

FALLING WALLS REMOTE

WHICH ARE
THE NEXT
WALLS
TO FALL?

FALLING WALLS 2020 REMOTE: THE BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

These extraordinary times open up a new opportunity for Falling Walls: We have decided to go digital in 2020, in order to continue our shared dedication to science communication across borders and disciplines.

This year, we designed a completely new concept to make the most out of remote meetings. Falling Walls will shift from a series of meetings and one conference with a limited number of speakers and topics to a global showcase that gathers, discusses, and celebrates a much broader set of the most recent breakthroughs in science and society – the **Falling Walls Breakthroughs of the Year**. We also want to contribute to the post-corona agenda through dedicated sessions. This year, we will not be taking all of your time for a couple of days, including travel, but rather share thrilling research for a few minutes per day over several weeks, with a global digital meeting on 9 November.

To highlight breakthrough thinking from all over the world, **we call for your nominations for the most recent breakthroughs in ten categories, from life sciences to science management**. We are delighted that Helga Nowotny (Former President of the European Research Council) will serve as overall chair of the juries. Moreover, we are honoured that our long-term partners “Springer Nature” and the “Zeit Verlagsgruppe” will support this challenge.

WHERE WE START FROM

A WORLD FORUM FOR SCIENCE

Since its first annual meeting on 9 November 2009, the 20th anniversary of the peaceful fall of the Berlin Wall, the Falling Walls Conference continuously developed into a world forum for science. Some of the [most important researchers and thinkers](#) on the planet discuss with [world leaders](#) in science, politics, business and the media a small number of high-calibre breakthroughs, answering the core question of the Falling Walls Conference: “Which are the next walls to fall in science and society?”

WHERE WE HEAD TO IN 2020

THE FALLING WALLS BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

As much as the coronavirus crisis restricts personal gatherings in 2020, it opens up a new opportunity for Falling Walls to overcome the limitations of a traditional conference through innovative, open and engaging digital formats. In 2020 we want to showcase, discuss, value and celebrate a wide variety of breakthroughs, involving a wider audience during a longer period of time than was possible before in physical meetings. All strands will converge on 9 November in a top-class award ceremony and expert panel discussions. In ten categories we will bring together some of the most recent breakthroughs, outstanding science projects and bright minds globally to inspire a discussion on how science and innovation can contribute to the state of mankind. Falling Walls Breakthroughs represent significant advances, developments, achievements or an increase in (scientific) knowledge that remove barriers to progress in the nominees’ respective fields. Breakthroughs can be ground-breaking, innovative ideas or represent a significant paradigm shift. They promise to have an impact on society world-wide, and contribute towards solving one of our biggest challenges, e.g. addressing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In a year of crisis and despair, we want to spur hope and set the stage for the post-corona agenda.

CONTACT

Falling Walls Foundation

Naveed Syed
Head of Global Networks
nominate@falling-walls.com

Phone

+49 30 60 988 39 76


Web


www.falling-walls.com

Falling Walls Foundation gGmbH

Kochstraße 6–7
10969 Berlin
Germany

 [fallingwalls](#)

 [falling_walls](#)

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THE CALL FOR NOMINATIONS IN 10 CATEGORIES

Falling Walls calls leading academics and world-class academic institutions from around the world – universities, research organisations, companies, private and public research centres, academies, research funders, foundations and individuals – for their nominations in ten categories:

- 1 Life Sciences,
- 2 Physical Sciences,
- 3 Engineering and Technology,
- 4 Social Sciences and the Humanities,
- 5 Science in the Arts,
- 6 Digital Education,
- 7 Science and Innovation Management,
- 8 Emerging Talents (Falling Walls Lab),
- 9 Science Start-ups (Falling Walls Venture),
- 10 Science Engagement (Falling Walls Engage).

THE FIVE-STEP PROCEDURE

STEP 1: NOMINATIONS

The first step is a brief nomination summary, plus links and/or attachments, to be entered: falling-walls.com/breakthroughyear/nominate. We ask every institution for only one nomination per category, i.e. your institution can nominate up to ten breakthroughs.

If – after a first nomination was made – in the course of the next months another outstanding breakthrough takes place in a specific category, a second nomination is possible.

However, we urge you **to enter your nominations as fast as possible** to make Step 3 most meaningful. The breakthrough categories 1-7 should bring together the most brilliant minds and offer them a platform to share their breakthroughs in a non-competitive way whereas the categories 8-10 represent our pitch formats, Falling Walls Lab, Falling Walls Venture and Falling Walls Engage. The nomination period starts immediately and ends on 1 September at the latest. If you have questions regarding any criteria of the nominations, don't hesitate to contact us.

STEP 2: FINALISTS

Your nomination is immediately reviewed by us together with external experts continuously. If it is accepted, we will ask for a short visual presentation (max. 5 min.). We will help you with detailed guidelines and briefings to record your best video.

STEP 3: GLOBAL PERCEPTION

Falling Walls will continuously announce the finalists, display their videos and make their outstanding work recognised, so as to foster a scholarly and public debate about the contribution of science to society – via social media, newsletters and on our growing library at falling-walls.com, as well as on the platforms of our partners.

STEP 4: WINNERS SESSIONS | BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK

From 4 November until 8 November 2020, each day will be dedicated to two different categories, to recognise and discuss the ten winners in each category, as identified by distinguished juries. At the end of each session, one Breakthrough of the Year in each category will be selected by the corresponding jury (but the Breakthroughs will not be announced before 9 November 2020).

In addition, digital live expert panel discussions open to the public ("Circle Tables") will highlight the post-coronavirus-agenda in various fields. The winners sessions and Circle Tables are part of the Berlin Science Week which will also be held digitally.

STEP 5: FALLING WALLS DAY 9 NOVEMBER 2020 | THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FALLING WALLS BREAKTHROUGHS OF THE YEAR

On 9 November 2020, the anniversary of the historic fall of the Berlin Wall, the ten Falling Walls Breakthroughs of the Year (one per category) will be made public, and the people and institutions who made them possible will be honoured in a live digital session; in this event, a "remote" Falling Walls Circle of distinguished world leaders will discuss the post-corona agendas of the various fields. All material will be made available permanently and for free on our falling-walls.com library to allow global access and inspiration.