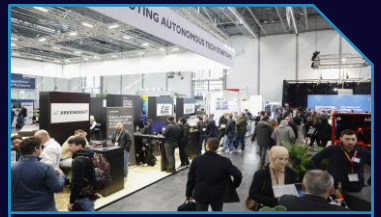
XPO+
LAUNCHER

Scouting Autonomous Tech Startups

Get Global Exposure for your Autonomous Tech Venture and Pitch your Start-up in front of International VCs

Messe Düsseldorf North America

XPONENTIAL - Background



ESTABLISHED PLATFORM

XPONENTIAL is an established annual industry gathering that has been held for over 50 years and will take place in Detroit from **May 11 to 14, 2026.**

AROUND THE WORLD

XPONENTIAL with its forums in the U.S. and Europe brings together all the key players and will drive future-oriented autonomous innovations forward.

ACROSS ALL DOMAINS

XPONENTIAL is a global forum for leaders in uncrewed systems and robotics.
It drives innovation across air, ground, maritime and space.

FOCUS AREAS

The event showcases key technologies such as AI, cloud, cybersecurity, IoT, mobile, robotics and sensors.
It connects cutting-edge innovation with real-world applications.

XPO+ Launcher - Mission

XPO+ LAUNCHER

GLOBAL PLATFORM

XPO+ Launcher is a global platform for scouting and screening early-stage start-ups in the autonomy continuum.

ECOSYSTEM MEMBER

It paves the way for innovators to become members of the XPO+ ecosystem.

BUSINESS MATCHING

Perfect platform for VCs and start-ups to meet and mingle.

SHOWCASE LOUNGE

A dedicated space in our lounge to present innovative autonomous technologies.

START-UP CONFERENCE AND AWARD PITCH

A conference for start-ups, accelerators, VCs and tech experts including our prestigious award pitch.

MARKET VISIBILITY

An ideal forum to be granted exposure to leaders, investors and enablers of the industry.

XPO+ Launcher - All Path To Autonomy

Scouting autonomy start-ups along the entire value chain for autonomy:

PLATFORMS

Platforms are the operational backbone of autonomous systems – from drones and rovers to maritime and space vehicles. They carry the mission, connect hardware and software and bring innovation into motion.

COMPONENTS AND SENSORS

The building blocks of autonomy including AI processors, navigation units, environmental sensors and robust energy systems – ensure precise control, perception and performance.

SERVICES

Services transform technology into impact. From design and prototyping to testing, licensing and data analytics: service providers empower every stage of autonomous technology development and deployment.

XPO+ Launcher - Across All Domains

AIR

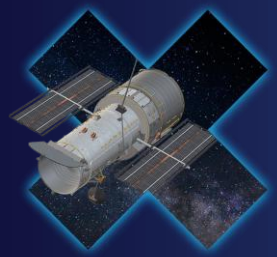
Autonomous aerial systems are tranforming logistics, surveilannce and mobility – with drones, UAS and airbone robotics taking on complex missions with precision and speed.

GROUND

From autonomous vehicles to robotics in the industrial and public spaces – ground-based systems are redefining how we move, operate and interact with our environment.

MARITIME

Uncrewed surface and underwater systems enable safe and remote operations in challenging marine environments – from exploration to infrastructure inspection.



SPACE

In orbit and beyond, autonomous technologies ensure reliability, adaptability and performance – powering missions where human access is limited or impossible.

XPO+ Launcher - Springboard for Start-ups

BENEFITS

- Networking and mingling with industry stakeholders on-site.
- Testing the pitch deck and presentation skills on stage.
- Getting feedback and mentoring from the jury on-site.
- Providing direct access to our global network of partners.
- Supporting to scale breakthrough technologies in uncrewed systems.
- Getting the chance to win the Award Pitch and a free Pod at XPONENTIAL Europe 2027

QUALIFICATION

- Bootstrapped or in funding stage Pre-Seed, Seed or Series A.
- Founded 7 years back or younger.
- Annual Revenue not above 3m USD (ARR).
- 50 employees or less.

If you do qualify and want to profit from the exclusive lounge benefits, but you need more exhibiting space than a pod or pedestal, we can work on an individual booth set-up placed inside our lounge. More mature startups can apply for a normal exhibition booth outside our lounge and are excluded from our lounge benefits.

CORE THEMES

- Innovation and Growth in Autonomy.
- Global Status of Autonomous Tech Startup Ecosystem.
- Investment Climate in Autonomous Tech.
- Pitch Competition for the best Solutions in Autonomy.

XPO+ Launcher at XPONENTIAL 2025

12 Start-ups

13 Pitches

7 Jury Member

1 Award Winner

„Participating in the XPO+ Launcher was a game changer for PLENO, connecting us with new partners and potential customers globally. Winning the start-up competition also puts us on the autonomous system landscape map”

Nura and Nino, Co-Founders
PLENO

XPO+ Launcher - Join us as as a start-up

Profit from exclusive benefits:

LOUNGE

Exhibit your product at an own pod or on a pedestal. Be part of the XPO+ Launcher family. Benefit from lounge facilities.

DEMO

Get 5 minutes airtime on the Start-up Stage to demonstrate and showcase your solution.

AWARD

Guaranteed start with 3 minutes pitch at XPO+ Launcher award taking place on Start-up Stage on second day of XPONENTIAL Europe.

NETWORK

Meet & mingle with industry stakeholders, VCs, angels, mentors, government bodies at our “Founders & Funders Mixer”.

XPO+ Launcher - Our Partner so far

XPO+ LAUNCHER

AWARD SPONSOR

GENIUSNY

INVESTOR PARTNER

PLUGANDPLAY Start2 Group

ECOSYSTEM PARTNER

AeroSpace .NRW
Das NRW-Netzwerk der Luft- und Raumfahrtindustrie

AFRICAN DRONE FORUM

DEUTSCHER ROBOTIK VERBAND

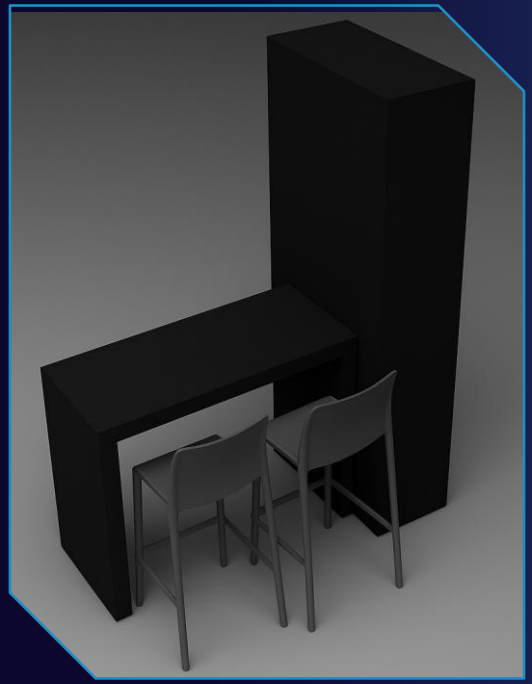
DRONEMASTERS

Women AND DRONES

XPO+ Launcher - Single Start-up Package

- 10 sqft area incl. Dedicated exhibition pod and 2 bar stools
- exclusive space for product/technology/service demo
- prominent logo placement (no extra roll-ups allowed!)
- power supply for your smart devices
- locker for your personal stuff
- access to all lounge facilities to meet your clients
- free coffee and water at the lounge (on availability)
- display screen with HDMI port & Wi-Fi access at additional costs

$3,100*



Final design on-site may vary

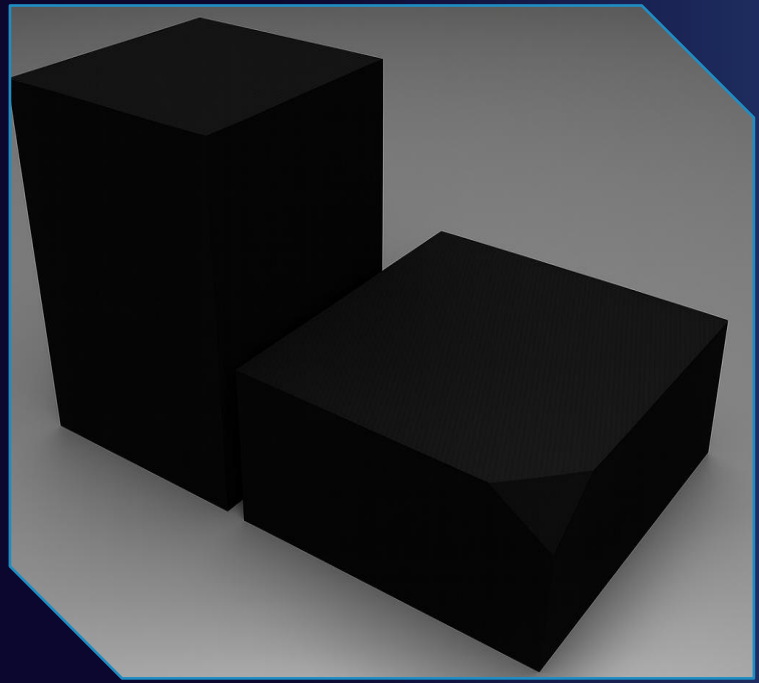
*plus taxes as applicable

XPO+ Launcher - Single Start-up Package

Alternative Singe Start-up Package to showcase Bulky Gear like Drones.

- square/rectangle pedestal to place your device
  - different calibres and heights possible*
  - incl. 2 bar stools
- prominent logo placement on the higher pedestal
- power supply for your showcased device
- access to all lounge facilities to meet your clients
- free coffee and water at the lounge (on availability)
- Wi-Fi access at additional costs

$3,100**



Final design on-site may vary

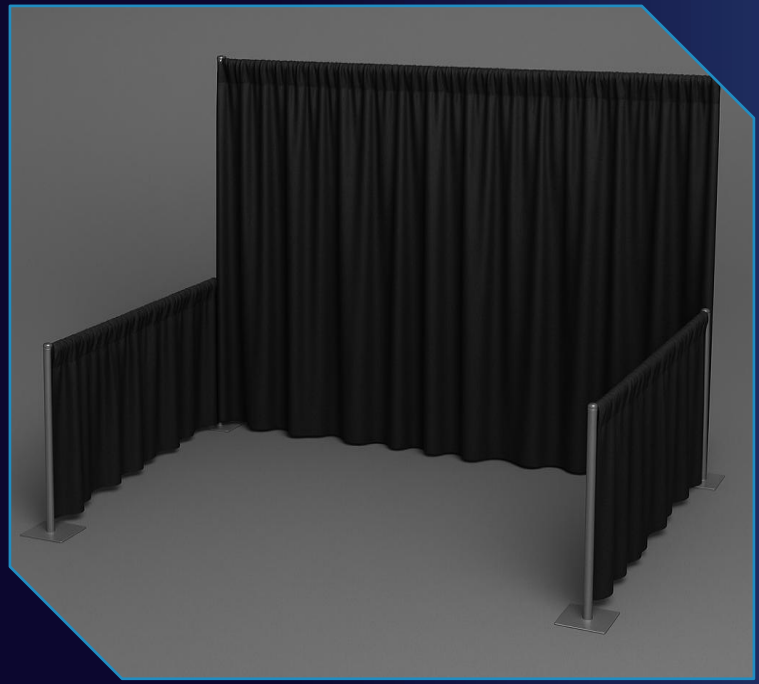
* based on availability and space, you may apply for a bigger storage surface
**plus taxes as applicable

XPO+ Launcher - Single Start-up Package

Alternative Singe Start-up Package if you need more space: 10x10 ft raw space.

- 8’ draped wall
- 3’ side-rails
- branding via your own roll-up / standee
- power supply for your showcased device
- free coffee and water at the lounge (on availability)
- Wi-Fi access, table and chairs at additional costs

$4,550*



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*plus taxes as applicable

XPO+ Launcher – Start-up Award

Exhibiting start-ups qualify automatically for the pitch at the Innovation Theater.

Non-exhibiting start-ups may have a chance to participate as well; apply latest by March 1, 2026.

On-site jury will have 2 minutes for Q&A per start-up.

Top 3 places will get a XPO+ Launcher Certificate.

1st place will get a free booth in XPO+ Launcher lounge at XPONENTIAL Europe in Düsseldorf in March 2027.

XPO+ Launcher partners may grant special prices.

The autonomous tech solution shall meet the following criteria:

- Solution designed for uncrewed vehicles: air, ground, maritime and space.
- Product /Service in market less than 5 years.
- Proven use case (B2B / B2B2C).
- Great Functionality / Proven Level of Problem Solving.
- High Level of Innovation / Originality of solution.
- Given Attractiveness of Business Model.
- Excellent Quality of Documentation & Team.

XPO+ Launcher - Key Dates

Dates:

Education: **May 11, to May 11, 2026**
Exhibition: **May 12, to May 14, 2026**

Location: Huntington Place
1 Washington Blvd
Detroit, MI 48226

Connect with us!

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SEE YOU

MAY 11 – 14, 2026

DETROIT, USA

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