



# THE GLOBAL MEETING FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION LEADERS

PARTNERSHIP OFFER 2025 AND REPORT 2024

FALLING  
WALLS  
**SCIENCE**  
**SUMMIT**

## THE FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT CONCEPT

# THREE DAYS OF BREAKTHROUGH THINKING

*There are numerous opportunities to connect, network, and actively engage. Join us either in person or virtually from anywhere in the world.*



### FALLING WALLS ENGAGE

*A global platform for Science Engagers who actively involve the public with science.*

### FALLING WALLS LAB

*A world-class pitch competition for Emerging Talents and early-career professionals.*

### FALLING WALLS VENTURE

*An international platform for the most promising Science Start-ups from around the world.*

### FALLING WALLS FEMALE SCIENCE TALENTS

*Promoting Female Leadership in Science, Business and Society*



*Falling Walls bridges science and society: Global leaders from research, business, policymaking, and media come together to discuss solutions to today's most pressing issues.*

### FALLING WALLS PLENARY TABLES

### FALLING WALLS ROUND TABLES

### FALLING WALLS IMPACT DIALOGUES

### FALLING WALLS EXECUTIVE TABLES

### FALLING WALLS INSIGHTS CAFE

### FALLING WALLS SYMPOSIUM

### FALLING WALLS AI NIGHT



*On the anniversary of the historic fall of the Berlin Wall, Falling Walls provides a stage for outstanding research presented in inspiring presentations. Every 9 November, "the brightest minds on the planet" (BBC) convene to answer the core question: Which are the next walls to fall in science and society?*

### FALLING WALLS BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

# SUMMARY

Since 2009, the Falling Walls Science Summit has been held in Berlin on the day the Berlin Wall once fell. The essence of the congress is the identification of breakthroughs in science and research world-wide that can be used to meet the major challenges facing humanity, and the combination of these breakthroughs with business, politics and civil society. "Which are the next Walls to fall?"

## FULL PROGRAMME

Days and hours showcasing the most recent scientific breakthroughs and innovations.

**3**

DAYS

**74**

EVENTS

**500+**

SPEAKERS

**1.938**

ATTENDEES

**9**

LIVESTREAMS

**62**

HOURS OF SCIENCE  
VIDEO FOOTAGE

## LEADING SCIENTISTS

Exceptional scientists and their groundbreaking work from around the globe.

**3.634**

NOMINATIONS

**1.522**

INSTITUTIONS

**156**

COUNTRIES  
(NOMINATIONS)

**9**

CATEGORIES

**94**

JURY MEMBERS

**199**

WINNERS

WHICH ARE  
THE NEXT  
WALLS  
TO FALL?

FALLING  
WALLS  
SCIENCE  
SUMMIT

6 DARWIN ROOM

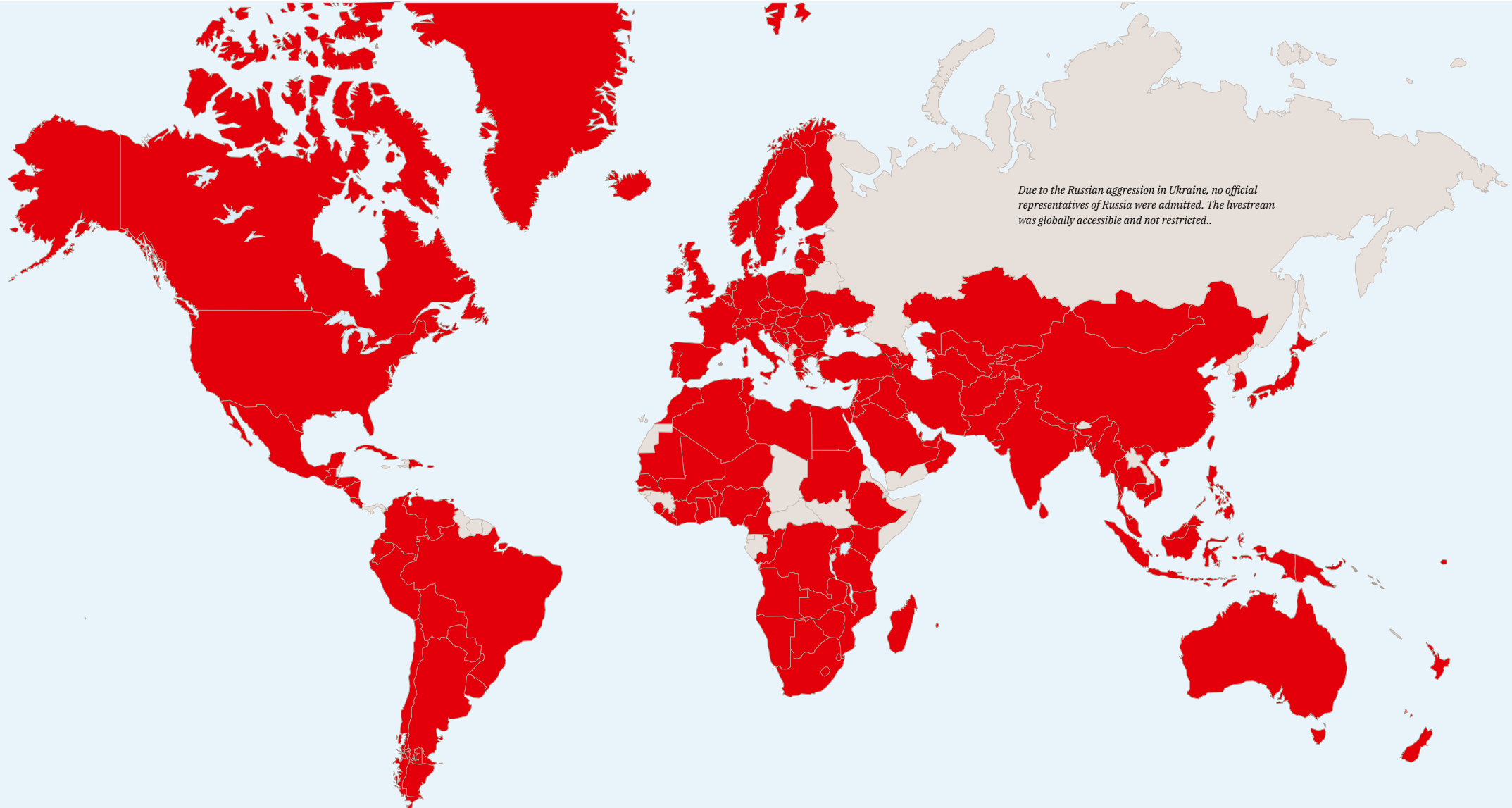
TO FALL'S

ELION

SUMMARY | THE FALLING WALLS WORLD MAP 2024

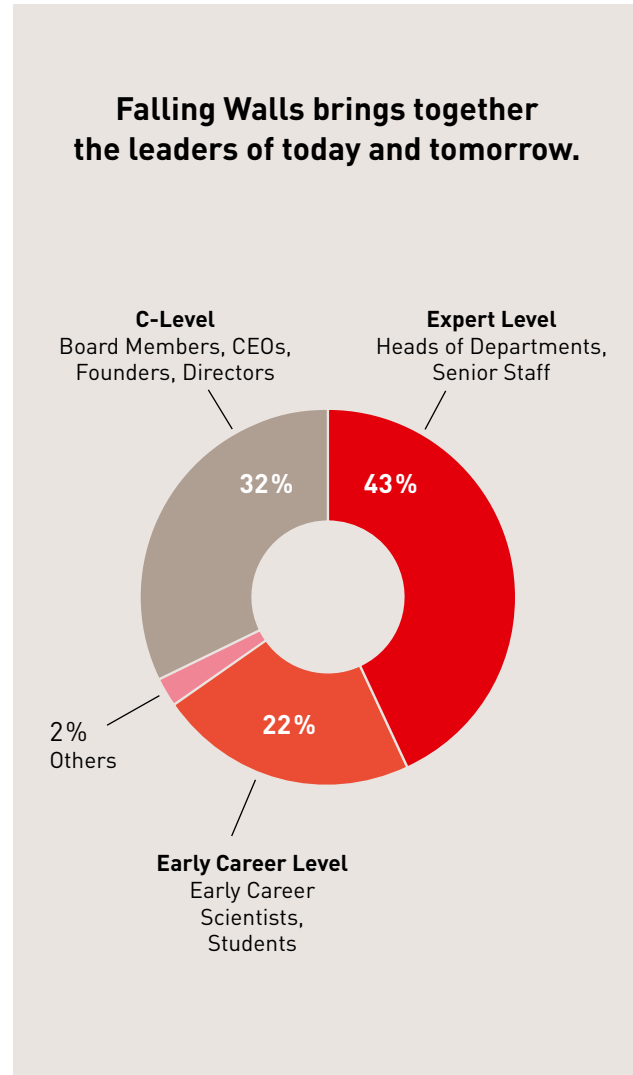
# 149 COUNTRIES – A WORLDWIDE AUDIENCE

*People from around the world gather, both virtually and in person, to participate in the inspiring Falling Walls Science Summit.*

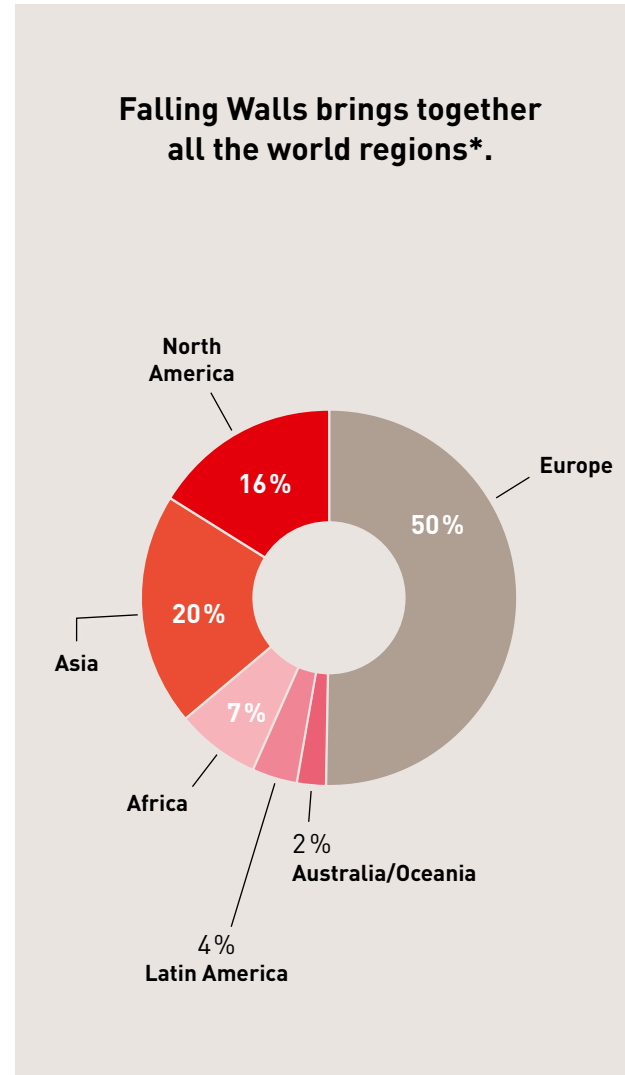


SUMMARY

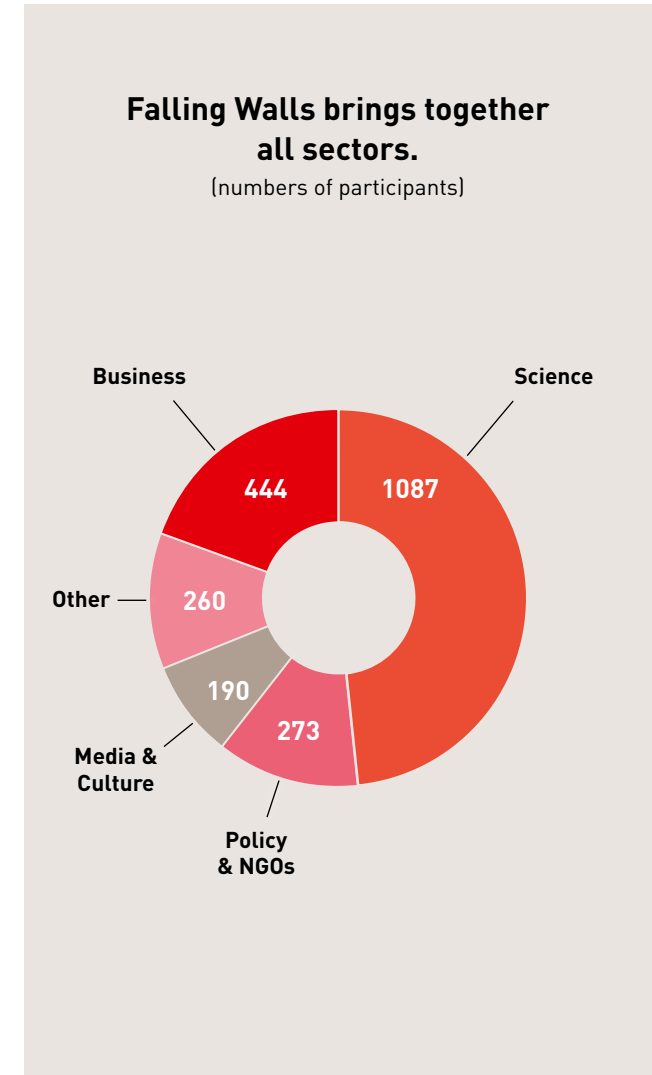
# HIGH LEVEL



# ALL WORLD REGIONS



# ALL SECTORS



\* International participants without Germans.

# PITCHES



**“YOU HAVE NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS,  
MINISTERS, AND STUDENTS  
CASUALLY ENJOYING A COFFEE  
TOGETHER, SITTING SIDE BY SIDE –  
IT'S SIMPLY FANTASTIC.”**

*Andrzej Szeptycki Secretary of State in The Ministry of Science and Higher Education, PL*



*Andrzej Szeptycki; Marie-Noëlle Semeria*



*Ta-Shun Chou*



*Falling Walls Lab Winners 2024*



*Fè.mi Tankpinou, Pewee Kolubah, Josué Smith*



*Patrick Hetzel, Minister of Higher Education and Research, FR*

**“THE SUMMIT PLAYS A KEY ROLE  
IN BRINGING UP NEW IDEAS AND  
STIMULATING COOPERATION,  
SO FOR ME IT'S REALLY AN  
IMPORTANT EVENT.”**

*Patrick Hetzel Minister of Higher Education and Research, FR*

## FALLING WALLS PITCHES

# PITCH COMPETITIONS & NETWORKING FORUMS

*The world's next generation talents take the stage with their breakthrough ideas for the future.*



Niklas Marzinek, Bengisu Berispek, Jaqui Goldin, Oriana Trejo Álvarez, Chuck Chuan Ng

## FALLING WALLS ENGAGE

*Falling Walls Engage puts a spotlight on the most inspiring Science Engagement projects worldwide. This year's focus was on climate change and adaptation, thanks to our partnership with the Hannover Re Foundation. The 21 Winners in the Science Engagement category were invited to present their 5-minute project pitches on stage.*



Tinaye Makoni

## FALLING WALLS LAB

*Falling Walls Lab is an international and interdisciplinary pitch competition that brings together students and early-career scientists to present their breakthrough ideas on stage. Falling Walls Labs take place locally all around the globe. They each send their winner to pitch their groundbreaking ideas in just 3 minutes in a grand finale at the Falling Walls Science Summit in Berlin.*



Seadna Quingley

## FALLING WALLS VENTURE

*Falling Walls Venture is a pitch competition for the most promising science start-ups nominated by outstanding academic institutions from around the world. Watch pioneering founders who have turned science into business demonstrate how entrepreneurial solutions can help solve today's most pressing challenges.*



Adelheid Wessler, Antonia Morita Saktiawati, Yann Schemm

## FALLING WALLS FEMALE SCIENCE TALENTS

*The Female Science Talents programme encourages alumnae of Falling Walls and other talented young women researchers to take a step forward in their career through tailored workshops, global networking and high-level events. The programme seeks to both broadly promote female talents and elevate exceptional female researchers.*



FALLING WALLS ENGAGE PITCHES

# THE MOST INSPIRING SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS



Falling Walls Engage Community



Falling Walls Engage Community

**“YOU SEE ME FULLY ENGAGED AND FULLY EXCITED.”**

Olaf Brock Hannover Re Foundation, DE

## FALLING WALLS ENGAGE

**137**

APPLICATIONS FROM 70 COUNTRIES

**30**

FINALISTS FROM 15 COUNTRIES

**21**

WINNERS

**9**

INTERNATIONAL FALLING WALLS ENGAGE HUBS

**3,400+**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM 140+ COUNTRIES

Hannover Re Foundation

**Falling Walls Engage is an international pitch competition that showcases the most impactful projects that actively involve the public with science.** In 2024, the competition focused on the topic of climate change adaptation. 21 finalists from 15 countries presented their projects in five minutes at the Falling Walls Science Summit in Berlin.

Our mission is to inspire and connect those who involve the public in science to solve global challenges. Apart from our pitch competition, we build hubs for science engagement globally. Our hubs in Argentina, Australia, Canada, Greece, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, South Africa, and Sweden connect scientists and the public with events throughout the year.

### How to get involved

- › Apply: You run a science engagement initiative and are over the age of 18? We are looking forward to your application.
- › Join a hub: Become part of our local networks and connect with science engagers worldwide or contact us to launch your own.

- › Become a partner: Help science engagers compete, connect globally and create impactful initiatives together with us.

Success stories: [falling-walls.com/engage/impact](https://falling-walls.com/engage/impact)

FALLING WALLS LAB PITCHES

# INNOVATIVE IDEAS FROM EMERGING TALENTS



Joseph Bedard

**“THE SCIENCE SUMMIT ALLOWS MANY PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT HORIZONS TO MEET—DIFFERENT HORIZONS, DIFFERENT COUNTRIES—AND IT’S TRULY WONDERFUL.”**

*Alain Aspect Nobel Laureate, Institute d’Optique, FR*



*Carl-Henrik Heldin, Netanel Loyfer, Cat Allman, Joey Leskin*

FALLING WALLS LAB

**2,500+**  
APPLICATIONS

**104**  
COUNTRIES

**74**  
INTERNATIONAL LABS

**100**  
INTERNATIONAL LAB WINNERS AT THE GLOBAL FINALE



**Falling Walls Lab is an international and interdisciplinary pitch competition where students and early-career scientists present their breakthrough ideas on stage in three minutes. In 2024, 74 Falling Walls Lab organizers in 58 countries hosted local pitch competitions. Their 100 winners competed in the grand finale at the Falling Walls Science Summit.**

Our mission is to celebrate and connect the world’s next generation of scientists. We work together closely with our esteemed partners to create a career-boosting extended programme for our winners during their trip to Berlin: This year’s programme included a reception at the Italian Embassy, workshops by Springer Nature and an excursion to research institutes organised by our partners DAAD and DFG.

**How to get involved**

- › Apply to a Lab: You have a breakthrough idea, are over the age of 18 and are currently enrolled at university or already have a degree? Our local Labs look forward to your application
- › Launch a Lab: You are a research institution and would like to bring together talents for a pitch competition? Cooperate with us.

- › Become a partner: Support the next generation of breakthrough scientists from around the world by becoming our partner and crafting experiences that will help them succeed together with us.

Visit: [falling-walls.com/lab](https://falling-walls.com/lab)

FALLING WALLS VENTURE PITCHES

# THE MOST PROMISING SCIENCE BASED START-UPS



**“IT’S A VERY HIGH-QUALITY EVENT FOR US. AND FOR ME, AS SOMEONE WHO LOVES SCOUTING, I’VE SEEN MANY START-UPS AND BRILLIANT TALENTS WITH GREAT POTENTIAL.”**

MICHEL SCHEFFER *President of the European Innovation Council Board, BE*

## FALLING WALLS VENTURE

**200**  
NOMINATIONS

**115**  
FINALISTS

**37**  
COUNTRIES

**3**  
CLUSTERS  
 • Sustainability  
 • Engineering of the Future  
 • Health Solutions



**Falling Walls Venture is a pitch competition for the most promising science start-ups nominated by outstanding academic institutions from around the world. Watch pioneering founders who have turned science into business demonstrate how entrepreneurial solutions can help solve today’s most pressing challenges.**

Our mission is to put the most groundbreaking science-based start-ups from around the world in the spotlight. In 2024, our advisory board carefully selected 25 start-ups from 12 countries. Our esteemed jury under chair Stefan von Holtzbrinck had the difficult task to find winners in the categories Engineering of the Future, Health Solutions, and Sustainability.

Beyond our competition, we are part of Falling Walls Sciencepreneurs and foster a network of scientific institutions, incubators and investors to create an ecosystem that helps science-based start-ups succeed. We have helped along investments and exits in several cases.

**How to get involved**

- › Are you a research institution? Nominate your best start-up and encourage them to apply.
- › Help us tailor a programme for our winners that connects them with people that help them succeed.

Visit: [falling-walls.com/venture](https://falling-walls.com/venture)

FALLING WALLS FEMALE SCIENCE TALENTS

# PROMOTING FEMALE LEADERSHIP



Intensive Track 2024 Participants



**“IT HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE TO DEVELOP THE WOMEN BREAK-THROUGH AWARDS WITH FALLING WALLS AND RECOGNIZE THESE IMPRESSIVE WOMEN WORKING TO DELIVER TANGIBLE CHANGE.”**

Ylann Schemm *Elsevier Foundation, NL*

*Adelheid Wessler, Inge Katrin Herrmann, Marianna Prokopi-Demetriades, Antonia Morita Saktiawati, Ylann Schemm*

## FALLING WALLS FEMALE SCIENCE TALENTS

**270**  
APPLICATIONS FROM  
66 COUNTRIES

*Intensive Track*

**83**  
APPLICATIONS FROM  
32 COUNTRIES

*Women's Impact Award*

**3**  
WOMEN'S IMPACT  
AWARD WINNERS



The programme empowers visionary women with a strong research background to take up a leadership role in science, business or society. Falling Walls promotes responsible leadership, diversity of talent, and encourages participants to become part of an international network of outstanding female science talents.

**OUR ACTIVITIES:**

- › Leadership Skill Webinar Series
- › Career Talks
- › Peer-to-Peer Exchange
- › International Spring Gathering in Berlin – Workshops and Talks
- › International Fall Gathering in Berlin – Workshops and Talks
- › The Women's Impact Award including a Celebratory Dinner
- › Executive Table and/or other direct involvement in the Falling Walls Science Summit

Visit: [falling-walls.com/female-science-talents](https://falling-walls.com/female-science-talents)



Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit



Tobitate Scholars at the Falling Walls Science Summit



Melanie Smallman, Apple Pui Yi Chui



Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit



Plaques for the Falling Walls Science Breakthroughs of the Year 2024



Maria Leptin

**“VERY BUSY, VERY LIVELY, FULL OF INTERESTING PEOPLE – FAR TOO MANY TO TALK TO!”**

**Maria Leptin** *President of the European Research Council, BE*



Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit

# CIRCLE



*Falling Walls Circle Plenary Table "Preparing the Next Generation of Civic Science Leaders"*

**“IT BRINGS  
TOGETHER THE  
BRIGHTEST MINDS  
IN THE WORLD.”**

**Cem Özdemir** *Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture,  
Federal Minister of Education and Research, DE*



*Cem Özdemir*



*Beate Kampmann, Jimi Olaghère*



*Falling Walls Circle Plenary Table “Boosting Frontier Research: Europe’s Next Move”*



*Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit*



*Maria Leptin, Alain Aspect*



*Rafael Laguna*

**“HERE YOU CAN DO THINGS IN  
5 MINUTES, THAT OTHERWISE WOULD  
TAKE MONTHS BECAUSE YOU HAVE  
EVERYBODY HERE. THIS IS WHY I AM  
BACK EVERY YEAR.”**

**Rafael Laguna de la Vera** *SPRIND, DE*

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE

# DEBATES & SYMPOSIA


*Fostering dialogue across disciplines to shape the future of innovation and collaboration*

**FALLING WALLS PLENARY TABLES**



*Panel discussions on global challenges with leading international experts and exchanges on necessary next steps along the international scientific agenda.*

**FALLING WALLS IMPACT DIALOGUES**




*Impact Dialogues offer dynamic, engaging scientific discussions across multiple venues. They encourage movement and audience interaction, fostering impactful discourse.*

**FALLING WALLS ROUND TABLES**



*From presentations to open discussions – drawing attention to topics from broader issues in science and society to specific scientific developments.*

**VOLKSWAGEN FOUNDATION IMPACT DIALOGUES**



*These formats address political and social consequences of major elections and different approaches on the topic of academic freedom.*

**FALLING WALLS INSIGHTS CAFÉ**




*The “Insights Café” turns a public space into a hub of innovation. It simplifies complex scientific concepts, with interactive and compelling presentations.*

**WILHELM & ELSE HERAEUS FOUND. SYMPOSIUM PHYSICAL SCIENCES**




*Wilhelm and Else Heraeus Foundation and Falling Walls hosted this unique format to bring together international researchers in such fields as quantum physics and chemistry.*

**FALLING WALLS EXECUTIVE TABLES**



*Invitation-only events with a strong focus on networking, bringing global science leaders together to connect and develop new ideas.*

**FALLING WALLS AI NIGHT**



*The AI Night is dedicated to exploring the latest findings in AI research. Participants showcase their work and discuss and debate AI in various interactive formats.*



FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**PLENARY TABLES**

Plenary Tables are the centrepiece of the Falling Walls Circle, addressing global challenges in a series of moderated panel discussions. Leading experts share their perspectives on how science can be employed to benefit humanity and the world around us and which will be necessary steps on the international scientific agenda. To further extend the discourse to the audience, participants at the venue are invited to contribute their questions. All Plenary Tables are accessible free of charge via livestream.

**“THERE ARE VERY, VERY FEW CONFERENCES THAT TACKLE THIS KIND OF TOPIC – FORWARD-LOOKING, TIMELY, WELL-ORGANIZED, AND WITH AN EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH DENSITY OF INTELLECT IN THE DISCUSSIONS.”**

**Peter Schlosser** *Vice President and Vice Provost of the Global Futures, Arizona State University, US*



**BOOSTING FRONTIER RESEARCH: EUROPE'S NEXT MOVE**

*Moderation*  
**Maria Leptin**  
 European Research Council, *BE*

**Alain Aspect**  
 Institut d'Optique and Ecole Polytechnique, *FR*

**Andrzej Szeptycki**  
 Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland, *PL*

**Jana Havlíková**  
 Ministry of Science, Research and Innovation of the Czech Republic, *CZ*

**Marie-Noëlle Semeria**  
 Total Energies, *FR*

**Patrick Hetzel**  
 Ministry of Higher Education and Research of France, *FR*

European Research Council | **erc**

**FEEDING THE WORLD IN 2050**

*Moderation*  
**Magdalene Skipper**  
 Nature, *GB*

**Jack A. Bobo**  
 University of Nottingham, *GB*

**Christophe F. Maire**  
 Atlantic Labs & Food Labs, *DE*

**Akua Konadu Antwi-Agyajwa**  
 Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana, *GH*

**Patricia Gruber**  
 U.S. Department of State, *US*

**Karin Guendel Gonzales**  
 Bayer Crop Science Deutschland, *DE*

**BAYER**

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**PLENARY TABLES**



**FUSION TECHNOLOGY: ENERGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

*Moderation*  
**Norbert Holtkamp**  
 Hoover Institution, *US*

**Pietro Barabaschi**  
 ITER, *FR*

**Constantin Häfner**  
 Fraunhofer Inst. for Laser Tech. ILT, *DE*

**Kimberly Budil**  
 Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, *US*

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

**PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CIVIC SCIENCE LEADERS**

*Moderation*  
**Mariette DiChristina**  
 Boston University, *US*

**Frances Colón**  
 Center for American Progress, *US*

**Dietram Scheufele**  
 University of Wisconsin-Madison, *US*

**Avriel C. Epps**  
 Citizens and Tech. Lab, Cornell University, *US*

**Naledi Saul**  
 University of California San Francisco, *US*

**Narayan Sankaran**  
 University of San Francisco, *US*

RITA ALLEN FOUNDATION

BURROUGHS WELLCOME FUND

**DRIVING INNOVATION: RENEWABLES AND SUSTAINABLE CHEMISTRY**

*Moderation*  
**Jennifer Porto**  
 NYU Berlin, *DE*

**Maria Magdalena Atria Barros**  
 Embassy of Chile in Germany, *DE*

**Carla Seidel**  
 BASF, *DE*

**Juha Pankakoski**  
 Siemens Energy, *DE*

**Bernd Rech**  
 Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin, *DE*

HZB Helmholtz Zentrum Berlin

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**PLENARY TABLES**



*Moderation*  
**Thierry Coulthon**  
 Institut Polytechnique de Paris, *FR*

**Michael Brigl**  
 Boston Consulting Group, *DE*

**Michiel Scheffer**  
 European Innovation Council, *BE*

**Robbert Dijkgraaf**  
 University of Amsterdam, *NL*

**Monika Lessl**  
 Bayer, *DE*

**Rafael Laguna de la Vera**  
 SPRIND, *DE*

**WINNING THE DEEP TECH CENTURY: EUROPE'S PATH TO INNOVATION**

**BCG**      **SPRIND**



*Moderation*  
**Beate Kampmann**  
 Charité Center for Global Health, *DE*

**Jennifer Eileen Adair**  
 Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, *US*

**Christof von Kalle**  
 Institute of Health at Charité (BIH), *DE*

**Alain Huriez**  
 AdBio Partners, *FR*

**Jimi Olaghere**  
 Sugarloaf Capital, *US*

**EXPANDING GLOBAL ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE MEDICAL THERAPIES**

**BIH**  
 Berlin Institute of Health @Charité



*Moderation*  
**David Patrician**  
 RTL Nord, *DE*

**Kohei Itoh**  
 Keio University, *JP*

**Richard Socher**  
 you.com, *US*

**John Josephakis**  
 NVIDIA, *US*

**Paul Kearns**  
 Argonne National Laboratory, *US*

**HPC AND AI SOLUTIONS: A COLLECTIVE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT**

**JÜLICH**  
 Forschungszentrum

# FALLING WALLS CIRCLE ROUND TABLES

Round Tables bring attention to topics ranging from broader issues in science and society to more specific aspects of scientific development. Depending on the topic, different methods of communication are used from presentations and interviews to panels and open discussions. In addition to experts from the respective field, the audience at the venue is usually encouraged to participate in the discussion. Round Tables are accessible free of charge via livestream.

**“I THINK IT’S REALLY IMPORTANT TO CONNECT SCIENTISTS, BUT ALSO TO LINK THEM WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS LIKE ME, TO TURN GREAT IDEAS INTO INNOVATION AND SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTS.”**

**Michael Bolle** *Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Carl Zeiss Foundation, DE*



**CEO-TABLE:  
FROM RESEARCH  
INNOVATION TO  
CORPORATE  
STRATEGY**

**Michael Brigl**  
Boston Consulting Group, DE

**Gesa Miczaika**  
Auxxo Catalyst Fund, DE

**Bernd Scheifele**  
Heidelberg Materials, DE

**Peter Sölkner**  
Vetter Pharma, DE

*Moderation*  
**Michael Bröcker**  
Table.Briefings, DE

**TABLE** BRIEFINGS



**SCIENCE  
DIPLOMACY:  
OPPORTUNITIES  
AND LIMITS**

**David Harel**  
Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Weizmann Institute of Science, IL

*Moderation*  
**Shelly Kupferberg**  
Deutschlandfunk K. und RBB Radio3, DE

**Robert Schlögl**  
Humboldt-Stiftung, DE

**Angela Liberatore**  
European Research Council, BE

Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**ROUND TABLES**



**NAVIGATING DUAL-USE: BALANCING FREEDOM AND SECURITY**

**Alice Aiken**  
Dalhousie University, CA

**Carsten Breuer**  
Bundeswehr, DE

**Alex von Somoren**  
UK Government Office for Science, UK

**Georg Schütte**  
Moderation  
Volkswagen Foundation, DE

**Ursula Staudinger**  
Technical University of Dresden, DE

**Hertie Stiftung**  
GEMEINNÜTZIGE

**4TH GEN UNIVERSITIES: SHAPING FUTURE INNOVATION AND IMPACT**

**Nick Fowler**  
Moderation  
Elsevier, GB

**Alekdrr Hobza**  
EU Commission, BE

**Robert-Jan Smits**  
Eindhoven Technical University, NL

**Marianna Prokopi-Demetriades**  
RSL Revolutionary Labs, Theramir, CY

**Peter Schlosser**  
Arizona State University, US

**Elsevier**

**TU/e**  
EINDHOVEN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**DEMOCRACY UNDER ATTACK**

**Alexander Betts**  
Moderation  
Brasenose College, Univ. of Oxford, GB

**Carsten Holtkamp**  
Kreab Germany, DE

**Lora Viola**  
Freie Universität Berlin, DE

**Anna Lührmann**  
wFederal Foreign Office, DE

**Petra Schleiter**  
St. Hilda's College, University of Oxford, GB

**Berlin University Alliance**

**SCRIPTS**  
CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE  
Contestations of the Liberal Script

**UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**ROUND TABLES**



**KIWI POLICY TALK: TRANSATLANTIC SCIENCE RELATIONS & THE US ELECTION**

**Ralf Beste**  
Federal Foreign Office, DE

**Anette "Nina" Gray**  
New York University, US

**Young-Kee Kim**  
University of Chicago, US

**Joybrato Mukherjee**  
German Academic Exchange Service, DE

*Moderation*  
**Sandra Pfister**  
Deutschlandfunk, DE



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



DAAD KIWI  
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

**FUTURE OF OPEN SCIENCE: ENHANCING RESEARCH ACCESS AND IMPACT**


**Julieta Arancio**  
Open Research Community Accelerator, DE

**Joseph Broz**  
IBM, US

**Gerard Meijer**  
Fritz Haber Institute of the Max Planck Society, DE

**Alina Schadwinkel**  
*Moderation*  
Der Spiegel, DE

**Magdalena Skipper**  
Nature, GB



**SPRINGER NATURE**

**NAVIGATING AI: SCIENCE, POLITICS, AND SOCIETAL CHALLENGES**

**Sarah de Rijcke**  
Leiden University, NL

**Iryna Gurevych**  
Technical University of Darmstadt, DE

**Martin Hullin**  
Bertelsmann Stiftung, DE

**Michael Schönstein**  
German Federal Chancellery, DE

*Moderation*  
**Georg Schütte**  
Volkswagen Foundation, DE



VolkswagenStiftung

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**ROUND TABLES**



**RELIABLE GENERATIVE AI: A KEY TO INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS**

**Michael Bartsch**  
AI.DOPT, DE

**Mehdi Ali**  
Fraunhofer IAIS  
Lamarr Institute, DE

**Hans-Jörg Vögel**  
BMW Group, DE

*Moderation*  
**Ludwig Siegele**  
The Economist, DE

**OVERCOMING ANIMAL TESTING WITH ADVANCED CELL MODELS**

*Moderation*  
**Alison Abbott**  
Freelance  
Journalist, DE

**Seyoum Ayeahunie**  
MatTek  
Corporation, US

**Zaher Nahle**  
The Ivyctory Group,  
US

**Uwe Marx**  
TissUse, DE

**Martha Mayo**  
Sartorius, US

**EYES TO THE SKY: THE NEXT GENERATION OF LARGE TELESCOPES**

*Moderation*  
**Sibylle Anderl**  
ZEIT ONLINE, DE

**Michael Kramer**  
Max Planck  
Institute for Radio  
Astronomy, DE

**Linda Tacconi**  
Max Planck Institute  
for Extraterrestrial  
Physics, DE

**David Reitze**  
Laser Interferometer  
Gravitational-wave  
Observatory (LIGO),  
California Institute of  
Technology, US

**Frank Stietz**  
Heraeus, DE



FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**ROUND TABLES**



**AI GOVERNANCE:  
 HOW TO BENEFIT  
 EVERYONE?**

**Helmut Krcmar**  
 TUM School of  
 Computation,  
 Information and  
 Technology, *DE*

**Urs Gasser**  
 TUM School of  
 Social Sciences and  
 Technology, *DE*

**Ludwig Siegele**  
*Moderation*  
 The Economist, *DE*

**Amelie  
 Hennemann-Heldt**  
 German Federal  
 Chancellery, *DE*

**Isa Sonnenfeld**  
 Google News Lab, *DE*



**RESTORING  
 TRUST: BUILDING  
 DEMOCRATIC  
 RESILIENCE**

**Gosia Binczyk**  
 EU Commission, *DE*

**Günter Nooke**  
 Leipzig University,  
*DE*

**Manon Westphal**  
 University of Münster, *DE*

**Christof Gattringer**  
 Austrian Science  
 Fund, *AT*

*Moderation*  
**Swantje Freifrau von Massenbach**  
 KiVVON Media, *DE*



**BIOMEDICAL  
 INNOVATION  
 ECOSYSTEMS:  
 RECIPES FOR  
 SUCCESS**

**Juan de Pablo**  
 New York  
 University, *US*

**Henry Marx**  
 Senate Department  
 for Higher Education  
 and Research, *DE*

**Ian Walmsley**  
 Imperial College  
 London, *GB*

**Maike Sander**  
 Max Delbrück  
 Center, *DE*

*Moderation*  
**Claudia Ulbrich**  
 Cardior Pharmaceuticals, *DE*







*Wilhelm und Else Heraeus Symposium*

**“AMAZING, ABSOLUTELY FLABBERGASTING – FANTASTIC NETWORKING, SO MANY PEOPLE TO CONNECT WITH, INCREDIBLE LECTURES, AND GREAT DISCUSSIONS. TRULY AMAZING!”**

**Robert-Jan Smits** *President of the Executive Board, Eindhoven University of Technology, NL*



*Nora Kottmann*



*Audience at the Falling Walls Insights Café*



*Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit*

**“THE FALLING WALLS SUMMIT BRINGS TOGETHER POLITICIANS, YOUNG SCIENTISTS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND HARDCORE SCIENTISTS LIKE ME.”**

**Saw Wai Hla** *Professor of Physics, Ohio University, US*



*Saw Wai Hla*

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**INSIGHTS CAFÉ**



Narayan Sankaran



Audience at Falling Walls Insights Café

**“THIS YEAR IS EVEN GRANDER THAN PREVIOUS ONES – I FIND IT LIVELY, BUBBLY, AND MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER IN THESE TIMES.”**

Stefan von Holtzbrinck, Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, DE



Sabine Lehmann

The Insights Café brings a new format of scientific discourse to the venue, transforming an ordinary public space into a hub of innovation and engagement – making complex scientific concepts accessible.

**BREAKING THE WALL OF SECTOR TRANSITION**

Simone Menne American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, DE

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

Klaus Tschira Stiftung

THE ELSEVIER FOUNDATION

VolkswagenStiftung

Foundation

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: TACKLING GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

Simone Menne American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, DE / Dietmar Harhoff Max Planck Inst. for Innovation and Competition, DE / Anousheh Ansari XPRIZE Foundation, US / Silke Sperling Charité, DE

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN SCIENCE

**ACADEMIC FREEDOM: BREAKING DOWN (NEW) WALLS**

Viktoriya Sereda Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, DE / Katrin Kinzelbach FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, DE / Ksenia Luchenko Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences, ME

ZEITSTIFTUNG BUCERIUS

FALLING WALLS CIRCLE  
**INSIGHTS CAFÉ**



**“IT’S INCREDIBLY EXCITING TO BE HERE AND LISTEN TO EVERYONE WORKING TOWARDS BUILDING A BETTER WORLD.”**  
 Rafael Prieto-Curiel Complexity Science Hub Wein, AT

Guests of the Falling Walls Science Summit



Elodie Chabrol

**FUTURE PERSPECTIVES – SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY**

**Inge Katrin Herrmann** University of Zurich, Univ. Hospital Balgrist, ETH/Empa, CH  
**Saw Wai Hla** Ohio University and Argonne National Laboratory, US  
**Elodie Chabrol** Science Communicator, FR  
**Narayan Sankaran** University of San Francisco, US



**THE KAVLI FOUNDATION**

**NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Susanne Buiter** Helmholtz Centre Potsdam, DE  
 / **Andreas Märkert** Hannover Re Group / **Marco Bohnhoff** Ger. Research Cntr. for Geosciences, DE /  
**Thomas Heilmann** Deutscher Bundestag, DE /  
**Mariette DiChristina** Boston University, US



**Hannover Re Foundation**

**REGULATING CONFLICTS IN INSTITUTIONS: MIGRATION, CLIMATE, IDENTITY POLITICS**

**Jens Martin Gurr** University of Duisburg-Essen, DE / **Annette Schavan** Former German Minister of Education and Research, DE /  
**Patrick Cramer** Max Planck Society, DE /  
**Sabine Lehmann** Communication expert, DE

**THE LIMITS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

**Hanoch Gutfreund** The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, IL / **Thorsten Schwede** University of Basel, SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics, CH /  
**Ruth Morgan** University College London, GB /  
**Frederick Fenter** Frontiers, CH / **Robbert Dijkgraaf** University of Amsterdam, NL /  
**Tanja Stadler** ETH Zürich, CH

## FALLING WALLS CIRCLE

**EXECUTIVE TABLES**

Executive Tables are invitation-based events bringing together high-profile global leaders to discuss current and future developments in regard to specific challenges of scientific relevance in a moderated exchange.

All participants actively shape the discussion by sharing their ideas, questions, and solutions. The commitment of the attendees to the Chatham House Rule encourages an honest, open discourse, retains its confidentiality and allows for disruptive thinking.

**CHARTING A PATH TOWARDS PRECISION HEART HEALTH**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session gathers global experts to explore the challenges in transforming heart health and how to reduce the burden of cardiovascular diseases.

DHZB Stiftung

**QUANTUM DISRUPTED COMMUNICATION**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session gathers global experts to explore the untapped disruptive potential of quantum technologies.

bdr.

**SAFEGUARDING RESEARCH INTEGRITY**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive discussion assesses how governments, companies and researchers can preserve academic freedom.

 VolkswagenStiftung

**BUILDING A FUSION INDUSTRY ECOSYSTEM**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session explores measures for establishing a sustainable fusion industry.

 Federal Ministry of Education and Research

**PHILANTHROPY IN SCIENCE**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session is about pressing issues of philanthropy in Science and fundraising resonating across foundations and projects worldwide.

WILHELM UND ELSE HERAEUS-STIFTUNG 

**INNOVATION AND SCIENCE: THEIR ROLE IN DEFENSE AND SECURITY**

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive panel will explore how shifting global alliances are reshaping international cooperation in science.

 STIFTERVERBAND

## LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR EUROPE'S DEEP TECH FUTURE

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive panel examines Europe's future technologies and discusses how companies and innovation agencies can lead in the emerging deep tech century.



## SCIENCE & RESEARCH IN UKRAINE

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive discussion evaluates the challenges facing Ukrainian science and identifies urgent support needs.

WILHELM UND ELSE HERAEUS-STIFTUNG



## SOLAR BOOM IN GERMANY: A BLESSING CHALLENGE

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: At this exclusive session, experts address managing high solar power feed-in and explore regulatory solutions for seamless grid integration.



HUAWEI

## TRANSATLANTIC BIG SCIENCE

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This background table addresses challenges and perspectives in international cooperation.



WILHELM UND ELSE HERAEUS-STIFTUNG



## ENGINEERING BIOLOGY

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: At this exclusive table, we explore how engineering biology can revolutionise industries by accelerating medical breakthroughs, lowering production costs.



## SCIENCE-BASED POLICY ADVICE

Falling Walls Circle – This exclusive event explores how empirical evidence and interdisciplinary research guide risk assessment and solutions for complex societal issues.

FALLING WALLS FOUNDATION

## DEBATE CULTURE AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ON CAMPUS

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive discussion focuses on the current debate surrounding political engagement that's appropriate on campus.



## FEMALE THOUGHT LEADERS IN SCIENCE

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session is focussing on the representation of female leaders among e.g. Nobel Prize recipients and other awards.

FALLING WALLS FEMALE SCIENCE TALENTS

## ART-SCIENCE ECOSYSTEMS FOR TRANSDISCIPLINARY BREAKTHROUGHS

Falling Walls Circle – Executive Table: This exclusive session brings together global leaders to explore ways to accelerate and scale Art and Science collaborations.



FALLING WALLS CIRCLE

# IMPACT DIALOGUES



Florin Zubaşcu



Participants of Impact Dialogues

Impact Dialogues introduce a dynamic approach to scientific discourse, with diverse sessions across multiple venues throughout the day. Unlike other formats confined to a single room and style of exchange, Impact Dialogues encourage movement and feature a structure that fosters audience engagement. Whether it's a panel discussion, an open forum, or a workshop, Impact Dialogues pave the way for meaningful connections and impactful discourse.

## OVERCOMING DIGITAL WALLS

**Arturo Filastro** Open Observatory of Network Interference  
**Patryk Pawlak** European University Institute / **Peter Limbourg** Deutsche Welle, *DE* / **Sabine Frank** Google / DW, *DE*



## INNOVATION JOURNALISM

**Nicola Kuhrt** science pressconference, *DE* / **Katja Matthes** Geomar, *DE* / **Henrik Müller** TU Dortmund, *DE* / **Ludwig Siegele** The Economist, *DE* / **Florin Zabascu** Science.Business, *DE*



## DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN SCIENCE

The workshop focused on unconscious bias in the MINT community. Dr. Alina Gales from TUM shared diversity best practices, and participants collaboratively developed solutions for a more inclusive academia through an interactive World Café.

Klaus Tschira  
Stiftung



## DECISION THEATER



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE  
OF GEOANTHROPOLOGY

## FALLING WALLS CIRCLE

VOLKSWAGEN FOUNDATION IMPACT DIALOGUES  
ON SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

*Félix Krawatzek, Clemens Fuest, Susan Banducci, Thorsten Faas*



*Kader Konuk*



*Volkswagen Foundation Impact Dialogue*

**ACADMIC FREEDOM: GLOBAL APPROACHES**

**Kader Konuk** TU Dortmund, Academy in Exile, *DE*  
**Ilyas Saliba** Global Public Policy Institute, *DE*

**ACADMIC FREEDOM: PRACTICAL APPROACHES**

**Philipp Christoph** Schmäddeke Sci. at Risk Emergency Office, *DE*  
**Aldo Spahiu** Berlin University Alliance, *DE*  
**Daniela Koleva** Sofia University, *BG*

**ACADMIC FREEDOM: NETWORKING AND DISCUSSION**

Networking

**GERMANY'S KEY VOTE**

**Susan Banducci** University of Birmingham, *GB* / **Félix Krawatzek**  
Centre for East European and Intl. Studies, *DE* / **Thorsten Faas**  
Freie Universität Berlin, *DE* / **Clemens Fuest** ifo Institute, *DE*

**US ELECTIONS IMPACT**

**Michael Bruter** London School of Econ. and Political Science, *GB*  
**Sudha David-Wilp** German Marshall Fund of the US, *DE* / **Petra**  
**Schleiter** St. Hilda's College, University of Oxford, *GB* / **Jeffrey**  
**Kopstein** University of California, Irvine, *US*

*Moderation:*

**Samiha Shafy** Die Zeit, *DE*  
**Catherine Newmark** Deutschlandradio, *DE*

## FALLING WALLS CIRCLE

# WILHELM AND ELSE HERAEUS FOUNDATION SYMPOSIUM ON PHYSICAL SCIENCES



*Wilhelm und Else Heraeus Symposium*



*Participants of Wilhelm und Else Heraeus Symposium*

## WINNER PITCHES

**Saw Wai Hla** Breaking the Wall of 128 Years of X-ray History, Ohio University/Argonne National Laboratory, *US* / **Simon Storz** Breaking the Wall of Quantum Communication, ETH Zurich, *CH* / **Thorsten Schumm** Breaking the Wall of Nuclear Laser Excitation, Vienna University of Technology, *AU* / **Ewold Verhagen** Breaking the Wall of Programmable Metamaterials, AMOLF, *NL* / **Liang Jie Wong** Breaking the Wall of Quantum X-ray Tech, Nanyang Technological University, *SG* / **Richard Town** Breaking the Wall of Fusion Gain, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, *US* /

**Martin Zwierlein** Breaking the Wall of Complex Quantum Matter, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *US* / **Xiaogang Liu** Breaking the Wall of X-ray Imaging, National University of Singapore, *SG* / **Nils Johan Engelsen** Breaking the Wall of Quantum Drum Vibrations, Chalmers Institute of Technology, *SE*

## NEXT GENERATION RESEARCHER PITCHES

**Thorsten Feichtner** University of Wuerzburg, *DE* / **Mathis Fricke** Technische Universität Darmstadt, *DE* / **Rutvik Lathia** Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research, *DE* / **Taner Esat** Forschungszentrum Jülich, *DE* / **Alice Orme** Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry, *DE*

### Other formats:

**SPEAKER CORNERS  
NETWORKING**

### Further active participants:

**Stefan Jorda** Wilhelm and Else Heraeus Foundation, *DE*

### Moderation:

**Oliver Benson** Humboldt University of Berlin, *DE*

**Thomas Elsaesser** Max Born Institute, *DE*

WILHELM UND ELSE  
HERAEUS-STIFTUNG





THE CONFERENCE INSIDE THE CONFERENCE

# THE GLOBAL FORUM FOR SCIENCEPRENEURS

Our Sciencepreneurs Forum's mission is to build connections that help science-based start-ups succeed. We create events that connect spin-offs, industry leaders, research organisations, venture capital and policy makers for success.

Business leaders and VCs flock to the Falling Walls Science Summit to meet with esteemed scientists and the next generation of science start-ups for the most cutting-edge insights into deep tech. The Sciencepreneurs Forum creates opportunities for them to unite forces, including meet-ups, panel discussions and a pitch competition at the summit and year-round.

**440**

BUSINESS LEADERS

**35**

SCIENCE-BASED START-UPS FROM OVER 12 COUNTRIES

**40**

VENTURE CAPITALS

**50**

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

**“NEVER BEFORE HAVE WE GATHERED SUCH A DIVERSE GROUP TO SHAPE OUR DEEP TECH FUTURE.”**

Michael Brigl *Head of BCG Central Europe, DE*



THE CONFERENCE INSIDE THE CONFERENCE

# THE GLOBAL FORUM FOR SCIENCEPRENEURS

## FALLING WALLS VENTURE – OUR PITCH COMPETITION

Falling Walls Venture is a pitch competition for the most promising science start-ups nominated by outstanding academic institutions from around the world. Watch pioneering founders who have turned science into business demonstrate how entrepreneurial solutions help solve today's most pressing challenges.



## WINNING THE DEEP TECH CENTURY: EUROPE'S PATH TO INNOVATION

A discussion like a look into the crystal ball: A European minister, a government innovation agency and industry leaders with unique insight met at this table to pinpoint what needs to be done to bring Europe to the forefront of deep tech in Europe – and what they will do to make it happen.



**Rafael Laguna de la Vera,**  
Federal Agency for Disruptive Innovation SPRIND, *DE*



**Michael Brigl**  
Head of BCG Central Europe, *DE*



**Monika Lessl**  
ED Bayer Foundation and Senior VP Bayer AG, *DE*



**Michiel Scheffer**  
President of the European Innovation Council Board, *DE*



**Robert Dijkgraaf**  
Netherlands' Minister of Education, Culture & Science, *NL*



**Thierry Coulhon**  
President of Hcéres, *FR* (Moderation)



## CEO-TABLE: FROM RESEARCH INNOVATION TO CORPORATE STRATEGY

A fly on the wall perspective on a discussion between CEOs that unearthed answers to important questions: How can innovations from research be translated into corporate strategies? How can the champion of basic research, Germany, move from the laboratory to the market more successfully?



**Michael Brigl**  
Head of BCG Central Europe, *DE*



**Gesa Miczaika**  
Auxxo Catalyst Fund, *DE*



**Bernd Scheifele**  
Heidelberg Materials, *DE*



**Peter Sölkner**  
Vetter Pharma, *DE*

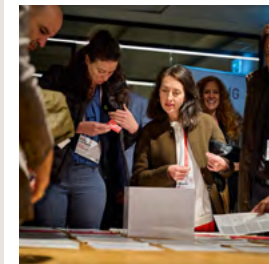


**Michael Bröcker**  
Table.Briefings, *DE* (Moderation)



## SCIENCEPRENEURS NIGHT

The 2024 Falling Walls Sciencepreneurs Night was one to remember, full of fun and meaningful connections: Over 120 visionary scientists, entrepreneurs, investors, and industry leaders at Merantix AI Campus in Berlin celebrated the Falling Walls Venture winning start-ups together.



## SCIENCEPRENEURS LUNCH

A brown-box lunch for best-practice sharing among VCs and innovators: In April 2024, more than 40 European deep-tech investors met at the Falling Walls Sciencepreneurs Investor Lunch to discuss improvements and opportunities in financing science-based start-ups.



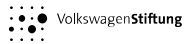
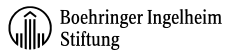
FALLING WALLS AI NIGHT

# AI NIGHT: ILLUMINATING THE FUTURE OF INNOVATION

The AI Night is a groundbreaking format that brings together global thought leaders, innovators, and visionaries to explore and shape the future of artificial intelligence. Initiated by Matthias Bethge, the event

features interactive presentations, dynamic discussions, and an emphasis on diverse perspectives, fostering meaningful communication and interdisciplinary collaboration. With a distinguished line-

up of speakers, the AI Night is dedicated to advancing discourse, inspiring transformative breakthroughs, and championing innovation that reflects the richness of ideas from around the world.



Participants of the AI Night



AI farming robot



Matthias Bethge



Painting with AI



Falling Walls Science House at night



Richard Socher



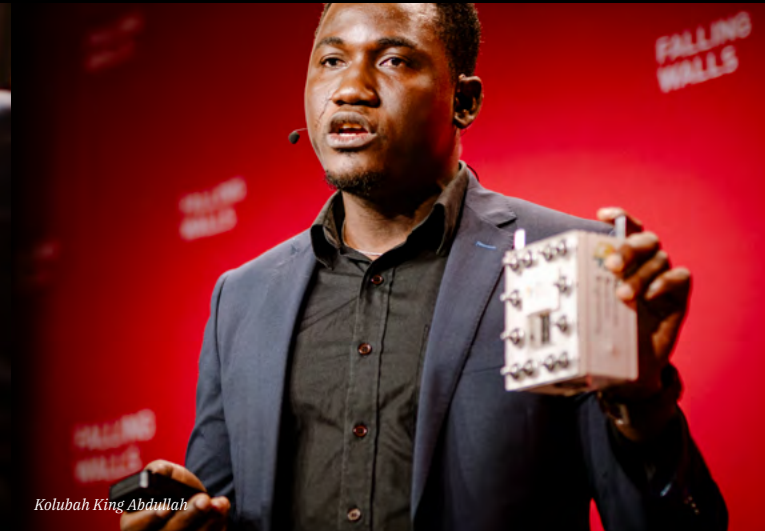
Decision Theater

# BREAK-THROUGHS



**“IT'S FANTASTIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE, A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO MEET NEW COLLEAGUES, AND TRULY ONE OF THE FOREMOST SCIENCE EVENTS WORLDWIDE.”**

*Alice Aiken Dalhousie University Halifax, CA*



**“THIS IS MY FIRST OFFICIAL EVENT AS MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION.”**

*Cem Özdemir Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, Federal Minister of Education and Research, DE*

FALLING WALLS SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

# IDENTIFYING & HONOURING BREAKTHROUGH RESEARCH

*Breaking Walls, Shaping the Future: Celebrating the Year's Pioneering Achievements in Science*



## GLOBAL CALL



*Prominent academics, universities, research organisations, companies, foundations, and institutes are invited to nominate groundbreaking projects across nine categories. A distinguished jury, comprised of leading experts in their fields, evaluates the submissions to identify the most exceptional contributions in each category.*



## THE GRAND FINALE

### FALLING WALLS BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

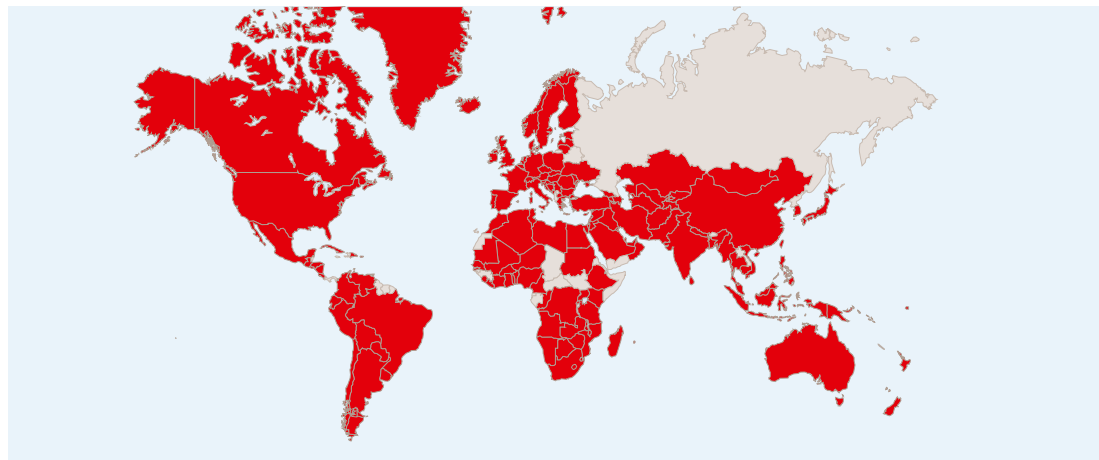


Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research

*On 9 Nov, the anniversary of the historic fall of the Berlin Wall, the Breakthrough Day provides a stage for “the brightest minds on the planet” (BBC) in Berlin. Outstanding research is showcased in 15-minute presentations focusing on the question, “What are the next walls to fall in science and society?”*

THE GLOBAL CALL FOR NOMINATIONS PROCESS

# IDENTIFYING OUTSTANDING BREAKTHROUGHS



## GLOBAL CALL

to all research institutions worldwide



## 3.634 NOMINATIONS

from 156 countries and 1.522 institutions



## 199 WINNERS

chosen by 94 jury members



## 9 SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

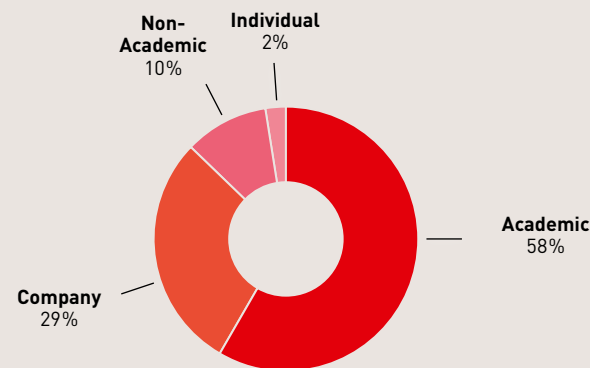
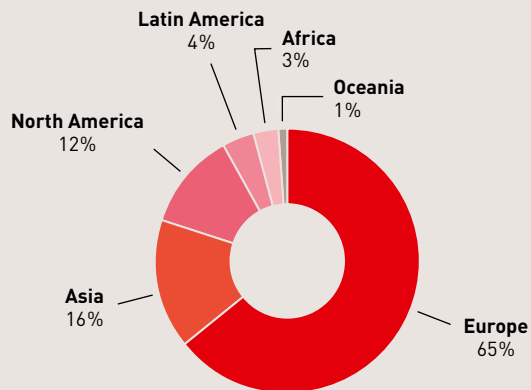
in 9 Categories:

- LIFE SCIENCES
- PHYSICAL SCIENCES
- ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY
- SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
- ART AND SCIENCE
- WOMEN'S\* IMPACT AWARD
- EMERGING TALENTS
- SCIENCE START-UPS
- SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Breakthrough research was and is the key to understanding and solving the greatest challenges of our time. To honor this important work Falling Walls encourages scientists to participate in the Falling Walls Global Call and submit their outstanding projects.

SEARCHING FOR THE SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

# WORLD-CLASS NOMINATING INSTITUTIONS



## EUROPE

- CNRS, *FR*
- Chalmers University of Technology, *SE*
- ETH Zurich, *CH*
- King's College London, *GB*
- University of Graz, *AU*
- Vienna University of Technology, *AU*
- Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia, *IT*
- University of Pavia, *IT*
- European Space Agency, *FR*

## GERMANY

- Johannes Gutenberg University, *DE*
- Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, *DE*
- Max Planck Society, *DE*
- Technical University of Munich, *DE*
- Federal Agency for Disruptive Innovation SPRIND, *DE*
- Federal Ministry of Education and Research, *DE*

- Technische Universität Berlin, *DE*
- Technische Universität Dresden, *DE*
- Humboldt University of Berlin, *DE*
- Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, *DE*

## AFRICA

- Stellenbosch University, *ZA*
- University of Cape Town, *ZA*
- University of Johannesburg, *ZA*
- Pontificia Universidade Católica do Paraná, *BR*

## NORTH AMERICA

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *US*
- New York University, *US*
- University of California San Diego, *US*
- Queen's University, *CA*
- Dalhousie University, *CA*
- University of Manitoba, *CA*

- Brown University, *US*
- Stanford University, *US*
- University of New Mexico, *MX*

## LATIN AMERICA

- The National University of Córdoba, *AR*
- National Technological University Mendoza, *AR*

## OCEANIA

- The Australian National University, *AU*

## ASIA

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong, *HK*
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, *HK*
- Nanyang Technological University, *SG*
- King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, *SA*
- Indian Institute Of Technology Kanpur, *IN*

AND MANY MORE ...



SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR 2024

# ALL CATEGORIES, JURY MEMBERS AND WINNERS

## LIFE SCIENCES

The Life Sciences jury, chaired by Michael Schuetz, focuses on recognizing the most groundbreaking advancements in the field. From a pool of remarkable nominations, the jury selected 10 exceptional winners and awarded Michael Platten the prestigious title of Science Breakthrough of the Year in Life Sciences. This category celebrates pioneering contributions to the understanding of living systems, encompassing areas such as biology, neuroscience, and zoology, with a strong emphasis on addressing the world's most critical challenges through innovative research.

### SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR



**MICHAEL PLATTEN**  
German Cancer Research Center, *DE*

### JURY CHAIR



**MICHAEL SCHUETZ**  
Queensland University of Technology  
Brisbane, *AUS*

### BREAKING THE WALL OF BRAIN TUMOR VACCINES

Michael Platten, a neurologist at Mannheim Medical University and the German Cancer Research Center, has achieved a breakthrough in cancer immunotherapy. His innovative research targets gliomas, including aggressive glioblastomas, using immune system strategies.

## PHYSICAL SCIENCES

The Physical Sciences jury, chaired by Ian Walmsley, focuses on identifying the most groundbreaking advancements in the field. From a pool of remarkable nominations, the jury selected 10 exceptional winners and awarded Saw Wai Hla the prestigious title of Science Breakthrough of the Year in Physical Sciences. The category celebrates pioneering contributions to the understanding of natural phenomena, encompassing areas such as chemistry, physics, and astronomy, with a strong emphasis on addressing the world's most critical challenges through innovative research.

### SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR



**SAW WAI HLA**  
Ohio University and  
Argonne National Laboratory, *US*

### JURY CHAIR



**IAN WALMSLEY**  
Imperial College London, *GB*

### BREAKING THE WALL OF 128 YEARS OF X-RAY HISTORY

Saw Wai Hla is a professor of physics at Ohio University and a physicist at the Argonne National Laboratory. He is also the director of the Nanoscale and Quantum Phenomena Institute, Ohio University's largest interdisciplinary institute. He is a world-leading researcher in atomic and molecular manipulation on material surfaces and synchrotron x-ray studies of individual atoms. His research focuses on nano and quantum properties of materials, in particular molecular machines and rare-earth molecular systems for energy applications.

SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR 2024

# ALL CATEGORIES, JURY MEMBERS AND WINNERS

## ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

The Engineering and Technology jury, chaired by Rokia Roslan, focuses on identifying innovative solutions and transformative technologies that address global challenges and revolutionize industries. From a pool of remarkable nominations, the jury selected 10 exceptional winners and awarded Guihua Yu the prestigious title of Science Breakthrough of the Year in Engineering and Technology. This category celebrates groundbreaking advancements that redefine technological boundaries and create impactful solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges.

### SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR



**GUIHUA YU**  
The University of Texas at Austin, *US*

### JURY CHAIR



**ROKIA RASLAN**  
University College London, *GB*

### BREAKING THE WALL OF SOLAR WATER SUSTAINABILITY

Dr. Guihua Yu is Temple Foundation Professor of Materials Science and Mechanical Engineering at University of Texas at Austin. He earned his B.S. degree with highest honor from USTC and his Ph.D. from Harvard, followed by postdoc at Stanford. His research focuses on nanomaterials innovations for addressing frontier challenges in sustainable energy-water nexus technologies. He is a Fellow of AAAS, MRS, RSC, IOP, IMMM and IAAM, and has received numerous awards and honors.

## SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

The Social Sciences & Humanities jury, chaired by Genoveva Martí, focuses on recognizing ground-breaking advancements in understanding human society and interpersonal relationships. From a pool of remarkable nominations, the jury selected 10 exceptional winners and awarded Rafael Prieto Curiel the prestigious title of Science Breakthrough of the Year in Social Sciences & Humanities. This category highlights pioneering contributions in fields such as politics, economics, and philosophy, emphasizing innovative research that addresses the world's most significant challenges.

### SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR



**RAFAEL PRIETO-CURIEL**  
Complexity Science Hub, *AT*

### JURY CHAIR



**GENOVEVA MARTI**  
University of Barcelona, *ES*

### BREAKING THE WALL OF DRUG CARTEL ANALYSIS

Rafael studied Applied Mathematics, and worked for the Police Department in Mexico City. His work consisted of crime forecasting. After a PhD in Applied Mathematics at UCL and became a postdoc at the Mathematical Institute of the University of Oxford. He also joined the Complexity Science Hub in Vienna, where he is the leader of the quantitative migration research group. He analyses cartels in Latin America, violence, and sustainable mobility.

SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR 2024

# ALL CATEGORIES, JURY MEMBERS AND WINNERS

## ART & SCIENCE

The Art & Science jury, chaired by Juliet Koss, focuses on recognizing groundbreaking projects at the intersection of artistic expression and scientific discovery. From a pool of remarkable nominations, the jury selected 10 exceptional winners and awarded Tiange Wang the prestigious title of Science Breakthrough of the Year in Art & Science. This category celebrates innovative works by artists whose creations, inspired by science, illuminate societal issues, explore natural phenomena, or capture the wonder of scientific breakthroughs, highlighting the profound connection between these complementary disciplines.

**SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR**



**TIANGE WANG**  
VLab, US

**JURY CHAIR**



**JULIET KOSS**  
Scripps College, US

**BREAKING THE WALL OF  
MULTISENSORY DATA**

Tiange Wang is an award-winning and internationally-exhibiting designer and creative technologist. Her work investigates innovative interactive paradigms among humans, technology and the environment. Tackling subjects like climate change, holistic wellbeing, multisensory experiences and speculative futures, she employs mediums such as multimodal interaction, creative data visualization, multimedia art, AR/VR, installation, food, software, AI and games.

## WOMEN'S IMPACT AWARD

**WOMEN'S IMPACT AWARD: RECOGNIZING WOMEN SCIENTISTS DRIVING GLOBAL CHANGE**

The Women's Impact Award recognizes women in science conducting research projects aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The award highlights exceptional talents engaged in interdisciplinary, ground-breaking research within their fields while advancing gender equality and diversity in science and academia. A distinguished Jury selects three outstanding scientists. In 2024, the Jury consisted of Ylann Schemm & Domiziana Francescon (Elsevier Foundation), Adelheid Wessler (Volkswagen Foundation), Aleksandra Drecun (Intersection Center For Science and Innovation), Simangele Shakwane (University of South Africa (UNISA)), Caroline Mose (Mawazo Institute). The award underscores the critical role of women in addressing the world's most urgent challenges and highlights their transformative contributions to science and society.

**SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR**



**INGE KATRIN HERRMANN**  
University of Zurich, University Hospital  
Balgrist, ETH/Empa, CH

**BREAKING THE WALL OF  
WOMENS HEALTH**

Inge Herrmann, an ETH Zurich engineer, is a Professor of Medical Technology Innovation at the University of Zurich, Balgrist University Hospital, and Swiss Federal Labs. Her lab focuses on developing the tools and technologies shaping the future of medicine. These innovations advance diagnostics and therapy, translating into clinical applications and successful ventures. Her achievements include the Eccellenza Professorial Award, Latsis Prize, and Largaider Award.

SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR 2024

# ALL CATEGORIES, JURY MEMBERS AND WINNERS

## SCIENCE START-UPS | FALLING WALLS VENTURE

Falling Walls Venture is a pitch competition for the most promising science start-ups nominated by outstanding academic institutions from around the world. Watch pioneering founders who have turned science into business demonstrate how entrepreneurial solutions can help solve today's most pressing challenges.

WINNER



**ANDREA TÜTTENBERG**  
ActiTrex, *DE*

JURY CHAIR



**STEFAN VON HOLTZBRINCK**  
Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, *DE*

### BREAKING THE WALL TO IMMUNE RESPONSE THERAPIES

Andrea Tüttenberg founded ActiTrex which is developing patent-protected cellular and biologic therapies targeting the root-cause of overshooting immune responses, thereby decreasing the need for immunosuppressants. The company's cellular lead product Actileucel aims to prevent Graft-versus-Host Disease at an early stage. It will pioneer as the first unmatched cell therapy sourced from a third-party donor.

## SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT | FALLING WALLS ENGAGE

Falling Walls Engage is an international pitch competition that showcases the most impactful projects that actively involve the public with science. We believe public trust and involvement in science play a central role in addressing global challenges, achieving the United Nations' SDGs and contributing to the overall wellbeing of society.

WINNER



**APPLE PUI YI CHUI**  
Apple Pui Yi Chui, *HK*

JURY CHAIR



**MELANIE SMALLMAN**  
University College London  
Department of Science and  
Technology Studies, *GB*

### BREAKING THE WALL TO ENGAGE SCHOOLS IN CORAL RESTORATION

This year's Engage Breakthrough of the Year Winner is Apple Pui Yi Chui from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her winning project engages students in coral restoration by turning schools into coral nurseries. She raises awareness about coral reefs and climate change, fosters connections with marine environments, and promotes conservation.

## EMERGING TALENTS | FALLING WALLS LAB

Falling Walls Lab is an international and interdisciplinary pitch competition that brings together students and early-career scientists to present their breakthrough ideas on stage in just three minutes. 100 winners from preliminary rounds on all continents compete against each other at the Falling Walls Science Summit in Berlin.

WINNER



**CONSTADINA ROGERS**  
University of Dalhousie, *CA*

JURY CHAIR



**CARL-HENRIK HELDIN**  
Nobel Foundation, *SE*

### BREAKING THE WALL OF PLASTIC ACCUMULATION

Constadina Rogers from Dalhousie University, CA is breaking the wall of Plastic Accumulation by enhancing the biological degradation of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), a common plastic used in packaging. Using a fusion of bacterial and fungal proteins, her research delivers a cost-effective and sustainable solution to managing plastic waste.

FALLING WALLS SCIENCE BREAKTHROUGHS

# BE INSPIRED & NETWORK WITH GLOBAL SCIENCE LEADERS



**BREAKING THE WALL OF QUANTUM TIMEKEEPING**

**JUN YE**  
JILA/NIST/University of Colorado, *US*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF HUMAN EMBRYO CREATION**

**MAGDALENA ZERNICKA-GOETZ**  
California Institute of Technology, *US*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF DARK ENERGY MYSTERIES**

**VALERIA PETTORINO**  
European Space Agency (ESA), *US*



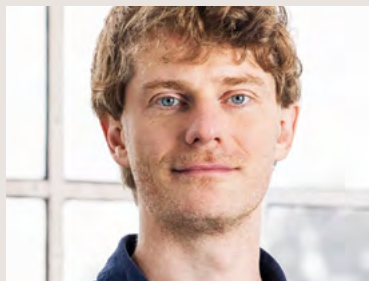
**BREAKING THE WALL OF SURGICAL IMAGING**

**LENA MAIER-HEIN**  
German Cancer Research Center, *US*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF BLIND OBEDIENCE**

**EMILIE CASPAR**  
Ghent University, *US*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE**

**RICHARD SOCHER**  
you.com, *US*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF MARINE CARBON INNOVATION**

**KATJA MATTHES**  
GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, *DE*



**BREAKING THE WALL OF UNDERSTANDING THE QUANTUM WORLD**

**IMMANUEL BLOCH**  
Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics, *DE*



**KEYNOTE**

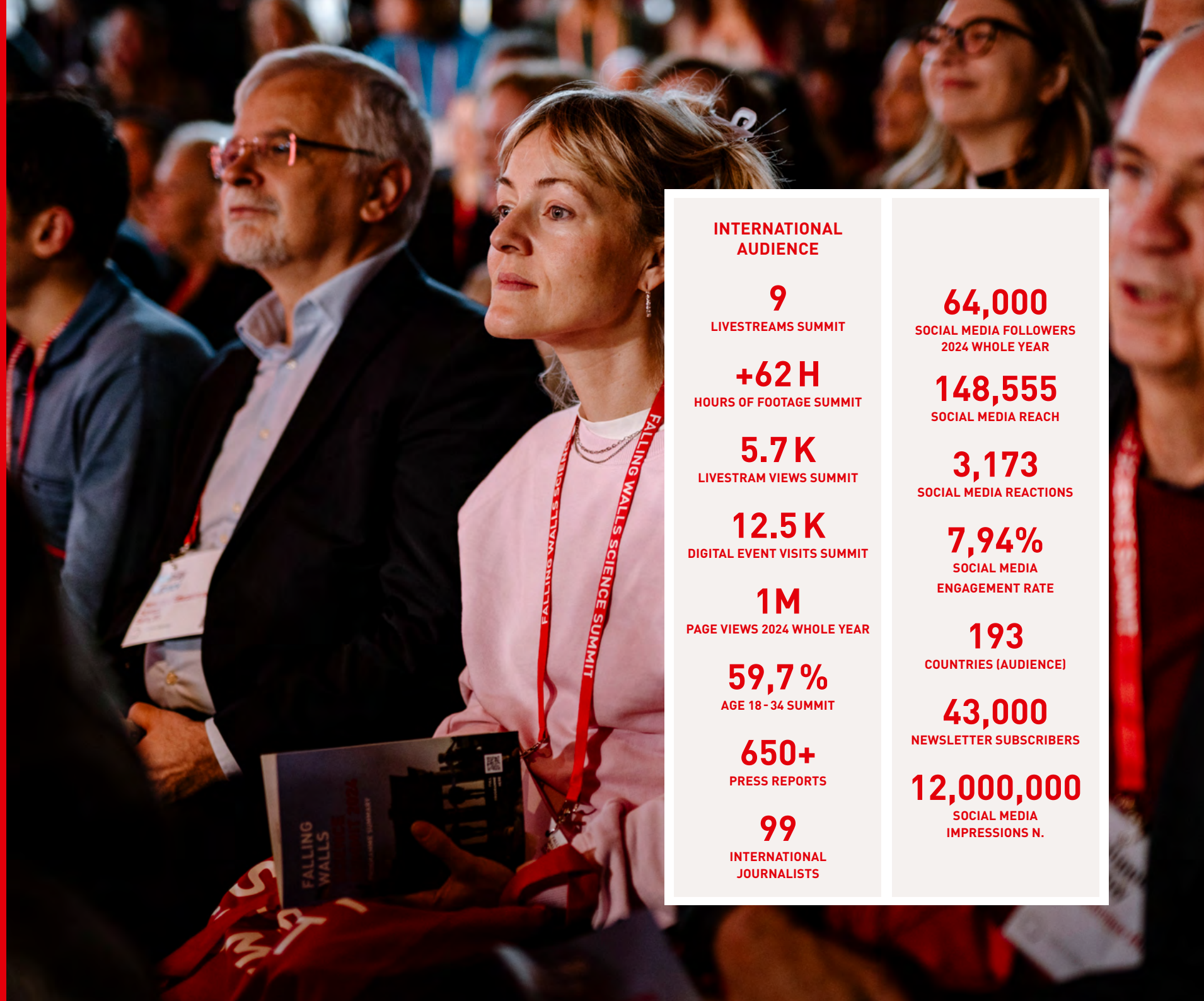
**CEM ÖZDEMİR**  
Federal Ministry of Education and Research, *DE*



**KEYNOTE**

**INA CZYBORRA**  
Senate Department for Higher Education and Research, Health and Long-Term Care, *DE*

# RESULTS



## INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

**9**

LIVESTREAMS SUMMIT

**+62 H**

HOURS OF FOOTAGE SUMMIT

**5.7 K**

LIVESTREAM VIEWS SUMMIT

**12.5 K**

DIGITAL EVENT VISITS SUMMIT

**1 M**

PAGE VIEWS 2024 WHOLE YEAR

**59,7 %**

AGE 18-34 SUMMIT

**650+**

PRESS REPORTS

**99**

INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS

**64,000**

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS  
2024 WHOLE YEAR

**148,555**

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

**3,173**

SOCIAL MEDIA REACTIONS

**7,94%**

SOCIAL MEDIA  
ENGAGEMENT RATE

**193**

COUNTRIES (AUDIENCE)

**43,000**

























NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

**12,000,000**

SOCIAL MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS N.




MEDIA OVERVIEW

# REPRESENTED MEDIA FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT

OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS  
**THANK YOU!**













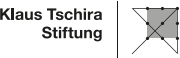














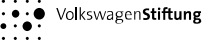



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 AND JOIN THE  
 FALLING WALLS  
 COMMUNITY  
 Please contact  
 andreas.kosmider@  
 falling-walls.com

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 academics Suchen. Finden. Forschen.	 ALFRED LANDECKER FOUNDATION	 Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung	 ÖAW AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES	 BAYER	 Bayer Foundation
 BIH Berlin Institute of Health @Charité	 Berlin University Alliance	 BIONTECH	 Boehringer Ingelheim	 Boehringer Ingelheim Stiftung	 BCG
 BRAIN CITY BERLIN	 bdr.	 BURROUGHS WELLCOME FUND	 Chan Zuckerberg Initiative	 Carl Zeiss Stiftung	 DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst German Academic Exchange Service
 DAAD KIWI Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst German Academic Exchange Service	 DESY.	 DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft	 DHZB Stiftung	 DW	 DIE ZEIT VERLAGSGRUPPE
 EBERHARD KARLS UNIVERSITÄT TÜBINGEN	 TU/e EINDHOVEN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	 ELSEVIER	 THE ELSEVIER FOUNDATION	 EnBW	 European Research Council erc



OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

**THANK YOU!**

FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT IS A PART OF BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK

# BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK – THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FESTIVAL



**Berlin Science Week is a 10-day international festival held annually from 1 to 10 November, transforming Berlin into a vibrant hub of scientific ideas, exploration, and experimentation.**

Bringing together leading scientific organisations, the festival offers a lively programme of over 300 events across dynamic hubs and venues throughout the city and online, celebrating science and fostering interdisciplinary exchange. This year's theme, Common Ground, invited participants to step out of their echo chambers and embrace diverse perspectives. Through its cross-disciplinary programme, the festival highlighted the role of science in combating polarisation and fostering collaboration, cohesion, and understanding, particularly in a year shaped by elections and concerns about misinformation.

**10**  
DAYS

**120**  
LOCATIONS

**300+**  
EVENTS

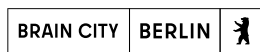
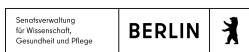
**700+**  
SPEAKER

**35,000**  
PARTICIPANTS

**300+**  
PRESS MENTIONS

**25,000**  
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

BERLINSCEWEEK.COM



Media Cooperations:





# WHAT'S OUR COMMON GROUND?

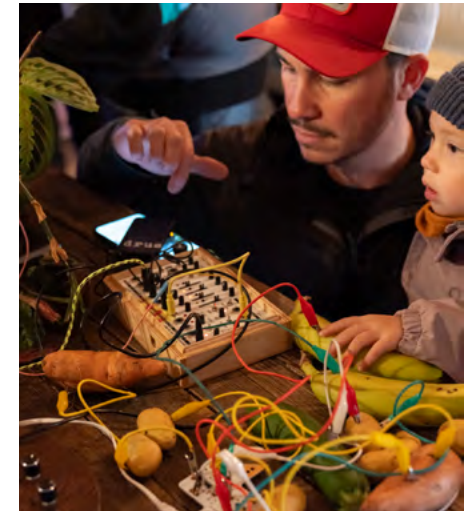
## BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK CAMPUS

Held at Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, the CAMPUS hosted over 30 events on 1-2 November 2024, featuring exhibitions, panels, and workshops. Focused on Common Ground, the interactive programme brought scientists, innovators, and families together to explore how science bridges diverse viewpoints and deepens understanding of our shared world.



## SCIENCE & CULTURE FORUM

At Holzmarkt 25, the Science & Culture FORUM showcased the intersection of art and science through a curated programme of workshops, talks, and performances. Highlights included an Art & Science Conference and Tiny Galleries, which invited audiences to engage with innovative concepts blending artistic and scientific perspectives.



### SCIENCE WEEK CAMPUS | SCIENCE & CULTURE FORUM

### INDEPENDENT EVENTS ALL OVER BERLIN

1 NOV	2 NOV	3 NOV	4 NOV	5 NOV	6 NOV	7 NOV PITCHES	8 NOV CIRCLE	9 NOV BREAK-THROUGHS	10 NOV
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### FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT



**“WHERE ELSE COULD IT BE BUT IN BERLIN?  
A CITY THAT HAS LIVED WITH THE WALL,  
WITNESSED ITS FALL, AND EXPERIENCED  
AN UNFORGETTABLE MOMENT IN HISTORY.”**

*Ina Czyborra Senator for Higher Education and Research, Health and Long-Term Care, DE*



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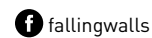
**OTMAR WIESTLER**  
President, Helmholtz  
Association

## CONTACT US TO JOIN FALLING WALLS

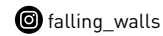


**ANDREAS KOSMIDER**  
Managing Director  
+49 30 60 988 39 770  
andreas.kosmider@falling-walls.com  
www.falling-walls.com

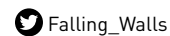
**FALLING WALLS  
FOUNDATION gGmbH**  
Kochstraße 6-7  
10969 Berlin  
Germany



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Falling\_Walls

# OUT OF THE BOX

Out of the Box is a creative photography project that captures the spirit of breaking barriers in science, politics, and business. At the Falling Walls Science Summit, leading figures are photographed in striking black-and-white images as they engage in playful interactions with building blocks – symbolizing the process of dismantling walls and fostering innovation.

Each photograph tells a story of curiosity, transformation, and the power of unconventional ideas. The contrast between structured walls and their playful destruction symbolizes the ongoing pursuit of progress. Out of the Box offers a unique perspective on the breakthroughs shaping our world. It reminds us that true innovation often begins with the willingness to rethink, rebuild, and explore.



Thank you for playing with us to Tina Boes, Carl-Henrik Heldin, Elaine Chew, Georg Schütte, Valerie Makoge, Rafael Prieto-Curiel, Alain Aspect, Sadayuki Tsuchiya, Aissa Mboub, Ina Czyborra, Andrzej Szeptycki, Tiange Wang, Apple Pui Yi Chui, Cem Özdemir, Maria Leptin, Carsten Dreher, Anousheh Ansari, Frankline Ojiambo, Melanie Smallman, Oluwafemi Kale, Robbert Dijkgraaf, Richard Socher,

Helga Nowotny, Jean Claude Burgelman, Emilie Caspar, Saw Wai-Hla, Michael Platten, Lena Maier-Hein, Michael Madeja, Markus Blume, Immanuel Bloch, Francis Luciano De Leon, Andrea Riccio, Michael Brigl, Sebastian Turner, Tasnim Al Dawudi and to Dominik Butzmann – the photographer.





**WELCOME BACK TO BERLIN**  
**7-9 NOV 2025**

