

FALLING WALLS LAB

WHICH ARE
THE NEXT
WALLS
TO FALL?

PITCH BRIEFING

In preparation for the Falling Walls Lab Global Finale, all Finalists will need to prepare a 3-minute pitch. Please read the following information thoroughly to help ensure a special day for everyone involved.

In order to deliver your message to the audience effectively, we recommend that you highlight the problem you are trying to solve (i.e. the wall) and your solution to that problem (i.e. how you are breaking down that wall). Remember, the jury and audience members come from diverse scientific and professional backgrounds, so make sure to use language that will let everyone follow along to what you are talking about without difficulty.

THE JURY WILL EVALUATE THE PITCHES BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 1) **Breakthrough Factor** — *How innovative is the proposed idea?*
- 2) **Relevance/Impact** — *How relevant is the idea to the discipline and beyond?*
- 3) **Structure/Performance** — *How convincing is the presentation?*

REQUIREMENTS

- **Language:** The pitch must be held in English.
- **Length:** You will be given **3:00 minutes** for your pitch. Unlike at the international Labs, there will be **NO** time set aside for questions, so please use the entire three minutes for your pitch. A countdown clock will indicate the time you have left. A first sound will be played 10 seconds prior to the end of your presentation and a second one once the entire three minutes are over. When your time is over, the next presenter will be introduced right away. There are no breaks between presentations, so please be ready to begin immediately when it is your turn.
- **PowerPoint presentation:** You must use the PowerPoint template provided in the download section. Make sure to follow the instructions on the first slide of the template. Please submit your presentation by emailing it to Sarah sarah.deventer@falling-walls.com by the submission deadline given to you.
- **Technical equipment:** Your presentation will be played from a central computer. You will get a final briefing next to the stage on the day of the Falling Walls Lab Global Finale in the break prior to your session. A presentation clicker will be provided. You will also be provided with a headset prior to stepping on stage. Please make sure to follow instructions given on the day and be in the designated area next to the stage well in advance of your own pitch, so you can get mic'd up.
- **Props:** Props are permitted on stage as long as they do not require any prior set up and can be carried on stage by yourself when it is your turn. There is going to be a cube on stage that can serve as a small table to place props on.

Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to your pitch!

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The jury will evaluate your presentation based on the following criteria:

RELEVANCE & IMPACT – 40%

Guiding Question:

How important is the problem to the discipline and beyond, and how meaningful is the potential impact of the proposed idea?

This criterion evaluates the importance of the challenge the project tackles and the value of its proposed contribution.

Impact may be:

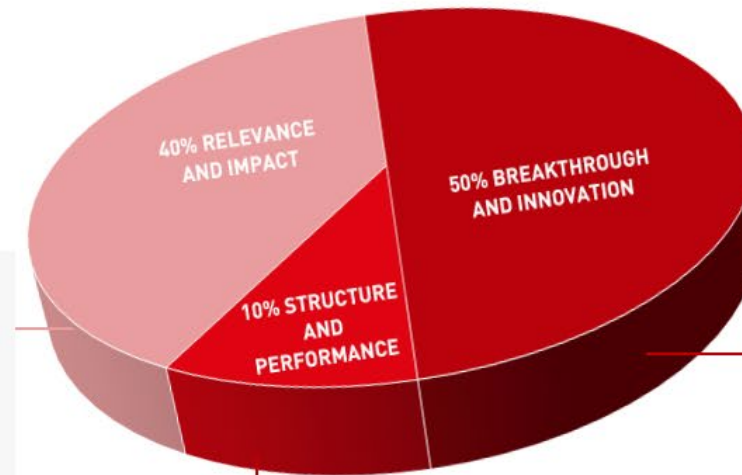
- Broad, through scalable or widely applicable solutions
- Targeted, through deep, meaningful improvements for a specific group, field, or region

Projects may demonstrate:

- impact through immediate applicability, strong future potential, or transferable insights.
- Early-stage ideas are acceptable if their relevance and longer-term value are clearly articulated.

Criteria:

- Clarity and relevance of the problem statement
- Credibility of the proposed benefit
- Potential short- and/or long-term value



STRUCTURE & PERFORMANCE – 10%

Guiding question:

How clearly and convincingly is the idea communicated within the three-minute pitch?

This criterion evaluates the clarity, structure, and delivery of the presentation.

Criteria:

- Clear structure and logical flow of the pitch
- Accessible explanation of the idea
- Confidence, focus, and effective use of the limited time
- Presentation skills should support understanding but should not outweigh the quality of the idea itself

BREAKTHROUGH & INNOVATION - 50%

Guiding Question:

How original, creative, and forward-thinking is the idea, and does it have the potential to open new pathways or shift thinking within its field?

This criterion assesses the novelty and innovative strength of the idea. A breakthrough does not need to be fully developed or validated at this stage. What matters is the originality of the approach, its scientific or methodological grounding, and its potential to inspire further research, applications, or new ways of thinking.

Criteria:

- Originality of the idea or approach
- Creative use of methods, perspectives, or technologies
- Strength and plausibility of the concept
- Potential to stimulate further innovation or challenge existing approaches
- Ideas may be exploratory, speculative, or in early development, provided their innovative potential is clearly and plausibly communicated

PITCH LIKE A PRO: FREE RESOURCES & TOOLS TO PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR PRESENTATION

You have 3 minutes on stage to present your breakthrough idea – make them count.

We've curated free, high-quality resources from TED, MIT, Harvard, and leading science communication platforms. These tools will help you to sharpen your message, structure your pitch, and deliver it with confidence.

STORYTELLING & PRESENTATION (TED X)

- How to make a great presentation:
https://www.ted.com/playlists/574/how_to_make_a_great_presentation
- How to speak so people will listen:
<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/0A3PRwvK>
- The secret structure of great talks (Nancy Duarte):
https://embed.ted.com/talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks

ELEVATOR PITCH ESSENTIALS

- MIT Communication Lab:
<https://mitcommlab.mit.edu/nse/commkit/elevator-pitch/>
- Harvard Catalyst:
<https://catalyst.harvard.edu/writing-communication-center/deliver-authentically/elevator-pitches/>

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

- Science Communication Lab (free courses):
<https://sciencecommunicationlab.org/free-online-courses/>
- AGU Toolkits (Advancing Earth & Space Sciences):
<https://www.agu.org/outreach/science-communication/resources>

