

FALLING  
WALLS  
ENGAGE

NOVEMBER 2018 –  
JUNE 2021

**EVALUATION  
REPORT  
FALLING WALLS  
ENGAGE**

Founding Partner



Global Partner

Chan  
Zuckerberg  
Initiative

GORDON AND BETTY  
MOORE  
FOUNDATION



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 STRATEGY AND IMPACT</b> <i>Planning and evaluating activities that bridge the gap between science and society in order to generate mutual learning and mutual benefits</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1</b> Vision and Mission	6
<b>2.2</b> Areas of Action	7
<b>2.3</b> Theory of Change	8
<b>3 EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021</b> <i>Activities that foster the Science Engagement field and bring science closer to the public</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1</b> Activities in Numbers	11
<b>3.2</b> Falling Walls Engage Finale	12
<b>3.3</b> Falling Walls Engage Hubs	14
<b>3.4</b> Community building and Science Engagement promotion activities	17
<b>3.5</b> Voices from the Community	19
<b>4 COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENTS</b> <i>Enabling digital exchange among Science Engagement practitioners, while disseminating scientific knowledge</i>	<b>21</b>
<b>5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS</b> <i>Collaborations as long-term outcomes resulting from developed activities</i>	<b>24</b>
<b>6 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT</b> <i>Thinking about the impact of COVID-19 in Science Engagement, in order to derive better support approaches to Science Engagement practitioners</i>	<b>30</b>
<b>7 EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS LEARNED AND REFLECTION</b> <i>Transforming evaluation results into lessons learned, towards a reflection that shapes future strategy and activities</i>	<b>35</b>
<b>8 GET IN TOUCH</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>&gt; IMPRINT</b>	<b>42</b>

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



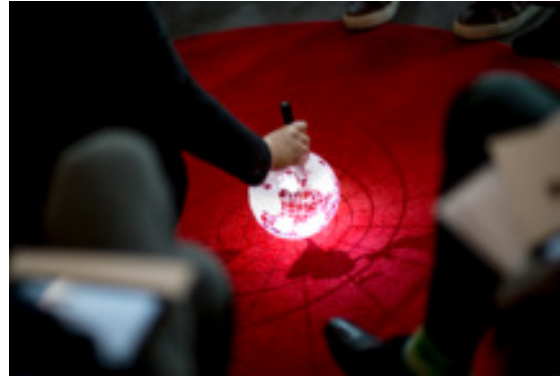
# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Falling Walls Engage**, hosted by the **Falling Walls Foundation** in cooperation with the **Robert Bosch Stiftung**, is a global platform for Science Engagement that aims to inspire and connect creative individuals and organizations who actively involve the public with science to generate mutual benefits for science and society all around the world.

We define Science Engagement as activities, events, or interactions bridging the gap between science and society, to generate mutual learning and mutual benefits, and belonging to the spectrum between public engagement, science communication and citizen science. Engagement is per definition a two-way process, with the goal to shape and co-create the scientific process together, to promote active involvement of the public and scientists in scientific knowledge production.

At Falling Walls Engage, we seek participatory formats of all levels: from collaborative research and public panels, to arts-driven or entertaining approaches – the common ground is the inclusion of and impact on all sides involved. Since 2018, we have been working to build an international community of Science Engagement practitioners who develop fresh approaches and innovative formats from the grassroots to the institutional level. We strive to expand the recognition of Science Engagement practices worldwide together with a strong international alliance of partners and stakeholders, with the belief that a better understanding and appreciation of science can help tackle global societal challenges.

For instance, the global challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic showed us that mistrust in scientific evidence and vaccine hesitancy are obvious reasons why we need to promote the active involvement of the public in science, thus promoting public trust in science, evidence-based decisions- and policy-making that follows scientific recommendations.



Falling Walls Engage Finale 2018

To achieve the goals, outputs and outcomes from our Areas of Action and Theory of Change framework, we derive indicators, evaluate our activities and collect lessons learned. We have been building on the evidence from our ongoing work, by systematically evaluating and adapting our activities when needed, to accommodate lessons learned into our strategy.

This evaluation report aims to:

- Present our strategy, namely our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change.
- Provide an overview on the evaluation of our activities and communication achievements from November 2018 to June 2021, in light of the goals, outputs and outcomes defined by our Areas of Action and Theory of Change framework.
- Show evidence for collaborations established among Science Engagement practitioners, after their participation in our activities.
- Highlight the impact of COVID-19 in Science Engagement to derive better support approaches to practitioners, in the current pandemic/post-pandemic scenario.
- Reflect on the evaluation of our activities and respective lessons learned, towards future adaptations on strategy and activities.

## 2 STRATEGY AND IMPACT



## 2 STRATEGY AND IMPACT

› *Planning and evaluating activities that bridge the gap between science and society in order to generate mutual learning and mutual benefits*

### 2.1 VISION AND MISSION

› *What drives us*

Science Engagement holds the key to solving many of the grand challenges faced all over the globe. A fact-based public discourse and evidence-based policymaking, e.g., in the collective fight against global warming, the spread of diseases, or the lack of social cohesion can only thrive in environments where research and the basic principles of the scientific process are understood, appreciated, and mostly trusted. It is up to Science Engagement practitioners, scientists, and science-driven institutions to find meaningful ways of engaging with non-scientists, in order to improve mutual understanding and mutual benefit, and bridge the perceived gap between academia and its broader ecosystem.

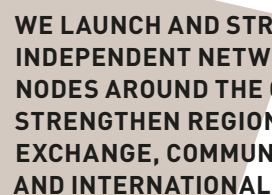
The purpose of Falling Walls Engage is to support this process by building a global community of individuals practicing Science Engagement to foster exchange, co-learning, and co-production that can lead to more effective engagement practices, inspiration, and societal impact in the long-term. We facilitate debates and create unique opportunities for exchange and collaboration among Science Engagement practitioners, scientists, scientific institutions, and the general public:



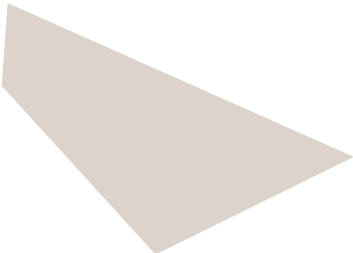
**WE SEARCH FOR SCIENCE  
ENGAGEMENT CHAMPIONS,  
INCLUDING PRACTITIONERS  
AND INSTITUTIONS, AND  
ONBOARD THEM TO OUR  
ENGAGE PLATFORM.**



**WE SHOWCASE BEST-PRACTICE  
SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT  
EXAMPLES ON STAGE IN FRONT  
OF AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE  
AND DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS,  
SUPPORTING VISIBILITY  
AND RAISING AWARENESS.**



**WE LAUNCH AND STRENGTHEN  
INDEPENDENT NETWORK  
NODES AROUND THE GLOBE TO  
STRENGTHEN REGIONAL PEER  
EXCHANGE, COMMUNITY BUILDING,  
AND INTERNATIONAL JOINT ACTION.**



### 2.2

## AREAS OF ACTION

To become an impactful global platform for Science Engagement, Falling Walls Engage focuses on three Areas of Action – Community, Activation and Perception Change, with an emphasis on a range of target groups. So far our activities have mainly been focussing on the Area of Action Community, with some connections to the other two Areas of Action. In the future, we are planning on implementing activities focused on all three Areas of Action.



### COMMUNITY

Continuously building and fostering a global platform for Science Engagement practitioners with the aim of sharing knowledge, expertise, and best-practice examples to inspire, transfer, take home messages, and collectively move the field of Science Engagement forward. The goal is to engage and interlink as many diverse communities as possible, to bring the most outstanding activities to the surface and to create sustainable interactions and collaborations. The target group of this area of action are Science Engagement practitioners.



### ACTIVATION

Moving towards an action platform that supports the implementation of solutions and demonstrates Science Engagement in practice beyond the exchange of experiences. We believe that involving and inspiring scientists in/with Science Engagement, who do not yet act as practitioners, can show them the impact their work can have on society. We want to strengthen the social responsibility of science itself by incorporating Science Engagement into the career path of every scientist. Ultimately, a bigger investment from scientists, in Science Engagement, can lead to more Science Engagement and participatory work in the academic sector. The target group of this area of action are scientists and non-scientific experts.



### PERCEPTION CHANGE

Using international examples of Science Engagement to promote a greater public understanding and appreciation of science. As a result, shape the way in which science is perceived and discussed in society, as well as foster evidence-based decision-making. The global Falling Walls Engage community and exchange between the Engage Hubs facilitate a global dialogue. The target groups of this area of action are the general public and higher education/scientific institutions.

## 2.3

### THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change is a strategy and evaluation approach that allows us to formulate assumptions, that will lead to the aimed long-term societal change. In order for us to make assumptions on the change we want to happen, we use the Theory of Change framework to give us a good overview on the expected outputs, outcomes and long-term impact on a societal level. Through the monitoring and evaluation of our activities, we check our assumptions with indicators and lessons learned, to evaluate if the proposed results have been achieved, and adapt activities accordingly.

**Problems we want to tackle are:**

- Lack of visibility of Science Engagement and the impact it has on society
- Lack of interconnectivity of Science Engagement activities and practitioners on a global level
- Mistrust in scientific facts
- Scientific findings evolve in an ivory tower
- Gap between science and society

Within our Theory of Change framework (figure 1), one can see the Areas of Action and respective aims, as well as the associated outputs, outcomes and impact. Through regular evaluations and reflection on lessons learned, we adapt our activities when needed, in order to come closer to achieving our impact goals.



Falling Walls Engage Hub Kenya 2020



## 2 STRATEGY AND IMPACT

### THEORY OF CHANGE FALLING WALLS ENGAGE<sup>1</sup>

#### CHALLENGES

are the societal problems we want to tackle with our activities

Lack of visibility of Science Engagement and the impact it has on society	Lack of interconnectivity of Science Engagement activities and practitioners on a global level	Mistrust in scientific facts	Scientific findings evolve in an ivory tower	Gap between science and society
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Areas of Action / Target Groups	Aims	Outputs	Outcomes
Community / Science Engagement practitioners	Onboarding Science Engagement practitioners to the Falling Walls Engage platform	A thriving, connected, collaborative and empowered global Science Engagement community	Success stories on evolving collaborations, new projects and Commitments to Action
	Searching for Science Engagement champions to identify practitioners still operating under the radar	Showcasing Science Engagement projects from all countries and raising visibility on an international level	Inspiration of the public, global science leaders, decision-makers, etc., through showcased projects and success stories
Activation / scientists & non-scientific experts	Demonstrating Science Engagement in practice and fostering the exchange between scientists and Science Engagement practitioners	Involvement and inspiration of scientists who do not yet act as Science Engagement practitioners	Activate scientists to include Science Engagement in their daily work
	Joint Puzzling: implementing a dialogical and participatory method to tackle complex scientific questions in collaboration with non-scientists	Participatory dialog and involvement of the public in science	Collaborative solutions and approaches shape the scientific process and findings
Perception Change / general public & scientific sector, academia	Using best-practice examples of Science Engagement to inspire the public and promote a greater understanding of science	The public gets more knowledge on scientific findings and understands their applicability in society	Greater appreciation and trust in scientific findings and societal perspectives are incorporated into debates on scientific topics
	Promoting debates about Science Engagement, with Science Engagement practitioners, academia and large scientific institutes	More Science Engagement offices/officers at universities and higher institutionalisation of Science Engagement	Science Engagement is more often included in the career path of a scientist

#### IMPACT

is the significant, lasting, and sustained change that occurs on people's lives as a result of our activities

Trust in science is improved on a global level	Academia's perception changed towards the inclusion of multistakeholder perspectives and co-creation	Global societal challenges and scientific breakthroughs are addressed and shaped in a participatory way by science and society	Long-lasting improvements in people's lives through participatory dialogue between science and society, and fact-based decision-making processes
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Figure 1: Theory of Change framework

<sup>1</sup> Our Theory of Change is a living framework, revised regularly. Therefore, if you would like to approach us with comments and ideas, we are happy to receive feedback.

3

## EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021



### 3

## EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021

› *Activities that foster the Science Engagement field and bring science closer to the public*

### 3.1

## ACTIVITIES IN NUMBERS

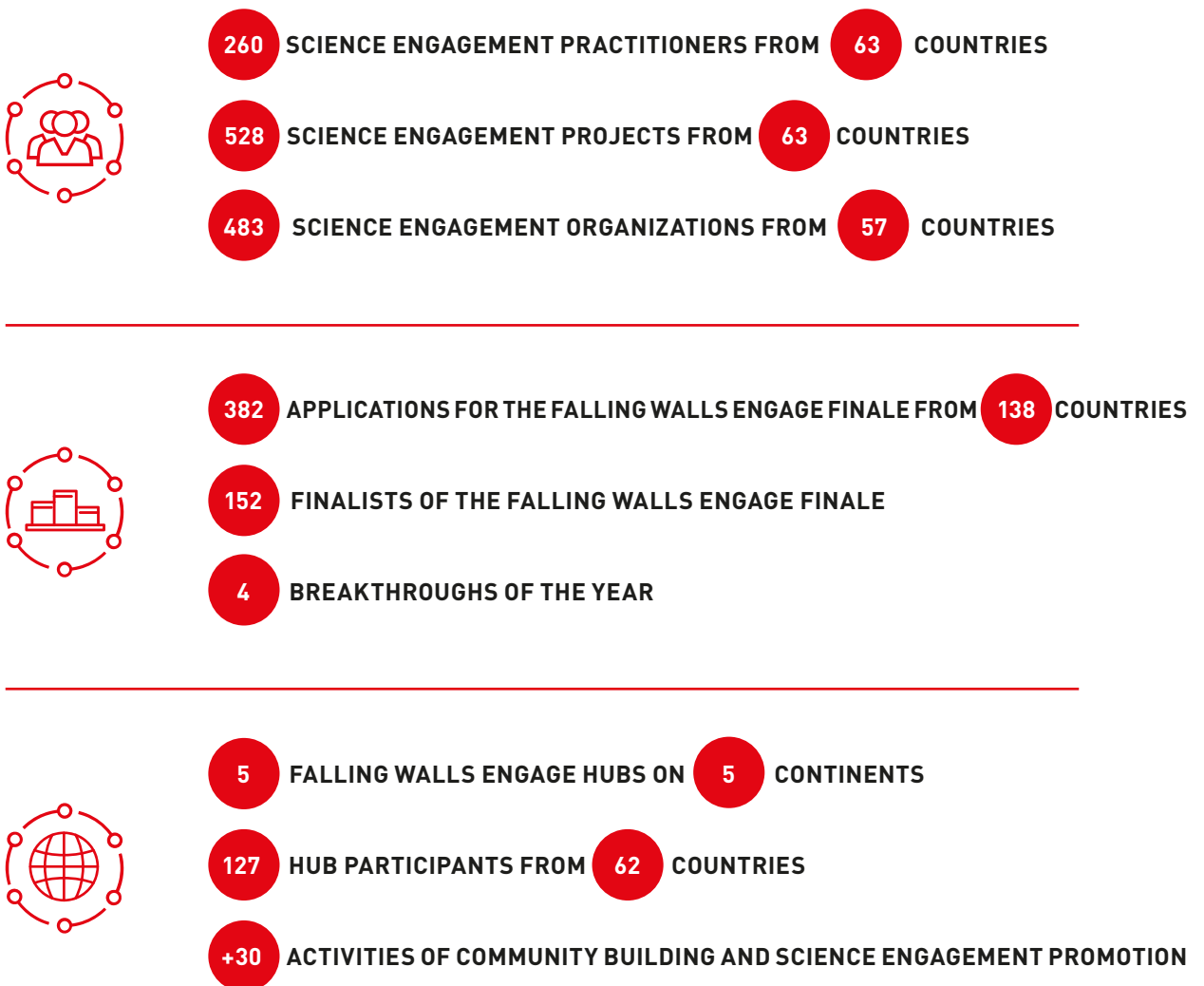


Figure 2: Overview of the main activities' achievements

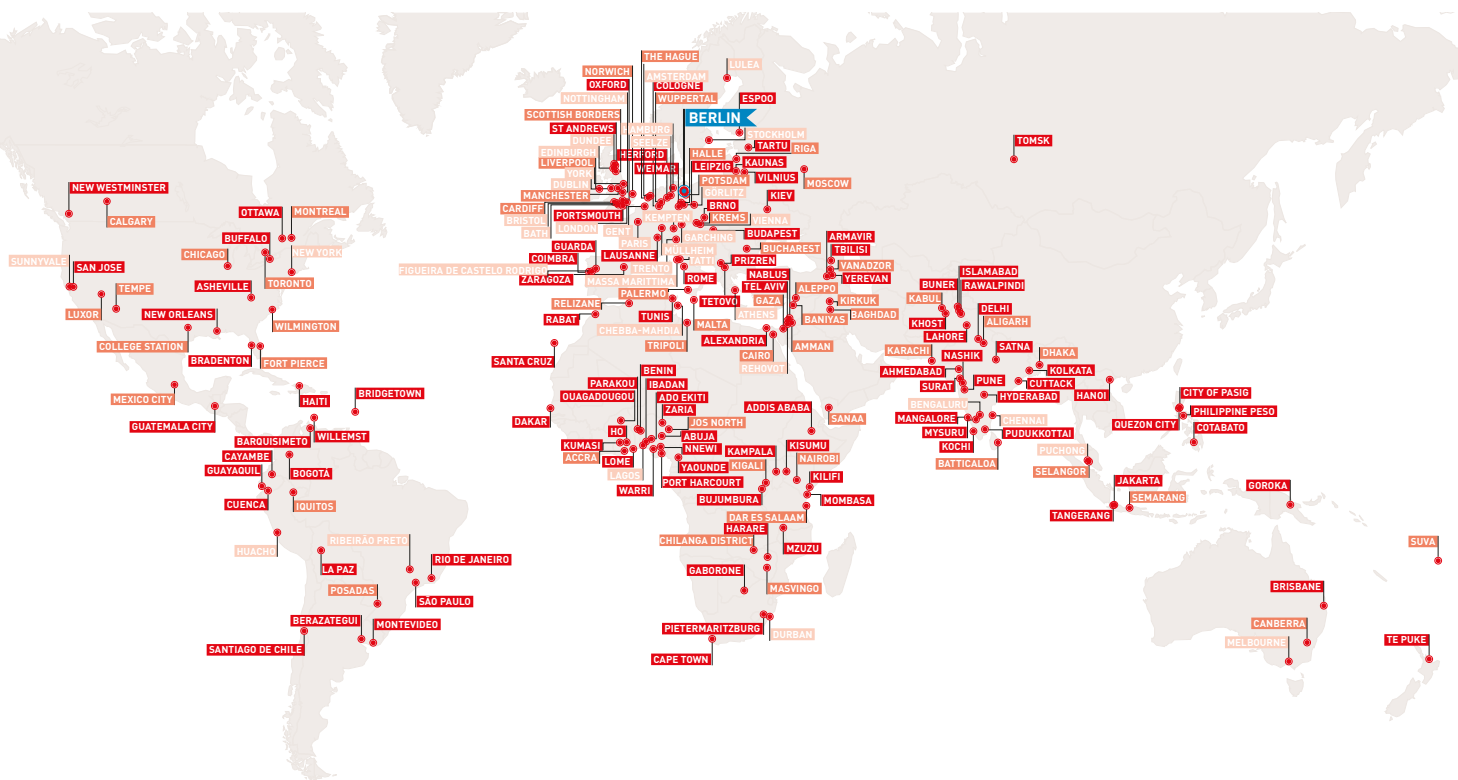
## 3.2 FALLING WALLS ENGAGE FINALE

Each year, on November 7, the 20 most outstanding Science Engagement initiatives from all over the world, are invited to Berlin to showcase best-practice projects at Falling Walls Engage, in an exclusive pitch format. The winners are named Breakthroughs of the Year in Science Engagement and present their projects on the grand stage of the annual Falling Walls Conference, on November 9, in front of international guests of high-profile science institutions and decision-makers.

Between 2018 and 2020, we received a total of 382 applications of Science Engagement initiatives, from a total of 138 countries all over the world (see figure 3).

Our outreach and scouting efforts resulted in a great increase from 15% [2018] to 62,66% [2020] of applications coming from countries within the global south, as well as an increase in applications coming from the regions of Africa and Asia (see figures 3/4).

Since 2018, three Falling Walls Engage Finales took place, two in Berlin and one online (2020), due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hosting a total of 152 finalists. Within the Falling Walls Conference 2020 that took place online, we had 65,000 online visits, which was a great digital platform to promote the Breakthrough of the Year in Science Engagement and increase the visibility of Science Engagement around the world.



Countries from the global south:

2018	15%
2019	48.15%
2020	62.66%

Figure 3: Submitted applications between 2018 and 2020

### 3 EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021

Science Engagement practitioners have the opportunity to showcase their initiatives on the grand stage of the Falling Walls Conference in front of global decision-makers, politicians, media, and the public, focusing attention on the field of Science Engagement and the necessary visibility on the approach and impact of each initiative.

Over the years, Falling Walls Engage has been working to build and expand a global platform for Science Engagement that currently gathers hundreds of practitioners, projects, and organizations from all over the world, that are champions in the field. Through this global platform, we have been able to attract worldwide applications, select more than 150 finalists that took part in the Falling Walls Engage Finale, and elect 4 Breakthroughs of the Year.

Both through our global platform and the Engage Finale, we were able to align our activities' efforts with several of the goals and outputs mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change:

- we showcased best-practice Science Engagement examples, thus raising international awareness and visibility of projects, while contributing to inspire practitioners and potentiate transfer of initiatives to other locations;
- we promoted Science Engagement' knowledge and expertise exchange, co-learning, co-production, therefore fostering more effective engagement practices;
- we inspired the public, global science leaders, decision-makers, etc., through showcased projects and success stories;
- we created connections between Science Engagement communities around the world, thus contributing to the visibility and development of the field.

Through the goals and outputs mentioned above, we make sure we tackle several of the outcomes and impact goals mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change. By fostering the Science Engagement landscape, we make sure that the public gets more knowledge on scientific findings and understands their applicability in society. This knowledge and understanding ultimately contributes to the public appreciation and trust in science, thus bridging the gap between science and society.

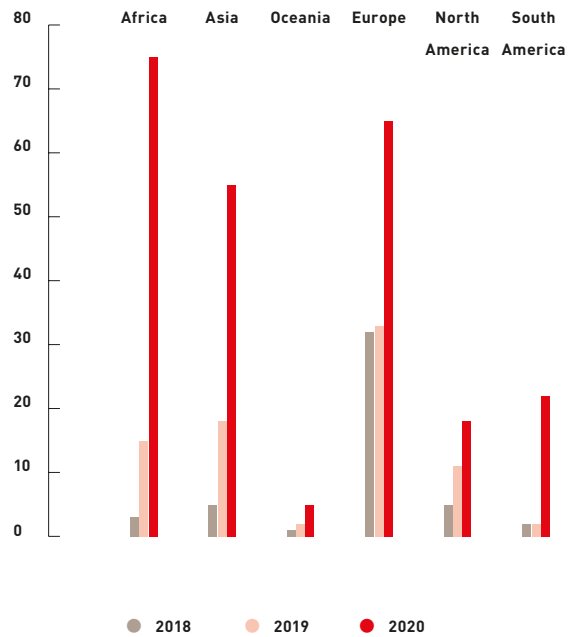


Figure 4: Falling Walls Engage Finale: applications and regions between 2018-20

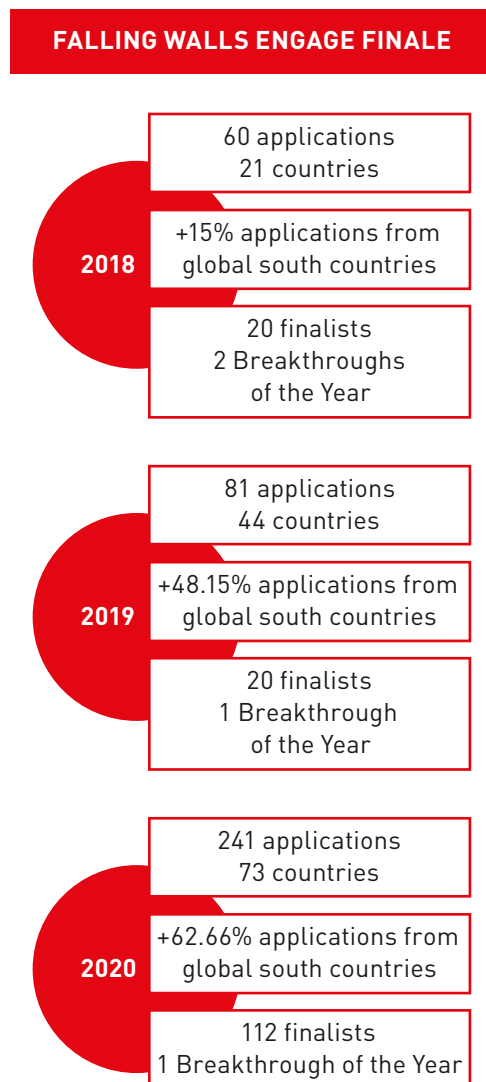


Figure 5: Falling Walls Engage Finale: numbers/geographical diversity of applications and numbers of finalists/Breakthroughs of the Year

### 3.3

## FALLING WALLS ENGAGE HUBS

To foster and promote Science Engagement worldwide, Falling Walls Engage has launched independent network nodes – the Falling Walls Engage Hubs – to connect the local and regional scientific community with the global Falling Walls Engage community. The Hubs are an open format with a regional focus, which translate into a series of events, conferences, and workshops addressing specific topics in Science Engagement.

Our goals are:

- to foster cross-border collaborations and international exchange among practitioners;
- to promote capacity-building in Science Engagement related skills;
- to inspire scientists with best practices of Science Engagement;
- to involve regional players as pioneers and major drivers for institutionalisation and spreading the idea of Science Engagement.

Since 2020, we have established five international **Falling Walls Engage Hubs** located in **Kenya, Sweden, Argentina, Canada, and Australia** (see figure 6).

All Falling Walls Engage Hubs have dedicated local Hub Managers, who come together every month in a Hub Forum to discuss the future of the network. The Hub Forum is a virtual gathering that serves as a platform to share updates from the individual Hubs and their regional communities, to align all community and Hub events in terms of timeline and content, and to discuss the overall and long-term growth, goals, and strategy of the Falling Walls Engage Hub network.

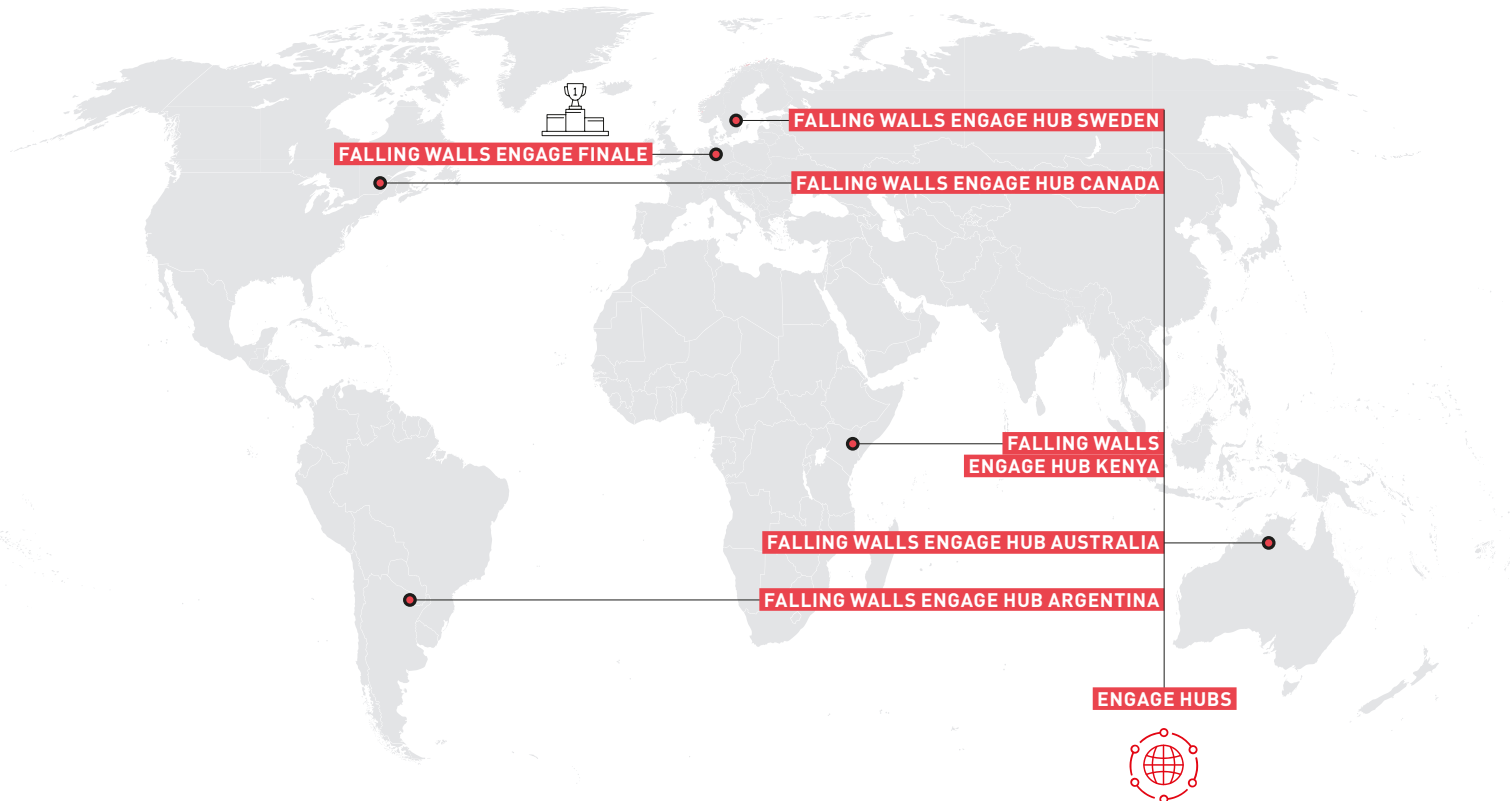


Figure 6: Falling Walls Engage Hub network

### 3 EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021

In the Falling Walls Engage Hubs, we develop ideas and activities (see figure 7), together with dedicated Hub Managers (see figure 8) in the respective region. In the Falling Walls Engage Hub Kenya, we also established the format of Commitments to Action, where Hub participants develop sustainable actions that address Science Engagement challenges which emerged from the Hub exchange.

**Our five Hub launches and associated events have gathered a total of 127 participants, from 62 countries worldwide, and involved 11 local partners.**

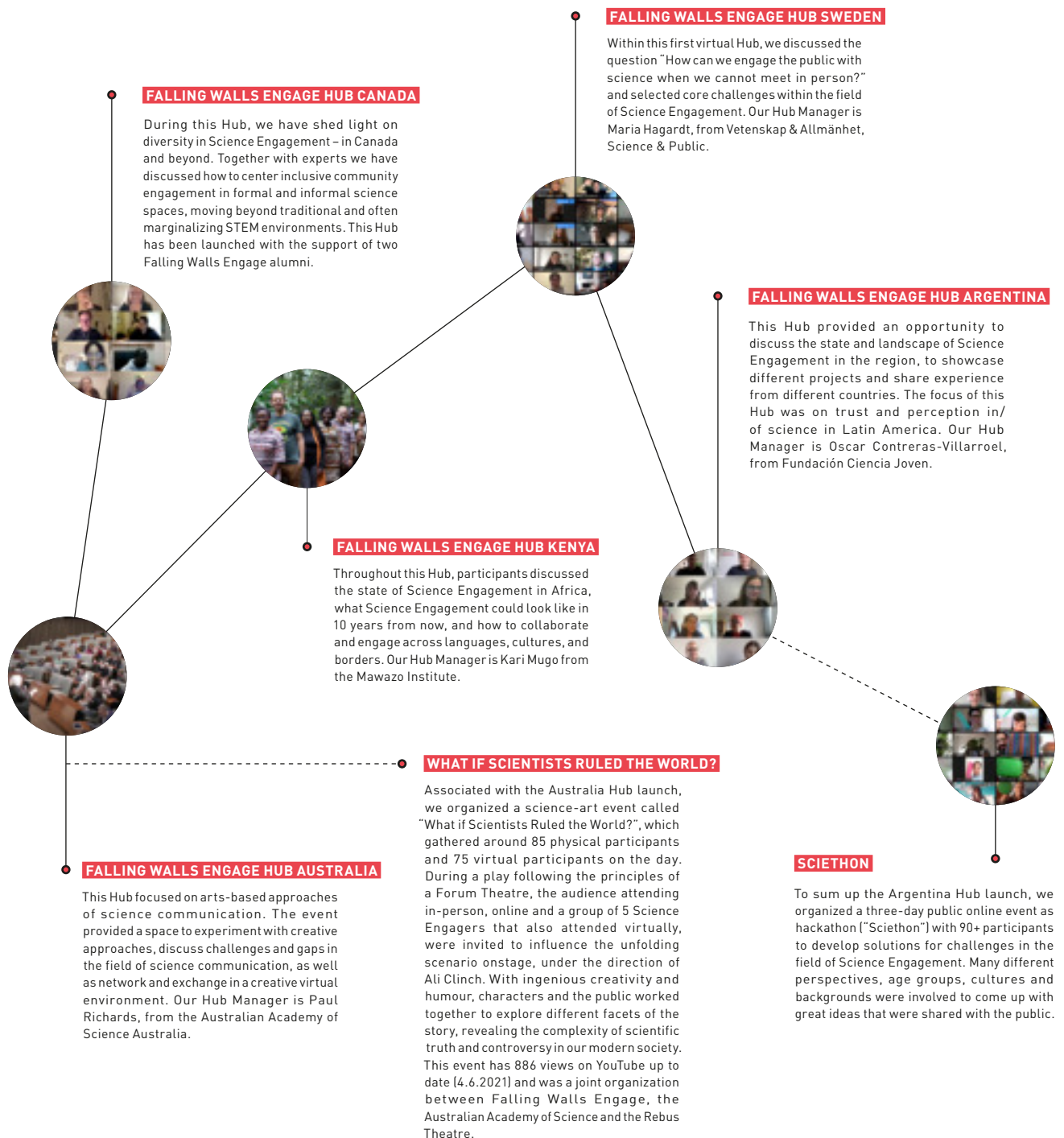


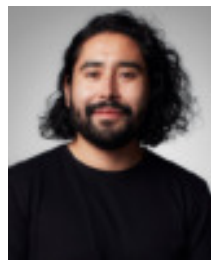
Figure 7: Falling Walls Engage Hubs: content focus of each Hub

### 3 EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021

#### HUB MANAGERS



**MARIA HAGARDT**  
*Vetenskap & Allmänhet (VA)*  
*Sweden*



**OSCAR CONTRERAS-VILLARROEL**  
*Fundación Ciencia Joven*  
*Argentina*



**KARI MUGO**  
*Mawazo Institute*  
*Kenya*



**PAUL RICHARDS**  
*Australian Academy of Science*  
*Australia*

Figure 8: Hub Managers

Since 2020, we established and expanded the Falling Walls Engage Hub Network, with 5 Hubs being launched in 5 continents, with almost 130 participants coming from dozens of diverse countries from all corners of the world. These Hubs were established with the help of dedicated Hub Managers and the collaboration of more than 10 international partners. Through the Hub launches and associated events, Hub participants discussed several relevant topics for the Science Engagement landscape, namely:

1. Science Engagement challenges and the future of the field;
2. best practices on Science Engagement;
3. international collaboration and diversity on Science Engagement;
4. Arts-based Science Engagement approaches;
5. perception and trust in science.

The Hub launches and associated events have enabled us to align our activities' efforts with several of the goals and outputs mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change:

- we fostered Science Engagement knowledge and expertise exchange, co-learning, collaboration and co-production among practitioners (please see chapter 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS for evidence regarding exchange, collaborations and co-production among community members);

- we fostered regional-global peer exchange and international collaboration on Science Engagement challenges through Commitments to Action projects;
- we potentiate a greater public understanding of science through inspiring examples of Science Engagement;
- we expanded our global community of practitioners and created connections between Science Engagement communities worldwide.

Through the goals and outputs mentioned above, we make sure we tackle several of the outcomes and impact goals mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change. By building and expanding the Falling Walls Engage Hub network, we aim to potentiate success stories on evolving collaborations in Science Engagement, including the start of new projects, as well as to promote Commitments to Action projects, where community members develop reflection-to-action projects based on Science Engagement challenges. Through the Hub launches, and respective empowerment and dissemination of Science Engagement projects on a regional-global level, we want to continue supporting projects that bring science close to everyone, thus promoting trust in science on a global level.



### 3.4

## COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Since 2018 we organised more than **30 activities**, beyond our November Falling Walls Engage Finale and Falling Walls Engage Hubs, that promote community building and Science Engagement. Some of these activities have the aim of potentiating encounters and collaboration between Falling Walls Engage community members only, like the Falling Walls Engage community events and our alumni gathering called Engagival. Other activities, like our ENGAGEx series, are open to the public interested in Science Engagement and/or science.

#### FALLING WALLS ENGAGE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Between 2018 and 2021, more than **26 events** that promote exchange, collaboration, and co-learning between Falling Walls Engage community members have been organized. These events have been happening through physical and online formats, mostly prior to the Falling Walls Engage Finale, to create a community-feeling between finalists. Community events follow a format of peer-group exchange and/or workshop, where

community members have the chance to get to know each other and their Science Engagement initiatives, discuss the most pressing and relevant developments and challenges in the field, as well as learn about Science Engagement best practices and Science Engagement skills.

#### ENGAGEx

The ENGAGEx event series is a line-up of smaller community events independently organized by Falling Walls Engage alumni and partners, in various regions of the world, to complement the Hub event series. These events aim to identify new countries for possible Hub locations, by having a better grasp of the country's potential in the field of Science Engagement, as well as understand the work and approach of country partners and the relevant topics in each geographical and cultural context. Until now three ENGAGEx took place online, in Mongolia, Romania, and Egypt (between April and June of 2021), gathering **more than 372 participants**.



Falling Walls ENGAGEx Bucharest

#### ENGAGIVAL - ALUMNI GATHERING

The Engagival (= Engage Festival) is a yearly alumni gathering that gives the opportunity to all Falling Walls Engage community members, across all years and Hubs, to (re-)connect and get to know each other, while exchanging ideas, experiences, and lessons learned about Science Engagement. The first Engagival happened in June 2021, under the name of ENGAGE CUP, and followed the format of a three-day virtual tournament, adapted to an online scenario due to COVID-19 restrictions. The event allowed the Falling Walls Engage community members to gain new skills, knowledge, and tools that they can feed into their daily Science Engagement practice, through expert insights and hands-on challenges. The winning team was awarded with a tailored and individualised workshop in creative and multidisciplinary science communication, led by expert coaches, allowing the winners to refine their methods and approaches and transpose new ideas into their Science Engagement projects.

Creating a community of Science Engagement practitioners that can connect, exchange and learn from, and collaborate with each other, has been one of the goals of Falling Walls Engage since the beginning. Over the past few years, we have been developing and implementing activities that try to achieve this goal, while including learnings of new Science Engagement best practices/skills and bringing Science Engagement and science to the public. These activities have also been enabling us to explore new regional Science Engagement contexts and include new

perspectives into our global discussion, thus unlocking the Science Engagement potential of those regions.

Our community building and Science Engagement promotion activities have enabled us to align our activities' efforts with several of the goals and outputs mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change:

- foster exchange, co-learning, co-production among our global community of Science Engagement practitioners;
- potentiate more effective Science Engagement practices, through exchange of knowledge and expertise, as well as inspiration through best practices.

Through the goals and outputs mentioned above, we make sure we tackle several of the outcomes and impact goals mentioned in our Vision and Mission, Areas of Action and Theory of Change.

For example, in our community building and Science Engagement promotion activities, we create spaces for practitioners to interact and connect, contributing to the development of lasting and sustainable interactions among them. These interactions often result in collaborations among the members of our community, on the exchange of ideas regarding Science Engagement, or in joint work on existing/new Science Engagement initiatives (please see chapter 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS for evidence regarding exchange, collaborations, and co-production among community members).



Engagival, Engage Cup

## 3.5 VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

**"Falling Walls Engage 2020 gave me a sense of belonging, motivation and encouraged my strides in Science Engagement!"**

Finalist 2020

**"What I liked best was the global aspect of the Hub and to meet Engagers from all over the world."**

Argentina Hub participant 2020

**"I have learnt so much as a Science Engager and I have all the Falling Walls Engage team to thank. Keep up the good work, you are highly appreciated."**

Finalist 2020

**"I rated the event as excellent, because the speakers were informative, and the organizers did a great job making everyone feel welcomed and included."**

Canada Hub participant 2020

**"I had a great experience, meeting engagers from across the world and learning what I hope to disseminate and make useful to my context, thus contributing to gradually improve science communication and public engagement."**

Sweden Hub participant 2020

**"This time is ripe for collaboration. All Science Engagement has the same goal – involve people with science. Imagine the possibilities when we share our ideas, our means, and our resources."**

Finalist 2019

**"The presentations were informative and the two breakout rooms/ workshops were a lot of fun. I have quite a lot of take-aways to integrate into my own work."**

Australia Hub participant 2020

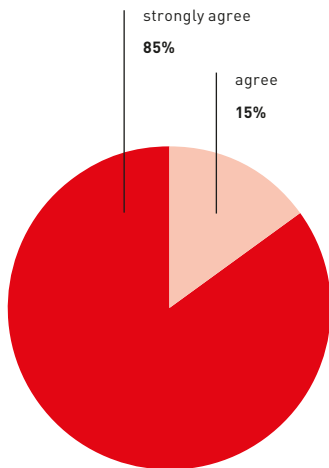
**"For me, it's a source of inspiration, but also a great network of collaborators and friends that I keep on learning from, and I hope that I am contributing as well, every year."**

Finalist 2018

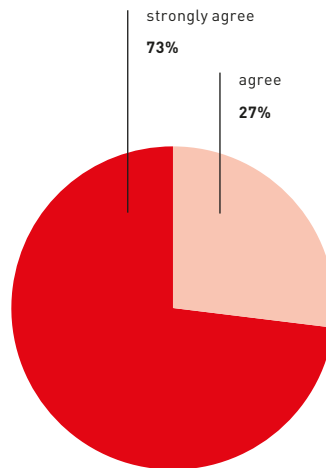
### 3 EVALUATION OF OUR ACTIVITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO JUNE 2021

#### HOW OUR COMMUNITY SEES FALLING WALLS ENGAGE

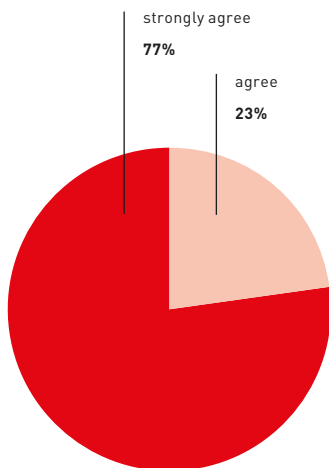
1 Falling Walls Engage is a global connector of Science Engagers



2 Falling Walls Engage brings together a global community



3 Falling Walls Engage overcomes regional barriers and fosters international exchange



4 Falling Walls Engage promotes a voice for Science Engagement globally

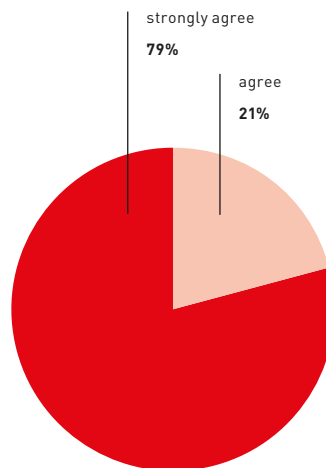


Figure 9: How our community sees Falling Walls Engage

# 4 COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENTS



# 4 COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENTS

> *Enabling digital exchange between Science Engagement practitioners, while spreading scientific knowledge*

In order to engage all audiences with science, as well as grow and foster the global platform of Science Engagement practitioners that bring science to the general public, Falling Walls Engage has been developing a digital communication strategy that takes Science Engagement to all corners of the world. Especially since 2020, we have been making efforts to adjust our communication activities to Falling Walls Engage areas of action and tailor them to different target groups, while improving the content by making it more visually appealing, engaging, and interactive.

As one can see by the figure 10 below, our communication activities have been addressing our Areas of Action, while targeting the general public, the Falling Walls network, and our community members. These communication activities have been using several channels and are focused on a diverse set of goals that go from promoting collaboration between Science Engagement practitioners to giving visibility to scientific findings and Science Engagement initiatives.

All communication efforts have translated into great digital impact (see figure 11 below), namely on a growing reach and engagement of the target groups with science discoveries and Science Engagement, as well as an increase in interaction, support, and collaboration between Falling Walls Engage community members.

## COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Areas of Action	Target group	Channels	Goals
Community, Activation, Perception Change	General public Falling Walls network	Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Connect, Podcast	Promote Falling Walls vision and mission
			Share updates with the Falling Walls network
			Connect Science Engagement practitioners
			Promote exchange, interaction, and collaboration between Science Engagement practitioners
			Give visibility to scientific discoveries, as well as Science Engagement initiatives and Science Engagement practitioners' stories, successes, challenges
	Falling Walls Engage community members	WhatsApp, Newsletter	Promote community building
			Increase networking between Science Engagement practitioners
			Promote exchange, interaction, and collaborations between Science Engagement practitioners
			Potentiate support between Science Engagement practitioners
			Update the community on relevant Science Engagement news (conferences, workshops, tools, etc.)

Figure 10: Communication activities - areas of action, target group, channels, goals

## 4 COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENTS

### ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

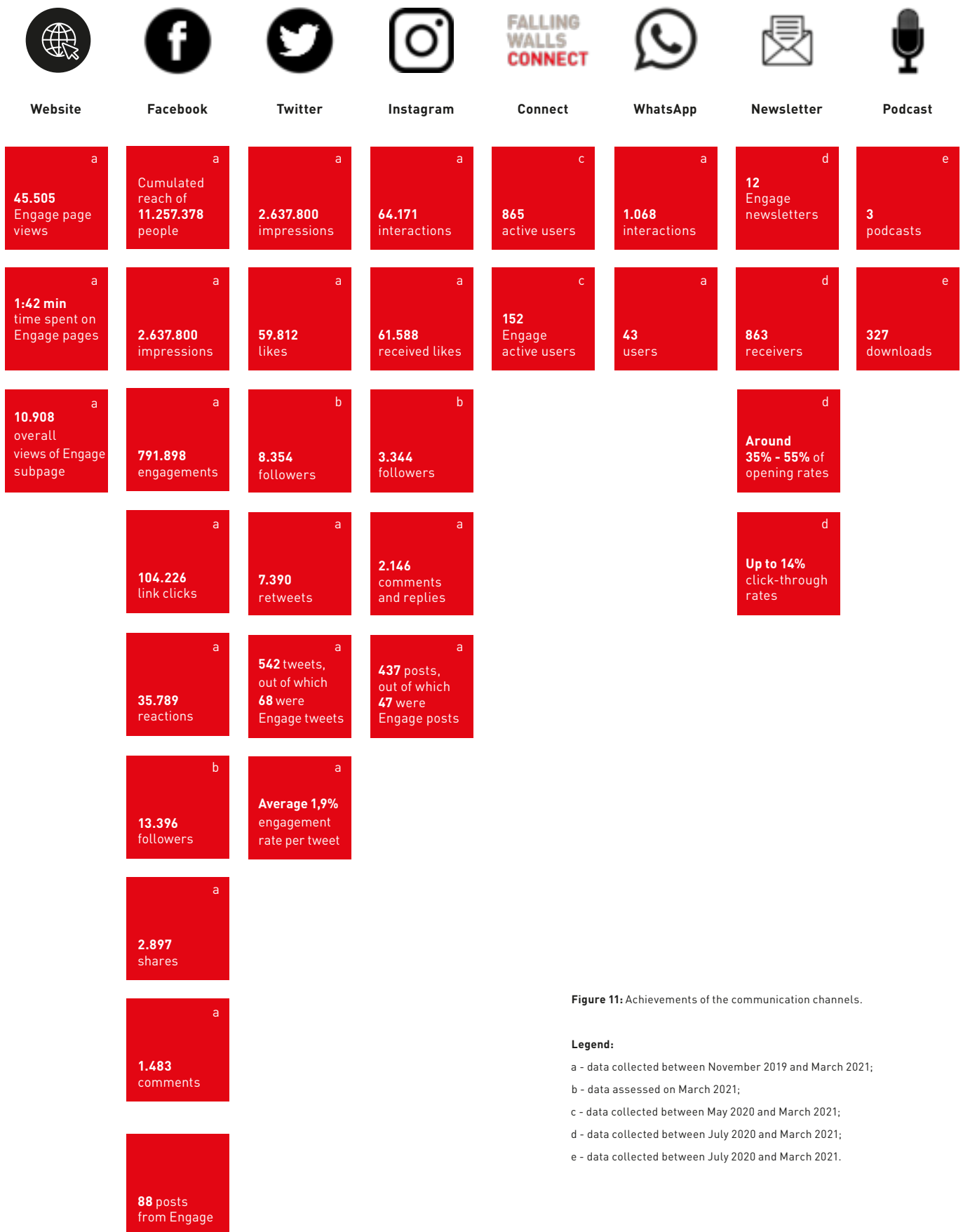


Figure 11: Achievements of the communication channels.

**Legend:**

- a - data collected between November 2019 and March 2021;
- b - data assessed on March 2021;
- c - data collected between May 2020 and March 2021;
- d - data collected between July 2020 and March 2021;
- e - data collected between July 2020 and March 2021.

5

## SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS





# 5

## SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS

- › *Collaborations as long-term outcomes resulting from developed activities*

One of the goals of Falling Walls Engage is to build a global community of individuals practicing Science Engagement, to foster exchange, learning, and joint production on Science Engagement, ultimately contributing to more effective engagement practices with a greater impact in society. For this to happen, one of the aims of Falling Walls Engage has been to potentiate opportunities for collaboration between Science Engagement practitioners that took part in Falling Walls Engage Finales and/or Hubs, creating spaces that promote networking and best practices or knowledge sharing, as well as learning about Science Engagement challenges and initiatives through co-learning workshops.

Thus, in order to understand the influence that the Falling Walls Finale or the Falling Walls Engage Hubs had, in the collaborations within the community members and its Science Engagement initiatives, we developed a Social Network Analysis. It is a data-driven approach that allows an analysis of the connections between the various individuals in the network, as well as identifies network nodes and clusters of people closely collaborating.

Within the analysis we focused on understanding if the Falling Walls Engage Finales and/or Hubs had an influence on collaborations that community members established after their participation in those formats. For this reason, we conducted a survey, where we asked all community members, if they collaborated with each other, and the type of collaboration (see figure 12) they established.

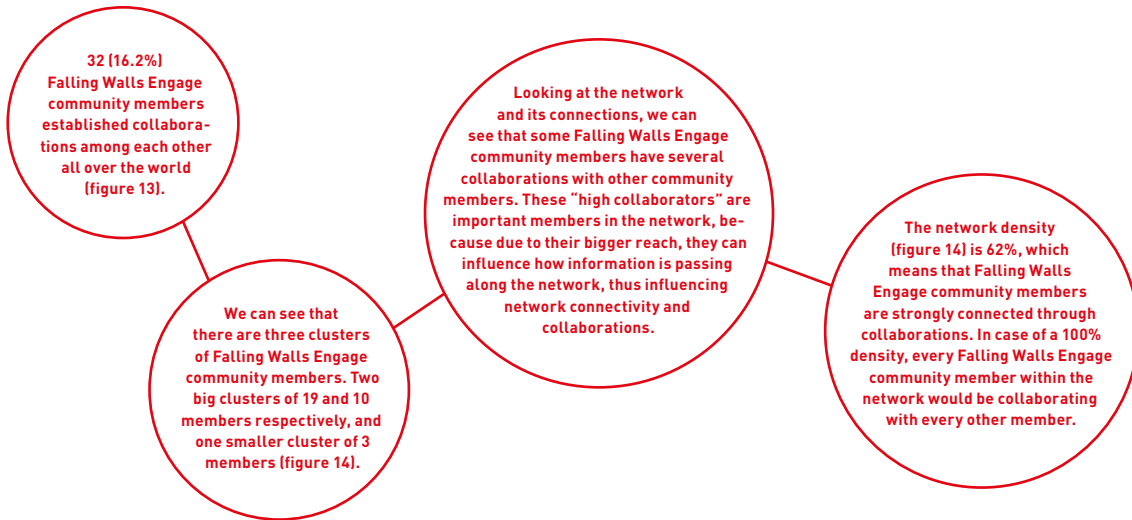
### SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Collaboration type	Definition
Collaboration type 1	Exchange of ideas regarding Science Engagement (e.g. collecting feedback about own Science Engagement initiatives, funding tips, hints on professional network opportunities)
Collaboration type 2	Collaboration in an existing Science Engagement initiative
Collaboration type 3	Development of a new Science Engagement initiative

Figure 12: Social Network Analysis - collaboration types and definitions

## 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS

### > Collaborations, connectivity, clustering and most collaborative members



Locations on the map below represent all the residency countries from the Falling Walls Engage community members that answered the survey and identified at least one collaboration. The lines connecting the locations represent the collaboration between the two Falling Walls Engage community members in question.



Figure 13: Collaborations between Falling Walls Engage community members and respective countries

## 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS

### SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Each red circle corresponds to one Falling Walls Engage community member. Below each red circle, one can see the format/s in which a given community member participated. Circle size represents the number of collaborations of a Falling Walls Engage community member (more collaborations = bigger circle).

Arrows between circles indicate collaborations between Falling Walls Engage community members, on different collaboration types:

- **collaboration type 1**  
exchange of ideas regarding Science Engagement (e.g. collecting feedback about own Science Engagement initiatives, funding tips, hints on professional network opportunities);
- **collaboration type 2**  
collaboration in an existing Science Engagement initiative;
- **collaboration type 3**  
development of a new Science Engagement initiative.

Direction of the arrows: incoming arrows on a given Falling Walls Engage community member mean that this member was referred as a collaborator by other member; outgoing arrows on a given Falling Walls Engage community member mean that this member was referred by other member as a collaborator. On top of each arrow, one can see the year/s when the collaboration took place.

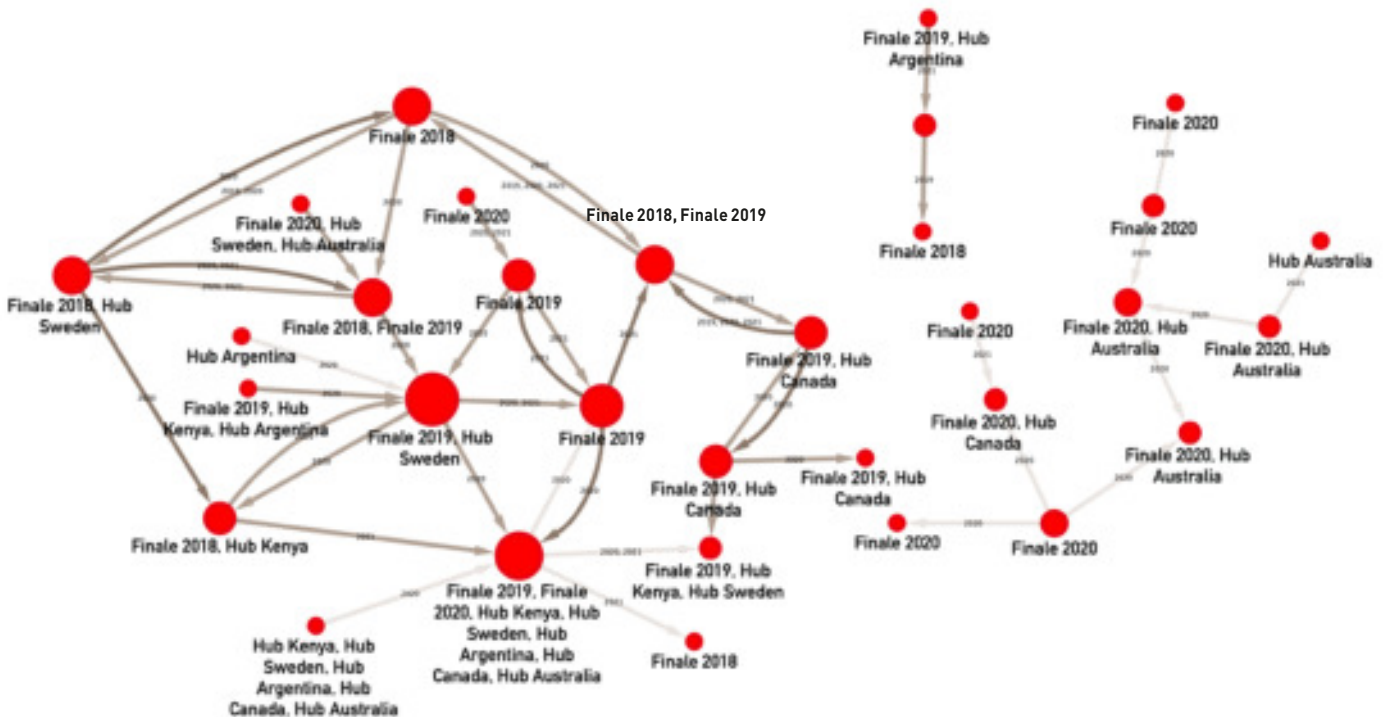


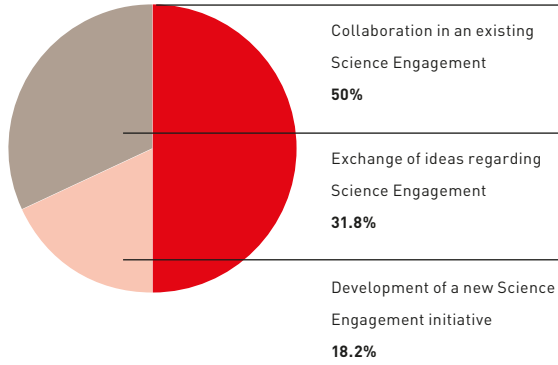
Figure 14: Social Network Analysis of Falling Walls Engage community members

## 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS

> *Collaborations per collaboration type, year, region and country*

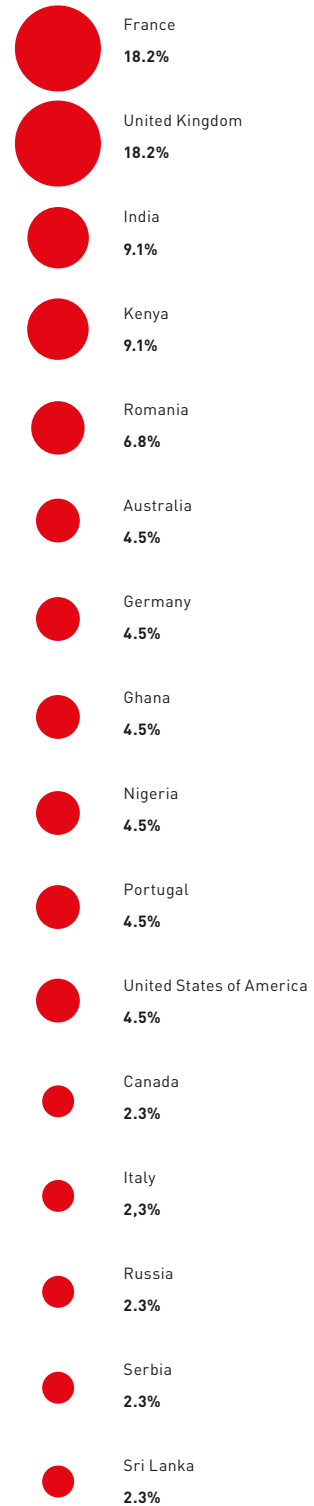
### Collaborations per collaboration type

50% of Falling Walls Engage community members mentioned to have collaborated in an existing Science Engagement initiative



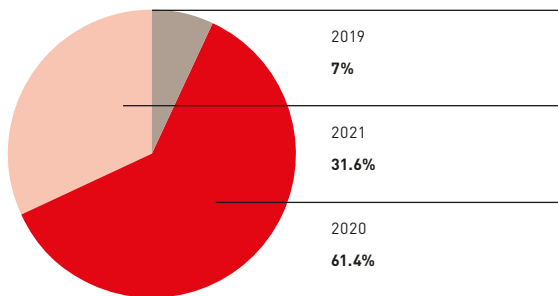
### Collaborations per country

Top 4 countries for collaboration: France (18.2%), United Kingdom (18.2%), India (9.1%), Kenya (9.1%)



### Collaborations per year

93% of the collaborations between Falling Walls Engage community members happened during the years 2020 and 2021 (no collaborations were established during 2018)



### Collaborations per region

56.6% of the collaborations established happened between Falling Walls Engage community members residing in Europe

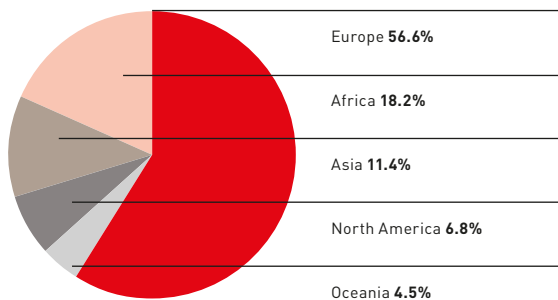


Figure 15: Social Network Analysis - collaborations per collaboration type, year, region and country

## 5 SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF COLLABORATIONS

### FALLING WALLS ENGAGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS NETWORK

> *Voices from Falling Walls Engage community members on the goal of their collaborations*

**"Me and Stephanie Okeyo\* had a meeting to discuss future career opportunities and preparation for job interviews."**

Ana Faustino  
Finale 2018, Hub Kenya  
\*Finale 2019, Finale 2020, Hub Kenya, Hub Sweden, Hub Argentina, Hub Canada, Hub Australia

**"Lewis Hou\* wrote two articles for the science communication guide that has been published in April 2021, that has the goal of helping scientists on how to best convey science in an engaging way."**

Elodie Chabrol  
Finale 2018  
\*Finale 2018, Finale 2019

**"Me and Kiki Jenkins\* have worked together to present our work, with other sci-dance experts, at AAAS, focusing on community building and other conferences, and are starting to write grants and being asked to run trainings for other researchers together."**

Lewis Hou  
Finale 2018, Finale 2019  
\*Finale 2019, Hub Canada

**"Aravinth Panch\* has downloaded and 3D printed some of the Tactile Universe's tactile astronomy images and has indicated that he is interested in adapting our project's materials for use in Sri Lanka."**

Nicolas Bonne  
Finale 2020  
\*Finale 2019

The Social Network Analysis is an important evaluation tool, that enabled us to understand that Falling Walls Engage community members are collaborating with each other beyond the scope of Falling Walls Engage activities, either on existing Science Engagement initiatives or development of new ones, as well as on the exchange of ideas regarding Science Engagement. Community members from all over the world have been collaborating greatly with each other, especially between 2020 and 2021, the years of the launch of the five Falling Walls Engage Hubs (4 out of 5 were virtual events) and the online 2020 Falling Walls Engage Finale.

We also see that some community members are involved in several collaborations and are "high collaborators", which is crucial for the dissemination of Science Engagement ideas, knowledge, and initiatives.

These results support several outputs and outcomes we proposed in our Theory of Change, and show that our activities are:

- contributing to the development and dissemination of the Science Engagement field, through the showcasing of best practices and the facilitation of cross-border collaborations between Falling Walls Engage community members;
- strengthening the support and collaboration ties between Science Engagement practitioners, on existing or new Science Engagement initiatives;
- creating spaces where community members can discuss and exchange ideas towards the replication of their Science Engagement initiatives worldwide;
- promoting dialogue, exchange and co-learning between Science Engagement practitioners, scientists, and science-related institutions, thus fostering the Science Engagement field across all sectors of the axis science-society.

**6**  
**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON**  
**SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT**



# 6 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

› *Thinking about the impact of COVID-19 in Science Engagement, in order to derive better support approaches to Science Engagement practitioners*

The COVID-19 further increased the relevance of the dialogue between science and society. On one hand, both mistrust in scientific evidence and vaccine hesitancy are obvious reasons why scientific literacy and trust in science are needed. On the other hand, the pandemic also deepened inequalities worldwide, making it crucial to further develop Science Engagement programs that can help educate and empower communities worldwide.

However, also due to the pandemic, the majority of Science Engagement initiatives were forced to shift from physical to online formats, as well as adapt tools and content to the virtual reality. To have a better insight into the impact of the pandemic in the Science Engagement landscape, as well as to foster the field according to the current challenges and needs, we prepared a survey open to Science Engagement practitioners, beyond our community, to have a better grasp on:

→ the impact of COVID-19 on Science Engagement initiatives worldwide;

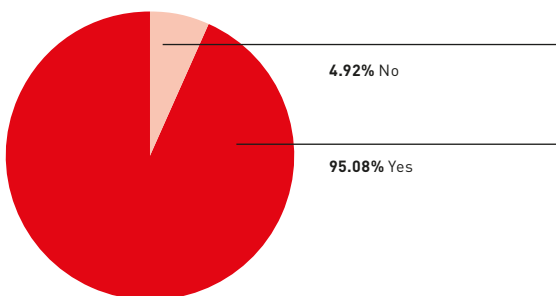
→ the needs identified by Science Engagement practitioners in a pandemic and post-pandemic reality;  
→ how can Falling Walls Engage better support Science Engagement practitioners in their initiatives.

This survey was answered by Science Engagement practitioners from all corners of the world, from diverse Science Engagement categories (e.g. science communication, science education, outreach) and types (e.g. education program, public outreach event, social media, science journalism).

Below, in figure 16, we present a summary of the results collected with the survey. This evidence will be used by Falling Walls Engage to adapt activities to the challenges and needs mentioned below, as well as learn how to better support practitioners in their initiatives. We hope that the lessons learned below also help the Science Engagement community to adapt their initiatives, where needed, during this pandemic/post-pandemic scenario.

## EFFECTS ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

**95.08%** of Science Engagement practitioners say they saw effects on Science Engagement due to the pandemic, in their country of residence



- More interest from the public in pandemic-related science
- More involvement from researchers and doctors in explaining pandemic-related scientific facts to the public
- More pandemic-related scientific content produced by Science Engagement practitioners
- Initiatives canceled and/or moved to online
- Low local participation, but better worldwide reach due to online work
- Low involvement in online initiatives due to too many options/requests
- Online initiatives with better media engagement strategies
- Great online exposure of Science Engagement initiatives and practitioners
- Lack of collaborative projects that enable pooling of different skills

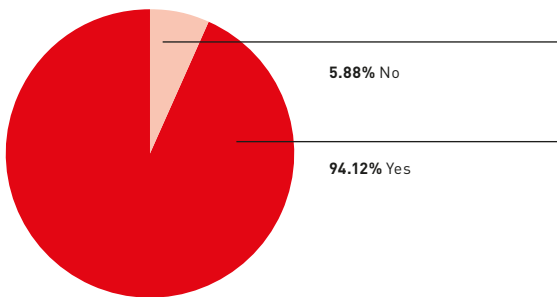
Figure 16: Impact of COVID-19 on Science Engagement initiatives worldwide

## 6 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

- Several Science Engagement initiatives reinvented themselves and new initiatives emerged
- Low quality education due to schools closure and consequent distance learning
- People recognize the relevance of science in their lives and its importance in decision-making processes

### SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT CHALLENGES AND/ OR OPPORTUNITIES BROUGHT BY THE PANDEMIC

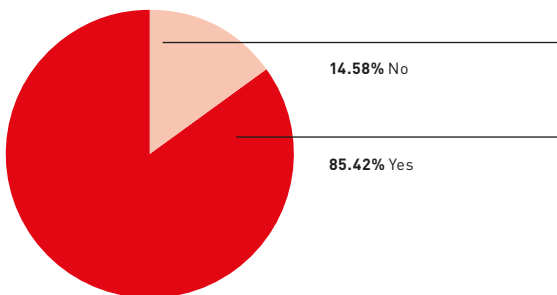
**94.12%** of Science Engagement practitioners say the pandemic brought new challenges and/or opportunities to their Science Engagement initiative/s



- Cancellation and/or reduced numbers of physical initiatives and/or participants
- Challenging to adapt initiatives to online
- Online initiatives with bigger reach, but with low engagement rates and lack of interaction between participants
- Worldwide connectivity, due to online work
- Worsened inequalities: lower online accessibility in developing countries and lower availability for participation from child caretakers
- Creation of new Science Engagement initiatives and formats
- Lack of sources of funding
- Scientists speaking about science to the general public and acknowledging the relevance of it

### CHANGES IN SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

**85.42%** of Science Engagement practitioners say their Science Engagement initiative/s changed (e.g. new approaches, tools, partnerships, initiatives, etc.) due to the pandemic



- Initiatives moved to online, with bigger international reach
- Collaboration between initiatives in different cities/countries
- Creation of online Science Engagement initiatives, some associated with pandemic-related topics
- Development of Science Engagement physical initiatives adapted to COVID-19 restrictions
- New topics, formats and tools (more interactive media tools)
- More international collaborations/partnerships

Figure 16: Impact of COVID-19 on Science Engagement initiatives worldwide



## 6 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

### NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS IN A PANDEMIC/POST-PANDEMIC REALITY

<b>MAKE BETTER ONLINE INITIATIVES, CONTENT- AND APPROACH-WISE</b>	<b>FOCUS ON HYBRID INITIATIVES THAT ENABLE LONG-TERM PLANNING, COLLABORATION, AND TARGET EXCLUDED GROUPS</b>	<b>IMPROVE SOCIETAL UNDERSTANDING, TRUST AND PARTICIPATION OF/IN SCIENCE</b>
More capacity building for online initiatives	Develop more hybrid events (physical + online) to reach different audiences, based on best practices	Improve communication on the axis scientists-Science Engagement practitioners-policy-makers-society
More effective communication on social media – write simple, short and content-full posts	Create new funding schemes that support online and/or hybrid events	Develop more Science Engagement initiatives that are not focused on pandemic-related science
Develop better community building, interactive and co-creative approaches for the online reality	Implement work strategies that enable making long-term plans for initiatives	Take advantage of the engagement of pandemic-related science enthusiasts to make them interested in other scientific topics
Use/develop more/better evaluation tools/approaches suitable for online initiatives	Create/foster platforms that enable collaborative and co-creative work among Science Engagement practitioners in order to pool everyone's best skills and improve quality of initiatives	Focus Science Engagement initiatives on target groups that do not trust in science
Think/develop alternative online formats to webinars and workshops to prevent online fatigue (e.g. podcasts, initiatives that enable group collaboration and co-creation)	Improve accessibility to technology and internet towards a more inclusive Science Engagement	Literate society on the scientific process, besides the scientific knowledge
	Focus physical Science Engagement initiatives on groups that lack technology/online accessibility	Communication between science and society needs to be more oriented to target relevant societal topics (e.g. health, environment), and more focused on promoting evidence-based policy-making

Figure 18: Needs identified by Science Engagement practitioners in a pandemic/post-pandemic reality

## 7 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

### HOW CAN FALLING WALLS ENGAGE BETTER SUPPORT SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS IN THEIR INITIATIVES?

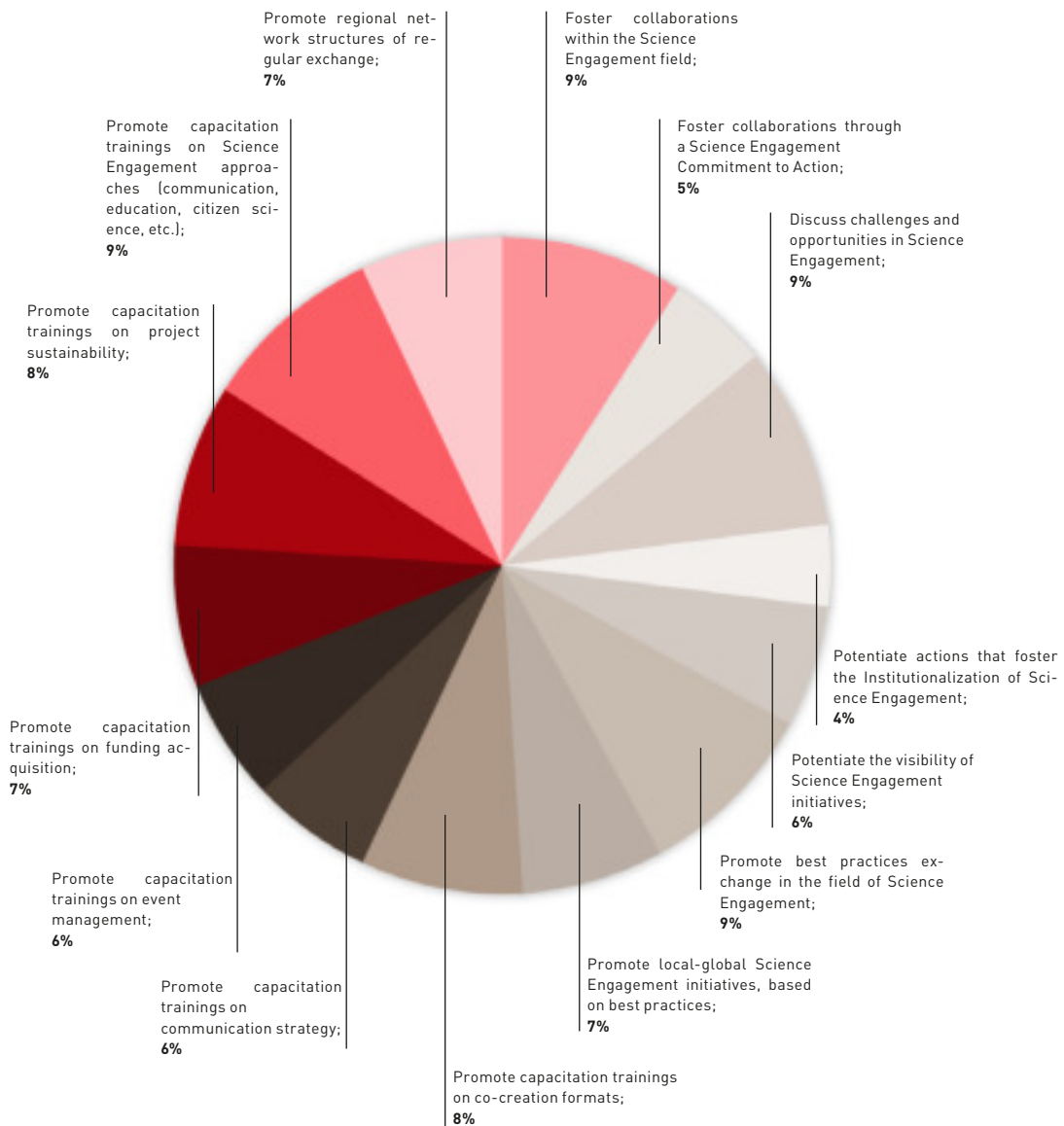


Figure 19: How can Falling Walls Engage better support Science Engagement practitioners in their initiatives?

7  
EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS  
LEARNED AND REFLECTION



IDEAS  
15% SOLUTION

#TALK5

Everyone in sci-eng should  
talk to 5 indifferent  
people and we should pool  
these conversations

BAN THE (uncommon)  
LABS IN

Share the Failures

★ YOU  
ARE  
INVITED  
! :)

MORE OUTREACH  
FROM THE SCIENTISTS

Conference where non-scientists  
give talks about their  
work and we should attend  
all of them, and show  
genuine interest

WORK OF  
SCIENTISTS  
JOURNALISTS...

SKILLS EXCHANGE  
RATHER THAN  
KNOWLEDGE

75%

#failure

SHARE OF THE  
BUSINESS

FOSTER

#YOU

# 7

## EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS LEARNED AND REFLECTION

- › *Transforming evaluation results into lessons learned, towards a reflection that shapes future strategy and activities*

### FALLING WALLS ENGAGE FINALE

Over the years we have been able to build and expand our global platform for Science Engagement, attracting a larger and more geographically diverse number of participants to the Falling Walls Engage Finale, especially through the worldwide mapping of the Science Engagement landscape accomplished through scouting efforts, searching for practitioners, projects, and organizations, through scouting and communication efforts.

Over the course of the last three years, we were able to create a global community of practitioners, as well as Science Engagement projects and organizations. Between 2018 and 2020, we had a 48% increase in the applications of projects coming from the global south. In the Falling Walls Engage Finale, finalists have been presenting a wide variety of Science Engagement initiatives targeting different audiences and following diverse engagement types. The Finale has been giving visibility to Science Engagement projects, as well as the practitioners behind them and their organizations. This has been potentiating inspiration among practitioners, as well as transfer of expertise and knowledge, which ultimately leads to more collaborations among practitioners, projects and organizations, contributing to more effective Science Engagement practices and the development of the field.

In the future, we will continue to add projects from regions not yet represented, to our global platform. We will also continue focusing on onboarding, into our platform, more Science Engagement projects that have participatory and interactive formats, ideally with a transferable and/or scalable approach that generates mutual learning and benefits for both sides, science and the public. All onboarded projects, practitioners

and organizations that are part of the Engage community will be able to benefit from the associated co-learning opportunities, as well as contribute to the collective knowledge pool on innovative engagement formats. Our scouting process will also help with finding new Hub locations and include scientists or scientific institutions into the discussions. Finally, after the Finale, in addition to the pitch competition on November 7, our finalists will be integrated into our high-level Circle Debates as experts of Science Engagement and mediators from their communities, bringing in expertise and global perspectives into crucial societal discussions.

### FALLING WALLS ENGAGE HUBS

Since the beginning of 2020, 5 Hubs from 5 different continents have been launched, gathering a total of 127 participants from 62 countries, and involving more than 10 partners. 4 out of the 5 Hubs were implemented following a virtual scenario – moving the Hubs to an online scenario enabled the engagement of Science Engagement practitioners all over the world, while promoting interaction and exchange among them.

We conclude that the Hubs are a great format to promote collaborations between Science Engagement practitioners on a regional to global scale. It is a great way to connect, focus on the regional debates, learn more about the local Science Engagement scene, discuss challenges, solutions, and approaches that one can use in their own Science Engagement initiatives. Additionally, we observe that finding committed Falling Walls Engage Hub Managers is essential for the success of the Hubs, since they know the local Science Engagement context and have established regional connections. The flexible framework of what defines an Engage Hub and

## 7 EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS LEARNED AND REFLECTION

the regular co-creation with the regional Hub partners, allow us to adjust the Hubs in format and content to what is most needed in the community and regional Science Engagement context.

In the future, we will keep using the Engage Hubs to connect the Science Engagement practitioners beyond the Falling Walls Engage Finale, with stakeholders such as scientists, institutions and the public, and bring in new perspectives and debates from around the world. We want to further foster the Hubs as networking nodes and milestones throughout the year. The Hubs should be places for collaborative reflection. Going forward, we want to emphasize the regional importance of the Hubs and define a standard approach to develop and implement them.

We will put a stronger emphasis on keeping the regional focus of the Hubs, to establish and grow the local communities. Hybrid formats allow people to join from remote areas, coming from all corners of the world. Thus, we will move away from physically including global participants into the Hubs and offer instead hybrid gatherings to connect the community on a local-global level.

### COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Since 2018, we have implemented more than 30 activities of community building and Science Engagement promotion. These activities have been working as platforms where Science Engagement practitioners can connect, exchange ideas, learn and collaborate with each other, as well as learn new Science Engagement best practices and skills. Through community building and Science Engagement promotion activities, we have also been able to explore new regional Science Engagement contexts and include new perspectives into our global discussion, thus unlocking the Science Engagement potential of those regions.

In the future, we want to design more activities that are focused on promoting collaboration and/or capacity-building on Science Engagement skills, that are relevant to practitioners and were identified by them.

### COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENTS

To increase the visibility of Science Engagement, promote projects in our community and connect with new network partners, we used the following communication channels: website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Connect, WhatsApp, Newsletter and a podcast. The use of different channels for different target groups proved to result in successful communication efforts. The variety of channels used increased collaboration and support between the Falling Walls Engage community members. It also offered the possibility to share information relevant to the practitioners. We have learned that it is important to have communication channels that focus on success stories of Science Engagement and promote public understanding and appreciation of science.

We conceptualized a dedicated learning and matchmaking platform, that we aim to launch in November 2021. This platform will have a virtual world map where all Science Engagement projects are listed, as well as their country, target-group, content focus, participation at Falling Walls Engage and project website. Additionally, we will launch a new Instagram channel with the aim of collecting and communicating Science Engagement success stories beyond the Falling Walls channels, showing cross-border collaborations, newly created projects and international synergies among Science Engagement practitioners, after they met through Falling Walls Engage activities. We are also planning on producing a video series especially focused on this topic.

### SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Falling Walls Community members really enjoy collaborating with each other. 32 community members are collaborating after their involvement in Falling Walls Engage activities. The network density, a measure that shows how the community members are strongly connected and collaborating with each other, is 62%. Collaborating on an existing Science Engagement initiative or through the exchange of ideas regarding Science Engagement seem to be the formats of collaboration that Falling Walls Engage community members prefer. We also see that most collaborations happened during the years of 2020 and 2021, which coincided with the launches of the Hubs. We believe that the local-global encounters and the connectivity enabled by the online or hybrid

## 7 EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS LEARNED AND REFLECTION

formats of the Hubs, greatly potentiated collaboration. Since a great number of community members are highly motivated to collaborate with others, we think it could be good to create even more spaces where these members can showcase their initiatives and ideas for collaboration with other community members.

In the future, we want to:

- Implement more activities that foster collaboration among practitioners, where they can: share expertise, pitch their projects and transfer them to other parts of the globe.
- Implement activities that match-make practitioners with similar projects, so that they can discuss challenges and find solutions together.
- Implement more capacity-building activities where Science Engagement practitioners learn how to scale up and transfer their projects.

### IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT

In order to have a better insight on the impact of the pandemic in the Science Engagement field, we prepared a survey that was answered by dozens of Science Engagement practitioners from all around the world. The survey aimed at providing a better understanding of the effects, challenges and opportunities the pandemic brought for Science Engagement initiatives. It also identified the support needed during the pandemic and how to prepare for a post-pandemic scenario.

These are the outstanding findings of the survey:

- Practitioners identified more interest from the public in science topics in general, but mostly in pandemic-related topics. They observed an increased involvement from doctors and scientists of all career levels in Science Engagement activities.
- The pandemic made very clear, for scientists, the relevance and need of speaking about science to the public.

- Online initiatives led to worldwide reach, connectivity and collaboration.
- Science Engagement practitioners gained more knowledge on interactive media tools.
- Online work led to the creation of new Science Engagement initiatives and formats, and enabled reaching out to new target-groups.

Based on the needs for the pandemic/post-pandemic reality, identified by Science Engagement practitioners, Falling Walls Engage should implement more activities that:

- Focus on capacity-building on how to make better online initiatives, content- and approach-wise.
- Use hybrid formats that enable long-term planning, collaboration, and target hard-to-engage groups.
- Improve societal understanding of, trust and participation in science.

Science Engagement practitioners ask Falling Walls Engage for support in the following points:

- Increase discussions around Science Engagement challenges and opportunities.
- Increase capacity-building on Science Engagement approaches such as science communication or education, citizen science, etc.
- Increase capacity-building on co-creation formats.
- Keep promoting best practices exchange in the field of Science Engagement.
- Keep fostering collaborations within the Science Engagement field.
- Increase capacity-building on project sustainability.

## 7 EVALUATION OVERVIEW, LESSONS LEARNED AND REFLECTION

### CONCLUSION

Our Areas of Action and Theory of Change framework have reached different levels of impact, thus far:

**Community:** A lot of work has been made to build a global network of practitioners. We have managed to connect diverse communities and foster collaboration among them. However, there are still some unpopulated spots on the map, of areas where practitioners are active in Science Engagement but have not yet joined our network.

**Activation:** We have showcased many different Science Engagement approaches and formats from around the globe, as well as promoted capacity-building activities in Science Engagement. However, we need to develop more activities where scientists can see and try Science Engagement for the first time, like best practices demonstrations or training workshops. First steps have been taken, but we are still a long way from incorporating Science Engagement into the career path of every scientist.

**Perception Change:** This aim is the hardest to reach as it involves a culture change within the global scientific, institutional and policymaking systems that has ripple effects on society. It takes a long time, requires several stakeholders to push it through and more participatory and co-creational approaches. We will focus on creating more initiatives that foster the Science Engagement initiatives tackling societal goals and include multistakeholder perspectives in the scientific and policymaking processes.

With strong Areas of Action and a regularly adapted Theory of Change, our work will address relevant outputs/outcomes and target groups in the science-society axis, which will further contribute to move the Science Engagement field forward and reduce the gap between science and society.

**8**

**GET IN TOUCH**

**FALLING  
WALLS  
ENGAGE**



## 8 GET IN TOUCH



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› **IMPRINT**

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