

Uber filed paperwork for IPO: report

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Ride-share giant Uber could go public as soon as the first quarter of 2019

Ride-share company Uber quietly filed paperwork this week for its initial public offering, the Wall Street Journal reported late Friday.

The move comes one day after rival Lyft launched the process to take the company public with a stock offering.

The Journal, citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter, said that Uber could go public as soon as the first quarter, while Lyft is targeting its market debut for March or April 2019.

Uber, which operates in over 60 countries, is in a race with Lyft to be the first to enter the market.

Company CEO Dara Khosrowshahi had mentioned since joining Uber in late August 2017 that he was hoping for an IPO in the first half of 2019.

Uber is already the largest of the venture-backed "unicorns" valued at more than \$1 billion, which until recently was considered rare without tapping stock markets.

In mid-October, the Journal reported that JPMorgan had been chosen along with Credit Suisse and Jefferies Group for its IPO next year, which could value Uber as high as \$120 billion.

If its valuation tops \$100 billion Uber's IPO would be the biggest ever in the tech sector, and worth more than the combined value of the three big automakers General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.

An IPO of such magnitude would especially be a mark of investor confidence for Khosrowshahi, who replaced the controversial Travis Kalanick, pushed out the door by investors anxious over a string of scandals.

Khosrowshahi has vowed to fix the company's work culture and business practices after a series of missteps and scandals over executive misconduct, a toxic work atmosphere and potentially unethical competitive practices.

For now, Uber has further increased its losses in the third quarter to

more than a billion dollars.

The San Francisco-based Uber has been a disruptive force in many cities where regulators and taxi operators have challenged its business model.

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