



Wonder Labs

## Reimagining 2025: Living with Fire Design Challenge

This is a call for student-led interdisciplinary proposals to reimagine what it means to live with fire.

3 awards of up to USD 10,000 available.

Submit your proposal to [shefali@lakhina.com](mailto:shefali@lakhina.com) by **7 May 2021**.

Selected teams will have from 1 June 2021 until 30 November 2021 to complete the Design Challenge.

### I. Context

Wonder Labs is a social enterprise based in San Jose, California. Our mission is to catalyze social and ecological innovations with communities on the frontline of climate impacts. We do this by co-developing technologies, facilitating convergence research, and granting seed capital for community-led innovations. Our work is guided by the United Nation's Agenda 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Our five-year mission is to reduce catastrophic wildfire risk for diverse communities across California. Through our *Reimagining 2025: Living with Fire* program, we advocate for a 'Policy, People, Places' approach to governing wildfire risk reduction. As part of this program, we are pleased to announce the *Reimagining 2025: Living with Fire* Design Challenge.

### II. The Challenge

The aim of the Design Challenge is to center the voices of emerging scholars in current discussions on wildfire risk reduction. The objective is to enable student-led teams to closely engage with communities in processes of reimagining inclusive, just, and sustainable pathways to living with fire. We expect proposals to be co-developed with communities at high risk of wildfire impacts in the western United States, specifically in California, Colorado, Idaho, and Oregon.

The Design Challenge seeks to enable participating teams to facilitate community-wide discussions around what it means to live with fire. Community discussions should lead to a clear articulation of what it means to live with fire (see background readings for guidance). Outputs from community discussions can be value-based and data-driven. Teams may reflect on values, amenities, social and environmental justice goals, with due attention to other locally relevant issues.

Expected outcomes include an identification of 'projected state/s' and 'reimagined state/s' of living with fire. A 'projected state' can be defined as a 'business as usual' scenario based on the current trajectory of wildfire risk reduction efforts in a community. In contrast, a 'reimagined state' can be defined as a



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process of reimagining ideal or desirable future/s by collaboratively envisioning diverse new possibilities. A ‘projected state’ can help *forecast* how we will live with fire in 2025 if we continue to do what we’re doing right now or do more of the same. Whereas a ‘reimagined state’ can enable a community to *backcast* how to get to reimagined future state/s by choosing new pathways, sometimes building on past efforts.

A process of reimagining can be supported through the iterative development of data-driven indicators / metrics to monitor how a community progresses along its ‘projected state/s’ and ‘reimagined state/s’. Teams can develop ‘projected state/s’ and ‘reimagined state/s’ using indicators, maps, graphs and other visualization tools. Indicators should be locally relevant and help monitor and track progress to achieving projected and reimagined state/s, as defined by the participating community. Maps can be geographical, statistical, conceptual, or narrative-based, and can be hand-drawn, app-based, or platform-based to represent projected and reimagined states, as defined by the participating community.

Outputs will be due by 30 November 2021 and will be showcased as part of a *Living with Fire Community Atlas* in 2022. We expect these outputs will contribute to a more robust characterization of what fire adapted communities look like across social geographies, while highlighting diverse pathways to get there. Teams will have a chance to present their outputs at a webinar in December 2021. Further details will be shared with selected teams.

### **Interested? Here’s what to do next:**

1. Assemble a team of at least 3 students, 1 faculty advisor, and 1 community partner.
2. Nominate a student team lead who will be responsible for managing the team’s participation in the Design Challenge and communicating with Wonder Labs.
3. Collaboratively draft a proposal following the submission guidelines below.
4. Submit your three-part proposal to [shefali@lakhina.com](mailto:shefali@lakhina.com) before 7 May 2021.

Wonder Labs will announce three winning teams by 14 May 2021. Teams will have until 21 May 2021 to accept. Selected teams will have 6 months, from 1 June 2021 until 30 November 2021, to complete the Design Challenge.

### **III. Forming a Team**

Students can be at masters or graduate level of study, from relevant disciplines (such as geography, sociology, engineering, environment, forestry, economics, urban planning), and must be currently registered at an academic institution in the United States. To ensure interdisciplinarity, we require teams to be comprised of students from at least two relevant disciplinary backgrounds. The faculty advisor must be a current academic advisor to at least one student on the team and should be able to provide methodological guidance to students through the course of the Design Challenge as required. The faculty advisor is expected to ensure methodological rigor and high-quality deliverables. The community partner must be currently leading wildfire risk reduction efforts and should be able to



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facilitate community-wide dialogue, participation, and coordination of local follow ups from the Design Challenge. The student team lead will be responsible for managing the team's participation in the Design Challenge and maintaining regular communication with Wonder Labs and other partners, as relevant.

### IV. Proposal Requirements

- The proposal must address the specific context, needs, and capabilities of a community at high risk from wildfire impacts in one of the following states: California, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon.
- The proposal must be place-based and address how the process of reimagining will be inclusive of the perspectives, experiences, and capabilities of diverse members of community.
- The proposal must seek to address the historical and cascading social, economic, public health, and environmental impacts of wildfires for the selected community.
- The proposal must demonstrate how the team will transcend disciplinary boundaries and organizational silos to adopt ethical, problem-focused, and solutions-based convergence research principles.
- The proposal will explore how a process of reimagining can bring together diverse ways of knowing, including indigenous and migrant perspectives, with 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies in respectful, just, and empowering ways.

### V. Submission Guidelines

Design Challenge proposals are due to [shefali@lakhina.com](mailto:shefali@lakhina.com) by 5:00 pm PST on **7 May** 2021. Your email proposal should include:

1. Cover letter (250 words): concretely explain *what* your team hopes to achieve with a Design Challenge award. The cover letter must be co-signed by all team members, including at least 3 students, 1 Faculty advisor, and 1 community partner.
2. Design brief (1500 words): outline *how* you will facilitate a process of reimagining 2025 with a community at high risk of wildfire impacts. Clearly describe your ethical framework, method, and expected outcomes. Clarify what you hope to do with the award amount, and why. Please state any prior work, publications, and outcomes between team members, especially with the proposed community partner/s. Further details in Design Brief Template, below.
3. Provide a link to a 2-minute video pitch: the video pitch should highlight *why* your approach is novel and how it serves the community you have chosen to work with. The video pitch can be presented by one team member on behalf of the entire team, or it can be collaboratively presented by all team members. The team must consider accessibility issues when preparing the design brief and video. Videos must include captioning or a transcript.



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### Design Brief Template

1. **The Title page** will include a Project Title and a complete list of Team Members.
  - Include at least 3 student's details in the following format:  
First name Last name, Level of study, Course, University. Include Email id and a photo.
  - Include at least 1 Faculty advisor's details in the following format:  
First name Last name, Designation, Department, University.
  - Include at least 1 community partner's details in the following format:  
First name Last name, Designation, City, County, State. Include Email id and a photo.
  
2. **Design Brief (1500 words)**
  - i. **Context:** Provide details about the community your team will work with. You can define community at municipal or county scale. If you choose to work with a community at neighborhood/ subdivision scale, you must demonstrate how your process of reimagining will adequately address wider landscape risks. Identify the community's Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) designation as listed in a local Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Clarify why the process of reimagining 2025 is relevant or interesting to the participating community?
  - ii. **Methods:** Provide a brief description of your proposed method of engagement. How will the team facilitate this process of reimagining with the participating community? Community consultations for the reimagining exercises can be held in virtual or physically distant formats due to the possibility of continuing COVID-19 health and safety precautions. Explore how best to set up your consultations via virtual, asynchronous, and synchronous collaboration tools such as Google docs, Slack, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Miro boards. Also, how will you make use of any past or ongoing community-wide discussions and planning processes, such as the Fire Adapted Communities Self-Assessment, the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan?
  - iii. **Expected outcome/s:** What are the expected outcomes from your proposed process? How will you know when you've successfully completed an inclusive process of reimagining with diverse members of community? Will you develop indicators, graphs, maps, or other kinds of tools to present your reimagining?
  - iv. **Prior work:** How will this award contribute to your ongoing/ previous work with the participating community? Has this team previously collaborated on any project/s, especially with the proposed community partner? Links/publications/ lessons to share?
  - v. **Ethics Statement:** How will your team conduct ethical research in caring, respectful, and inclusive ways? How will you engage with all of community, and represent your findings and next steps in inclusive and accessible ways?
  - vi. **Timeline and Major Milestones:** Provide a timeline for your community consultations and reimagining process. The timeline should include major project activities and milestones, with a budget as relevant.



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- vii. **Future Directions:** Describe what it would mean if this project were successful and what next steps you might build on to scale or translate the lessons and/ or priority actions of this project. How will you keep the momentum going with the community?
- viii. **Budget Justification:** The proposal should include a budget justification to outline where/ to whom funds will be allocated and why. Budget fields can include stipends, equipment, food, travel, miscellaneous.
- ix. **References,** if any.

Please write to [tarapozzi@u.boisestate.edu](mailto:tarapozzi@u.boisestate.edu) with any questions as you prepare your application.

### VI. Funding and Resources

The Design Challenge funds will be awarded in two equal tranches: the first tranche (USD 5,000) will be awarded on 1 June 2021, and the second tranche (USD 5,000) will be awarded on 1 September 2021. Each tranche will be received in equal parts by a student (USD 2,500) and a community partner (USD 2,500). The nominated student and community partner will commit to distributing the grant equitably as a stipend to members of the participating team, or the team may choose to spend the money on equipment, travel, or other relevant expenses.

In addition to seed funding, Wonder Labs will provide selected teams with regular access to industry, community, and academic mentors who will provide feedback and guidance throughout the period of the Design Challenge. Also, Wonder Labs and relevant partners will support the selected teams in obtaining future funding opportunities to implement priority actions / pathways identified through the Design Challenge, beyond 2021.

### VII. Review Criteria

The proposals will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- Eligibility criteria (no points):
  1. Proposal includes three parts: cover letter, design brief, and video pitch.
  2. Project team includes at least 3 students, 1 faculty advisor, 1 community partner.
  3. Project can be accomplished within a 6-month period (1 June – 30 November 2021).
- Proposal review (100 points):
  1. Cover letter (max. 10 points)
  2. Design brief (max. 70 points)
  3. Video pitch (max. 20 points)

While preparing the three-part proposal, please be guided by the proposal requirements outlined in Section IV.



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### Background reading

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Moritz MA, Batllori E, Bradstock RA, Gill AM, Handmer J, Hessburg PF, Leonard J, McCaffrey S, Odion DC, Schoennagel T, Syphard AD. 'Learning to coexist with wildfire.' *Nature*. 2014. 515(7525):58-66. doi: 10.1038/nature13946. PMID: 25373675.

Paveglio TB, Brenkert-Smith H, Hall TE, Smith AMS. 2015. 'Understanding social impact from wildfires: Advancing means for assessment.' *International Journal of Wildland Fire* 24: 212–224.

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