

TERMS & CONDITIONS 2026- INTERNATIONAL LAB ORGANISER

I. General

- **Mission:** The international Falling Walls Lab must uphold the spirit of Falling Walls, embodying interdisciplinarity and emphasising exceptional ideas, research projects, and initiatives.
- **Organiser:** A Falling Walls Lab must be organised by an academic institution/science academy or in cooperation with an academic institution or science academy as its main partner.
- **Licence:** The Falling Walls Foundation does not demand any licencing fees; however, international Lab organisers must maintain a high standard in the planning and execution of a Falling Walls Lab to safeguard the competition's integrity. In cases where the Falling Walls Foundation deems this at jeopardy, the Falling Walls Foundation reserves the right to revoke permission for the execution of an international Falling Walls Lab at any time.
- **Event format:** The default format of an international Falling Walls Lab is in-person. Under certain circumstances, and as an exception, events may be hosted online. This is only permitted after obtaining express consent from Falling Walls Lab.
- **Concept:** Each presenter is allotted three minutes to pitch their project.
- **Language:** The language of the event is English.
- **Admission:** Falling Walls Labs are open to the public without charge. The sale of tickets is prohibited.
- **Naming:** Falling Walls Labs are named after the city/federal state/region plus country in which they will take place by default. Example: Falling Walls Lab Berlin, Germany.
- **Season:** The Falling Walls Lab season 2026 will be held between 1 February (applications open) until 15 September 2026 (last date to host a Falling Walls Lab).
- **Data storage:** Falling Walls is storing data obtained from the International Labs and their organisers and partners for business purposes and contacting.

II. Funding & Partnerships

- **Funding and partnerships:** The international Lab must be financially secured. Prior to approaching prospective funding partners, the international Lab organiser must obtain approval from the Falling Walls Foundation.
- **Expenses:** The Falling Walls Foundation does not assume responsibility for any expenditures incurred by the international Lab organiser in the planning and execution of the Falling Walls Lab. The Lab organiser is responsible to cover any costs associated with the Lab winner's participation in the Falling Walls Lab Global Finale in Berlin. This includes costs for visa, travel and accommodation (three hotel nights).

III. Applications & Participants

- **Eligibility criteria:** Bachelor and Master students, PhD candidates, postdocs, and early-career professionals from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Applicants must meet at least one of the following formal requirements:
 - They must be currently enrolled at a university as a student
 - They must have received a Bachelor's degree no more than 10 years ago (2016 or more recently);
 - They must have received a Master's degree no more than 7 years ago (2019 or more recently);
 - They must have received a PhD no more than 5 years ago (2021 or more recently).

An MD (medical degree excluding a doctoral dissertation) is deemed equivalent to a Master's degree. A Dr. med. (medical degree including a doctoral dissertation) is deemed equivalent to a PhD. The global diversity of academic degrees is acknowledged. The eligibility criteria apply uniformly to all international Falling Walls Labs. No exceptions are allowed which limit the participation to students of a single university, country and/ or specific degrees (e.g. PhD students only).

- **Parental leave:** One year per child is added to the deadlines mentioned above.
- **Age Requirement:** Participants must be of full age according to their domestic legislation or older, but not less than 18 years old. The legal age status of participants must be verified by the international Lab organiser prior to participation.
- **Multiple participation:** Applicants who presented at an international Falling Walls Lab or at the Falling Walls Lab Global Finale previously are not eligible to apply or participate again.
- **Group participation:** Groups are not permitted to present at a Falling Walls Lab. Only individual applications are accepted, and presenters must delineate their individual contribution if the project involved a group effort.
- **Selection of Participants:** The Falling Walls Lab organiser needs to ensure a quality selection of participants, taking into account the following factors: Breakthrough Factor, Impact, Innovation and Originality.
- **Gender balance:** The international Lab organiser is responsible for ensuring a balanced representation of genders without compromising the quality of the international Falling Walls Lab. They must actively engage all genders when disseminating the call for applications.

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- **Discipline balance:** The international Falling Walls Lab, as an interdisciplinary event, necessitates the Lab organiser's proactive engagement with innovative thinkers across all disciplines to ensure diversity among presenters.
- **Application process:** All applications are processed through the Falling Walls website. The Falling Walls Foundation collects the applications, provides weekly updates on application numbers, and provides the international Lab organiser with a final list of applications after the submission deadline. Falling Walls Lab reserves the right to decline applications.
- **International applications:** Applications may not be rejected based on race, colour, creed or religion, national/ethnic origin, country of residence, marital, pregnancy or parenting status, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression. Participants are responsible for their travel to/from the international Falling Walls Lab.
- **Number of participants:** A minimum of five (5) participants is required. The Falling Walls Foundation reserves the right to withdraw permission for the execution of an international Falling Walls Lab if fewer than five participants are confirmed.
- **Presentation requirements:** For in-person events, presentations must be given in-person. Hybrid/online events permit the option of online presentations. The presenter, in all cases, must be the original applicant, and the presentation must be given in English.
- **Presentation structure:** Presenters must distinctly articulate the problem they are addressing and their proposed solution to that problem. Presenters should highlight in their presentation how their research is innovative and considered a breakthrough, as well as the impact it has on its target group. For this, each presenter is allotted four slides: one introductory slide containing name, institution, and presentation title, two content slides, and one questions slide. Presenters must use the PowerPoint template for these slides provided by the Falling Walls Foundation.
- **Presentation Tools:** Presenters are permitted to use physical objects or prototypes that illustrate or reference the concept being presented. However, the use of notes or cue cards is not allowed.
- **Content:** Presenters are prohibited from delivering talks with inflammatory political or religious agendas.

IV. Jury & Evaluation

- **Jury size:** The jury must comprise a minimum of five (5) members.
- **Approval process:** The international Lab organiser is required to seek approval for the jury selection from the Falling Walls Foundation prior to the event.
- **Gender balance:** The international Lab organiser is responsible for ensuring a gender-balanced composition of the jury.
- **Discipline balance:** To facilitate informed judgment of the interdisciplinary presenters, the international Lab organiser must appoint respected representatives from various disciplines and the industry.
- **Selection:** In choosing university representatives for the jury, the international Lab organiser must ensure a diverse mix of affiliations amongst Jury members
- **Jury chair:** The international Lab organiser must designate a jury chair. In the event of a disagreement among jury members, the chairperson moderates the discussion until a final decision is reached. Additionally, the jury chair is responsible for time keeping during the jury meeting.
- **Jury briefing:** It is the responsibility of the international Lab organiser to provide a comprehensive briefing to the jury prior to the event. This briefing should include the guideline that jury members sharing the same affiliation as a presenter must abstain from voting on that presenter's presentation, ensuring an unbiased and impartial evaluation process.
- **Evaluation criteria:** The jury assesses presentations based on the following criteria:
 - Breakthrough factor: How innovative is the proposed idea? 50%
 - Relevance/Impact: How relevant is the idea for the discipline and beyond? 40%
 - Structure/Performance: How convincing was the presentation? 10%The jury shall make a decision at its own discretion.
- Evaluation may not be influenced by race, colour, creed or religion, national/ethnic origin, country of residence, marital, pregnancy or parenting status, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.
- **Jury Evaluation Sheets** shall be kept until the end of the Falling Walls Lab Season and made available to Falling Walls Lab team upon request.
- **First, Second, Third Place:** The jury is to select one first place, one second place and one third place winner.

V. The Winner

- **Winner Admission:** Only the 1st placed winner is automatically granted admission to the Falling Walls Lab Global Finale in Berlin in November 2026 (final date to be confirmed), unless an alternative arrangement is agreed upon with the Falling Walls Foundation. The Falling Walls Foundation reserves the right to replace the awarded admission with an alternate arrangement if circumstances beyond its control make it necessary to do so.
- **Passport Requirement:** The winner must possess a valid passport. The Falling Walls Foundation may issue an official invitation to assist with the visa application process; however, the Falling Walls Foundation is not accountable for the outcome of the visa application.
- **Travel Expenses:** Travel expenses must be covered by the international Lab organiser. If the Lab winner's country of residence differs from the Lab location, the Lab organiser must cover the travel costs from the international Lab location to the global finale in Berlin and back or its equivalent. The Falling Walls Foundation does not cover travel or other expenses.

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- **Accommodation:** The Falling Walls Foundation will cover the winner's stay in Berlin for one night at its partner hotel. Any additional nights of accommodation relevant to the winner's participation in the Global Finale, the Falling Walls Science Summit, and extended programme must be covered by the international Lab organiser, for a minimum of 3 nights.
- **Cancellation:** In the event of the winner cancelling their participation in the Falling Walls Lab finale in Berlin, the international Lab organiser must promptly inform the Falling Walls Foundation. A substitute (under normal circumstances, the next placed winner) can only be admitted with the prior written consent of the Falling Walls Foundation.
- **Attendance Requirement:** The winner must be available in Berlin for Falling Walls related events from 6-9 November 2026. The winner of the Global Finale is to present again at the Breakthrough of the Year presentations (Emerging Talents Category) on the evening of 9 November. Travel arrangements must be made accordingly by the Lab organiser.

VI. Website & Social Media

- **Naming:** The names of the international Lab's social media accounts must align with the international Falling Walls Lab name. If the Lab name exceeds the character limit, the international Lab organiser may modify the name as follows: FW Lab Berlin, Germany or FWL Berlin, Germany.
- **Social media content:** The social media accounts must explicitly state that the international Lab is an independently organised event and should include an 'About' section providing a description of Falling Walls Lab.
- **Website content:** The international Lab organiser is permitted to create a website for their Falling Walls Lab. The website must explicitly state that the Lab is an independently organised event and should include an 'About' section providing a description of Falling Walls Lab and linking to the official Falling Walls Lab website: <https://falling-walls.com/lab>.
- **Logo usage:** The website must prominently feature the custom Falling Walls Lab logo. The international Lab organiser is obligated to use the custom Falling Walls Lab logo as the event's profile picture on social media platforms.

VII. Logos & Branding

- **Logo usage:** The international Lab organiser is exclusively permitted to use the custom Falling Walls Lab logo provided by the Falling Walls Foundation. Alteration or recreation of the custom Falling Walls Lab logo is strictly prohibited. Any other Falling Walls logo usage, alteration or recreation requires prior written consent from the Falling Walls Foundation. The Falling Walls logo is property of the Falling Walls Foundation and should never be modified or recreated without explicit written consent of the Foundation.
- **Templates:** Templates and documents provided for the international Falling Walls Lab may only be reproduced and distributed within the context of the event. Any reuse of these materials outside the event or after its conclusion is allowed only with the permission of the Falling Walls Foundation.
- **Wordings:** 'Falling Walls Lab' should be written with case sensitivity or in capitals; it is never written in lowercase. The word 'Lab' is never written in capitals only and should always be used in combination with Falling Walls.
- **Marketing:** All outbound marketing and event materials must incorporate the custom Falling Walls Lab logo. The Lab organiser is prohibited from removing or altering the logos of partners of the Falling Walls Foundation placed on documents provided by the Foundation (partner sheet, certificates, etc.).

VIII. Photography

- **Quality standards:** To uphold the high standards of the Falling Walls Foundation, the international Lab organiser is recommended to hire a professional photographer to capture images at the international Falling Walls Lab.
- **Licence-free usage:** Photos taken at international Falling Walls Labs must be licence-free and available for use by the Falling Walls Foundation for marketing and communication purposes. These photos may be freely shared and reposted.
- **Branding restrictions:** Photos may not have any watermarks, text or other labels on them.
- **Timely delivery:** The international Lab organiser must promptly send photos of the Lab to the Falling Walls Foundation via a file transfer service, ensuring submission no later than two weeks after the event.

IX. Video

- **Quality standards:** Videos must be rendered in the highest possible resolution.
- **Logo inclusion:** Videos must prominently feature the custom Falling Walls Lab logo, as well as the logos of the respective partners of the Falling Walls Lab.
- **Branding restrictions:** Videos may not have any watermarks, text, or other labels on them.
- **Approval process:** Prior to publication, videos must be submitted for approval to the Falling Walls Foundation. The international Lab organiser is strictly prohibited from publishing any videos of the Falling Walls Lab without the final and prior approval of the Falling Walls Foundation.

X. Post-Event

- **Winner information:** The international Lab organiser must promptly submit the full name and email address of their winner, with a deadline of two days after the event.
- **Presenter list:** The international Lab organiser must promptly submit the complete list of presenters, including their email addresses, to the Falling Walls Foundation using the provided template, with a deadline of seven days after the event.
- **Post-event report:** The international Lab organiser must promptly submit the post-event report to the Falling Walls Foundation, ensuring submission no later than fourteen days after the event.

XI. Anti-Corruption

- **Anti-corruption commitment:** The Falling Walls Foundation unequivocally condemns all forms of corruption. In the event that the Falling Walls Foundation becomes aware of potential instances of corrupt behaviour, it reserves the right to revoke the international Lab organiser’s licence to conduct a Falling Walls Lab and to initiate necessary legal measures.

These Terms & Conditions are applicable to all institutions, partners, supporters, and individuals engaged in the organisation of the international Falling Walls Lab.

We hereby confirm that we understand and accept the above-listed Terms & Conditions.

Date, Location

Full Name of Lab Organiser Institution

Full name of Signatory & Signature