FALLING
WALLS
LAB

GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL LAB ORGANISERS

FALLING WALLS LAB

2500
APPLICATIONS

104
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

74
INTERNATIONAL LABS

100
PITCHES AT THE FINALE IN BERLIN

** 2024 figures*

3
MINUTES EACH

3
EMERGING TALENTS
BREAKTHROUGH WINNERS

HOW IT WORKS

100 INTERNATIONAL LABS

15 FEBRUARY - 15 SEPTEMBER 2025

WINNER OF EACH LAB GETS SENT TO BERLIN FOR THE GLOBAL FINALE

100 WINNERS GLOBAL FINALE 7 NOVEMBER 2025

EXTENDED PROGRAMME & FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT

International Falling Walls Lab winners receive the opportunity to pitch their innovative idea at the global finale in Berlin, Germany on 7 November.

Out of 100 presenters, a live jury then announces 3 global winners, which will be „The Breakthroughs of the Year in the category Emerging Talents".

Moreover, winners are offered the exclusive opportunity to engage in a tailored five-day programme during their stay in Berlin, including full access to the Falling Walls Science Summit (7-9 November).

3 BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

The three Breakthroughs of the Year in the category Emerging Talents get to present their winning pitches again at the Falling Walls Science Summit on the Breakthroughs of the Year stage on 9 November.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

CHECKLIST

Briefing materials and templates are available in the *organiser download section*. The timeline is not binding, but can serve as a reference during the event planning

STEP 1

- Acquaint yourself with the event format
- Review and sign the terms & conditions

STEP 2

Ca. 3 months before event

- Acquire partners
- Secure a venue
- Share event details with Lab team in Berlin

STEP 3

Ca. 2-3 months before event

- Application form for your Lab opens on Falling Walls website (earliest 15 February 2025)
- Begin marketing activities to receive applications

STEP 4

Ca. 1 month before event

- Select jury and notify Lab team in Berlin
- Select presenters and inform all applicants
- Begin guest marketing

STEP 5

Ca. 1-4 weeks before event

- Your Lab closes for applications
- Prepare event materials
- Brief participants (e.g. presenters, jury, photographer, moderator)

HOST THE LAB

STEP 6

- Send winner information, list of presenters, post-event report, and photos to Lab team in Berlin
- Arrange travel to/from Berlin for your Lab‘s winner; coordinate winner‘s accommodation with Lab team in Berlin
- Watch your Lab‘s winner pitch via livestream or in person at the global finale in Berlin

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Falling Walls Labs are open to students and early-career professionals of all disciplines.

APPLICANTS MUST BE 18 YEARS OR OLDER WHEN SUBMITTING THEIR APPLICATION. THEY MUST FULFIL AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FORMAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Currently enrolled in university / currently a postdoc
- Awarded a Bachelor's degree no more than 10 years ago
- Awarded a Master's degree no more than 7 years ago*
- Awarded a PhD no more than 5 years ago*

PLEASE NOTE:

- Applications must be submitted in English
- Presenting at a Falling Walls Lab is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Past participants are no longer eligible to apply for a Lab
- The eligibility criteria apply uniformly to all Falling Walls Labs. No exceptions are allowed which limit the participation to students of a single university or specific degrees (e.g. PhD students only)

↳ For more information, please visit: *https://falling-walls.com/lab/eligibility-criteria/*

* An MD (medical degree excl. a doctoral dissertation) is considered equivalent to a Master's degree. A Dr. med. (medical degree incl. a doctoral dissertation) is considered equivalent to a PhD. The global diversity of academic degrees is acknowledged.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND SELECTION

- Applications are submitted centrally via the Falling Walls Lab website
- The Falling Walls Lab team prescreens all applications based on the eligibility criteria and forwards the applications to the international Lab organisers
- The international Lab organisers screen applications and select 15–20 candidates based on the following criteria:
  - Individual: Quality of innovative idea, education and academic grade, relevant work experience
  - Group composition: Gender balance, diversity (nationality, discipline, etc.)

Please make sure to approve/decline applicants in a timely manner.

CALL OPEN

JUL 16, 2024 | 2.00 PM

FALLING WALLS LAB IS COMING TO BERLIN-ADLERSHOF

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Students and early-career professionals of all disciplines.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

You must be 18 years or older when submitting your application. You must fulfil at least one of the following formal requirements:

- You are currently enrolled in university
- You are currently a postdoc
- You received a Bachelor's degree no more than 10 years ago
- You received a Master's degree no more than 7 years ago
- You received a PhD no more than 5 years ago

*An MD (medical degree excl. a doctoral dissertation) is deemed equivalent to a Master's degree. A Dr. med. (medical degree incl. a doctoral dissertation) is deemed equivalent to a PhD. The global diversity of academic degrees is acknowledged.

BEFORE APPLYING, PLEASE NOTE

- Applications must be submitted in English.
- Submitting multiple applications is not permitted.
- Travel & accommodation expenses for international Falling Walls Labs will not be covered unless otherwise stated by the local organisers.
- This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Past participants are no longer eligible to apply.
- No ticket purchase necessary when applying to an international Falling Walls Lab.

PARTNER ACQUISITION

SECURING PARTNERS FOR AN INTERNATIONAL FALLING WALLS LAB IS PIVOTAL FOR SECURING ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BACKING*, ENHANCING ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY EFFORTS, AND FOSTERING COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES.

- Should the host organisation not be an academic institution, it is imperative to establish a partnership with at least one academic entity
- For those seeking additional support for the event, Falling Walls provides a sponsorship package template available in the *download section*. Additionally a curated list of potential partners is also available in the download section
- Organisers are required to obtain approval from the Falling Walls Lab team in Berlin prior to confirming with the partner

* DAAD Labs: Please be advised that the DAAD maintains its own sponsorship regulations. Prior to establishing partnerships with potential sponsors, ensure that any agreements are compliant with DAAD regulations.

SECURING A VENUE

SELECTING AN APPROPRIATE VENUE IS CRUCIAL AS IT SETS THE TONE FOR THE EVENT. PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA DURING THE VENUE SELECTION PROCESS:

- Ensure the venue is easily accessible and conveniently located for all guests
- Choose a venue with lighting that is suitable for both photography and videography
- Select a venue that comfortably accommodates the expected number of guests
- Ensure the venue is equipped with a video projector and a suitable audio setup

MARKETING YOUR EVENT

Effective marketing is paramount to the success of any Falling Walls Lab. Broad distribution of the call for applications and strategic promotion of the event are vital to cultivating the distinctive Falling Walls Lab atmosphere.

CONSIDER ENGAGING WITH THE FOLLOWING FOR OUTREACH:

- Nearby academic institutions (incl. all faculties and departments)
- Collaborative spaces (e.g. co-working spaces, impact hubs, innovation labs)
- Research communities (e.g. research groups, labs)
- Student organisations (e.g. clubs, associations)
- Start-up networks (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook)

☝ Harness the power of online and social media to reach a diverse and engaged audience. Consider collaborating with the hosting institution's press office for broader dissemination across official social media channels and mailing lists.

JURY SELECTION

SELECTING THE RIGHT JURY MEMBERS IS CRUCIAL FOR THE SUCCESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE LAB. PLEASE ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING DURING THE JURY SELECTION PROCESS:

- The jury should consist of a minimum of five members. It is recommended to have an odd number of jurors to avoid tie-break situations
- Initiate contact with potential jury members as early as possible to ensure their availability on the event day
- Ensure diversity within the jury in terms of:
  - Professional background: Include members from academia, business, media, the public sector, the non-profit sector and other relevant fields to bring diverse perspectives to the evaluation process
  - Gender: Aim for equitable representation within the jury
- Once the jury members have confirmed their participation, promptly send the finalised jury list using the template in the *download section* to the Lab team in Berlin

BRIEFING THE JURY AND PRESENTERS

A thorough briefing for jury members and presenters is vital to ensure the success and smooth execution of every Lab.

- Familiarise yourself with the briefing materials available in the *download section*
- Distribute the presenter briefing and PowerPoint template to all successful applicants
- PowerPoint presentations are limited to the following four slides:
  - Title slide
  - Problem slide
  - Solution slide
  - Questions slide
- Prepare all voting-related materials in advance and verify the functionality of the evaluation tool
- Provide clear instructions on the jury members' roles and responsibilities
- The jury assesses presentations based on the following criteria:
  - Breakthrough factor (50%) – How innovative is the proposed idea?
  - Relevance/Impact (40%) – How relevant is the idea to the discipline and beyond?
  - Structure/Performance (10%) – How convincing was the presentation?
- Designate a team member responsible for collecting and evaluating the jury voting sheets during the event

SAMPLE PROGRAMME

XX Month	FALLING WALLS LAB XXX XXX
10.00 am	Prepare venue for event and conduct technical checks: sound, projectors, presentations, etc.
1.00 – 2.00 pm	Jury member briefing
1.30 – 2.15 pm	Arrival and registration of presenters and guests
2.15 – 2.45 pm	**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**
2.45 – 3.45 pm	**1ST BLOCK OF PITCHES**
3.45 – 4.15 pm	Networking break
4.15 – 5.15 pm	**2ND BLOCK OF PITCHES**
5.15 – 5.45 pm	Networking break and jury evaluation session
5.45 – 6.15 pm	**AWARDS CEREMONY AND GROUP PICTURE**
6.15 pm	Reception

POST-EVENT TASKS

AFTER HOSTING A SUCCESSFUL LAB, THERE ARE SEVERAL IMPORTANT TASKS TO COMPLETE IN PREPARATION FOR THE GLOBAL FINALE:

- Share the winner‘s contact information with Falling Walls
- Winner Documentation:
  - Confirm that the winner possesses a valid passport
  - If the winner is not an EU/EAA citizen, ensure they have initiated the visa application process
  - Verify that the winner meets current travel requirements to enter the EU if not based in the EU
- Arrange and cover travel expenses for the winner to attend the Falling Walls Science Summit, scheduled from 7-9 November. The extended programme for Lab winners usually takes place starting 5 November
- Contact Falling Walls to arrange a hotel reservation for the winner at our partner hotel
- Upload photos and videos from the event to a file-sharing service (e.g. WeTransfer)
- Submit a comprehensive list of presenters (using the template in the *download section*). Share press coverage, and fill out our post-event report

JOIN THE FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT

ATTEND THE GLOBAL LAB FINALE AT THE FALLING WALLS SCIENCE SUMMIT

- Keep the momentum going by attending the Global Lab Finale or hosting a viewing party at your institution, and sharing the livestream link on your social media channels.
  Buy your tickets to the Summit here
- Lab Organiser get-together: Meet and greet other Lab Organisers in Berlin over drinks before the Summit (6 November) and over coffee on the day of the the Global Lab Finale (7 November)

LAB VOICES

“A MUST FOR EMERGING RESEARCHERS AND ESTABLISHED PROFESSIONALS ALIKE. AN EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER.”

TAMLYN SASHA NAIDU *2022 Breakthrough Winner*

“FOR ANY ORGANISER, FALLING WALLS LAB IS A POSSIBILITY TO OFFER A HIGH-LEVEL, VERY ATTRACTIVE EVENT THAT SUPPORTS GREAT IDEAS.”

IRENA RUSAK-ROJAS *Falling Walls Lab Costa Rica organiser*

PLEASE CONTACT

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