



Welcome to Gather

CASCA 2024 Virtual Conference Guide



1. General information

What is Gather?

- Gather is a virtual office platform with avatars that move around a map and interact with each other via video, audio, and text chat.

What you need:

- A desktop or laptop computer with a **microphone** and a **camera**.
- You can access Gather either in a web browser (**Chrome is recommended**, but other browsers can also work, if necessary), or using the [Gather Desktop App](#).
- It is generally possible to access Gather using a mobile device, such as a tablet or a smartphone, but functionality is limited and some features are not available on mobile, so we recommend using a laptop or desktop, if possible. See the **Gather blog** for information about [connecting on a mobile browser](#).

How it works:

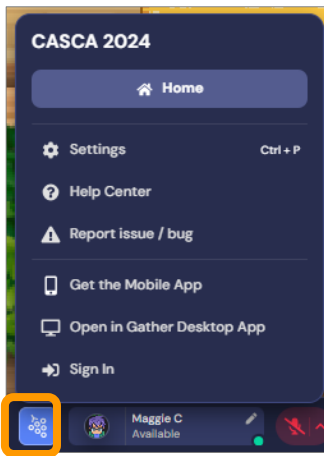
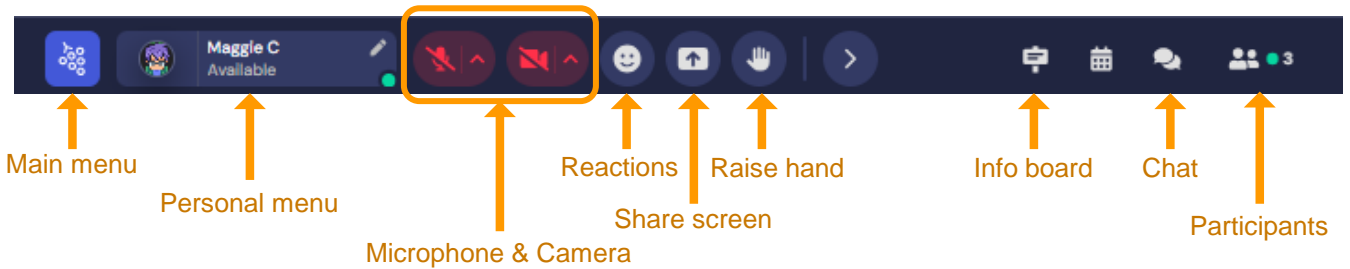
To move around the space, you can:

- Use the arrow keys or the WASD keys on your keyboard



- Or use your mouse to double click on the map where you want to go, and your avatar will go there.

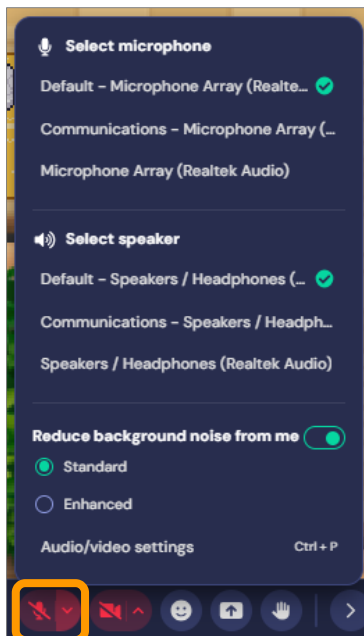
At the bottom of your Gather window, you will find a series of buttons:



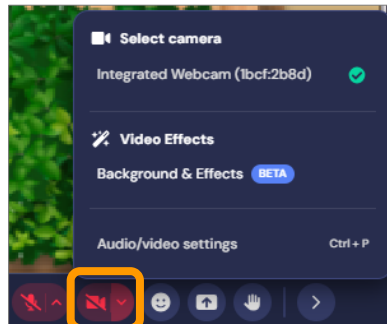
The **Main menu** is where you can access general settings, etc.



In the **Personal menu**, you can update your status, edit your avatar's appearance, or respawn to the Veranda.



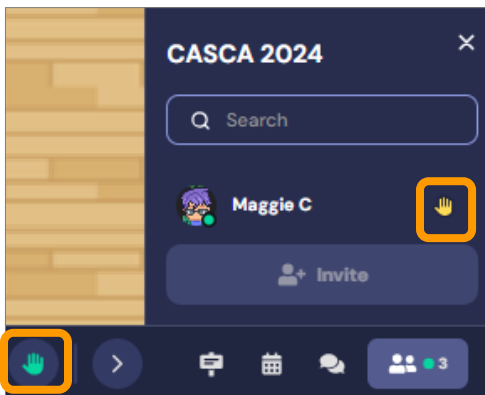
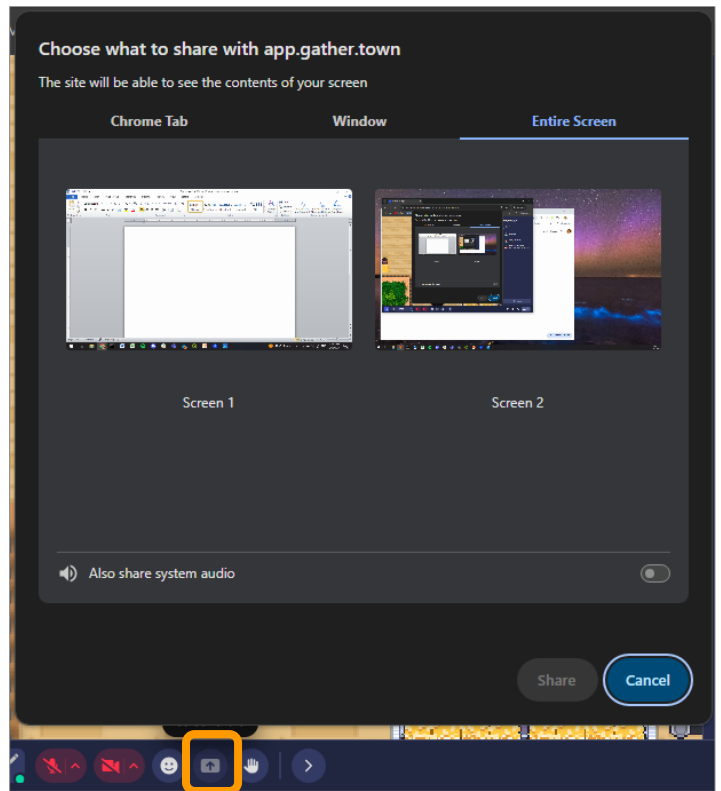
The **Microphone & Camera** buttons allow you to update your audio/video settings, and turn your microphone or camera on and off.





Use the **Reactions** button to share your reactions (e.g. wave, like, laugh, clap, etc.) during a session or a conversation.

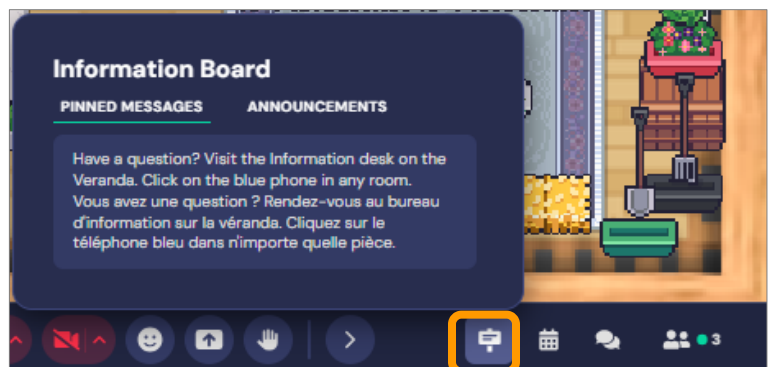
Clicking on the **Share screen** button, you will have the option of sharing your entire screen, a single window or tab, or a particular app that you already have open.



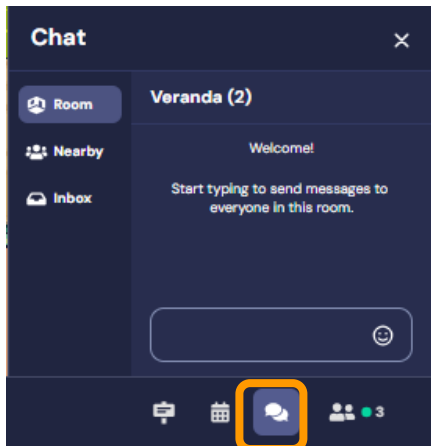
The **Raise hand** button allows you to raise your avatar's hand. A hand will appear next to your name in the **Participants** panel.

Click on the **Raise hand** button again to lower your hand.

The **Info board** is where conference organizers will post pinned messages and announcements throughout the conference.

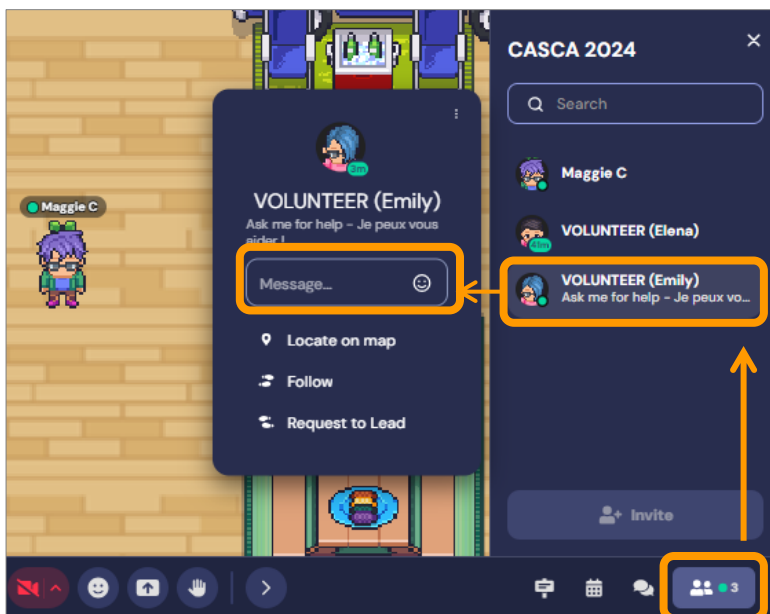
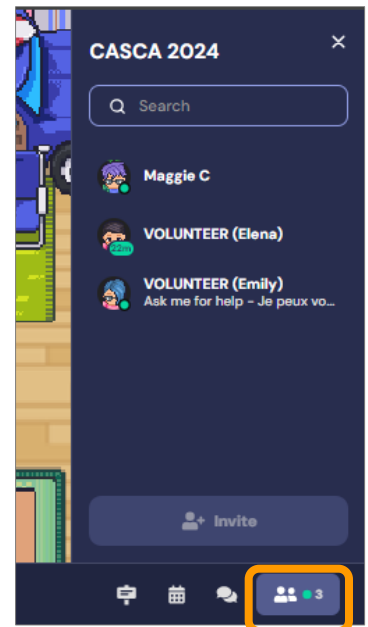


Sending messages



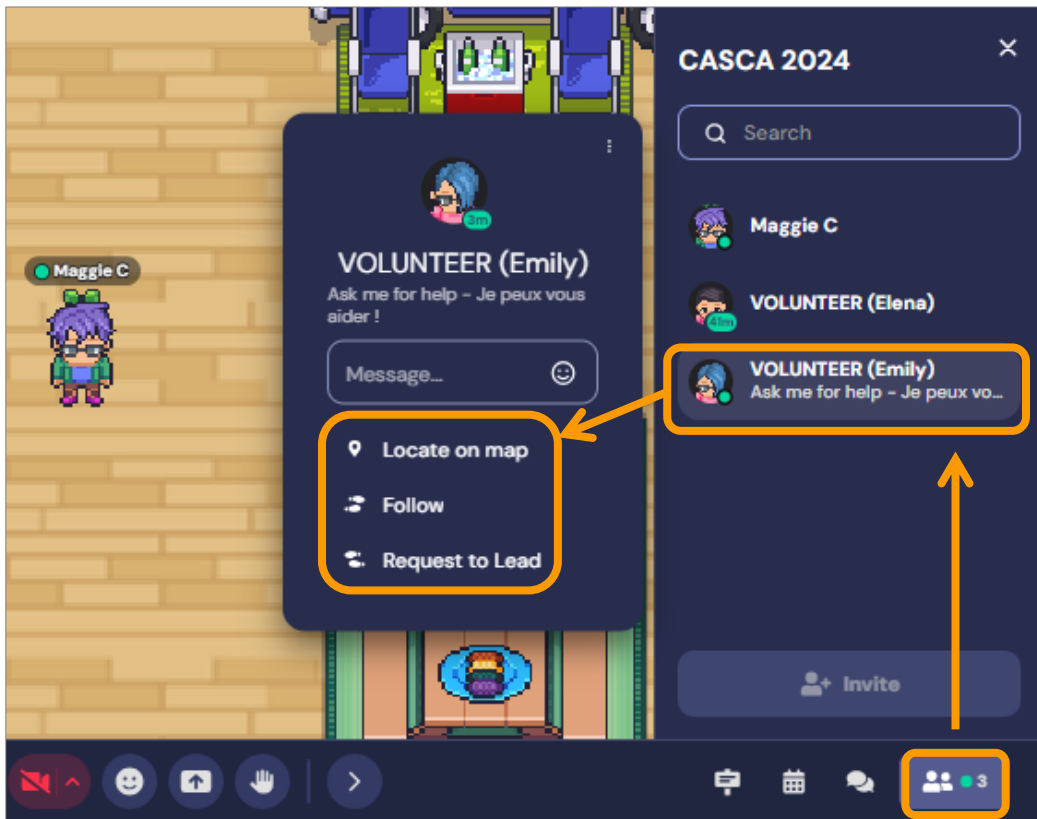
Clicking on the **Chat** button will open the **Chat** panel, where you can send group messages to everyone who is **Nearby** or in the same **Room**, or you can send private messages (under **Inbox**) to specific participants who are in the same room.

Clicking on the **Participants** button will open the **Participants** panel, where you can see who else is in the virtual conference space.



To send a direct message to participant who is in a different room, click on their name in the **Participants** panel and type a message in the **Message** field.

Locating other participants

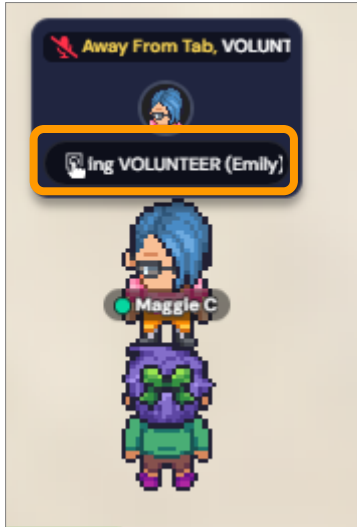


- To locate another participant in the virtual conference space, click on their name in the **Participants** panel and select **Locate on map**.



- You can then go to where this participant is on the map by selecting **Walk over**. You can also go to another participant by clicking on their name in the **Participants** panel and selecting **Follow**.
- To stop locating or following another participant, click **Stop locating** or **Stop following**.
- You can also invite other participants to follow you by clicking on their name in the **Participants** panel and selecting **Request to Lead**, which they can then either accept or decline.

“Ringing” other participants



To connect with someone who appears to be idle or “away from tab,” click the **Ring [name]** option on their camera bubble. This will send them a sound and text notification indicating that you would like to connect.

Entering and exiting rooms

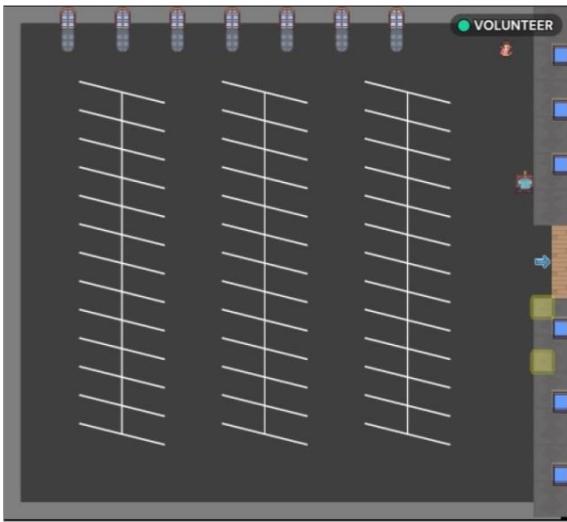
To enter or exit a room, walk straight at the doorway and keep going until you see your avatar appear in the next room.

DO NOT STOP IN A DOORWAY,
as it will block others.



If your avatar does not appear in the room you are trying to enter, you may be stuck! If this happens, click on your **Personal menu** and select **Respawn**, and your avatar should return to the Veranda.

Avatar Parking



Anytime you want to leave the virtual conference space, you can park your avatar at the **Avatar Parking** lot.



Navigate your avatar to any empty spot in this room before you log off or close your Gather window.

The next time you open Gather, this is where your avatar will be.

Private areas

You will find **private areas** throughout the virtual conference space.

In a **private area**, you can meet with other virtual conference participants in smaller groups, and only the people standing in the **private area** with you will be able to hear your conversation.

Private areas come in many different shapes and sizes. Most will be either **shaded** (see the hatching effect underneath the furniture), or set up on **rugs**.

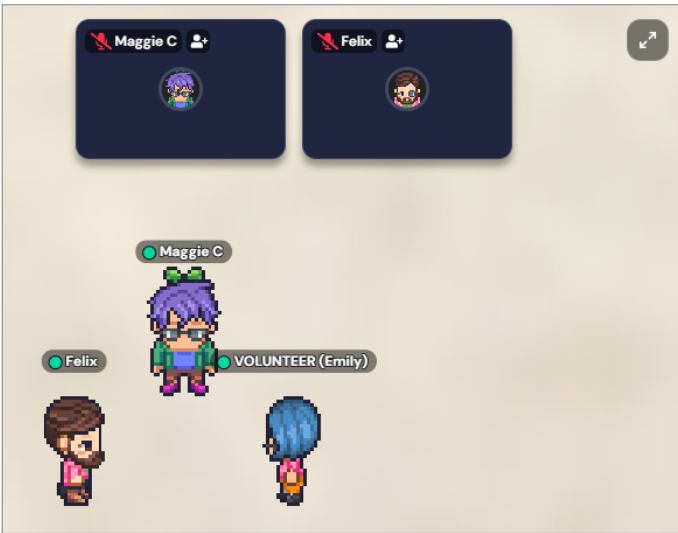
In general, if you see a small number of chairs or benches (etc.) clustered together, it is probably a **private area**.

When you enter a **private area**, a notification saying “**You have entered a private area**” will appear at the bottom of your Gather window.



You have entered a private area

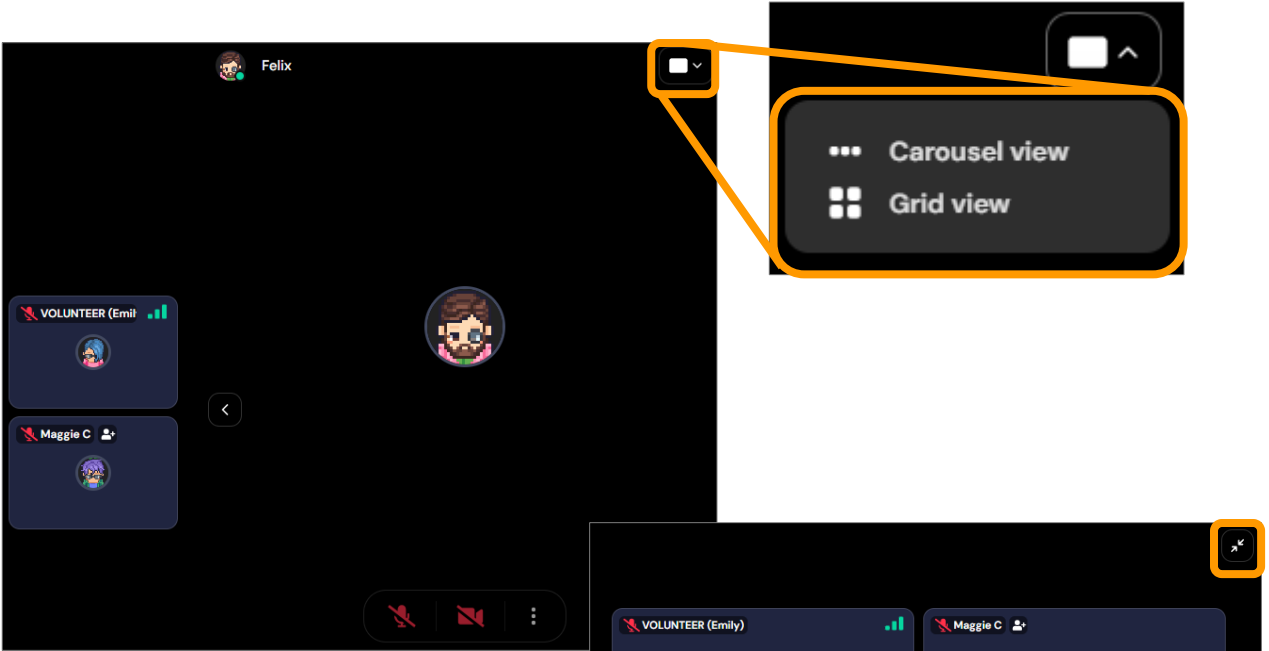
Video view



When you approach a group of people, their videos will pop up. You can click on a video to make it full screen.

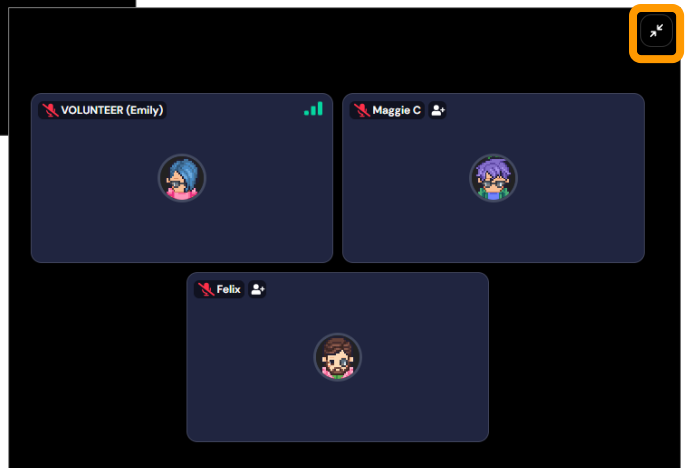
For **video view** options, click on the **Video view** menu in the top right corner. You can select **Carousel view** (which is the default) or **Grid view**.

Carousel view



Full screen

Close **Grid view** by clicking on the arrows at the top right corner of the screen.



Grid view

Interactive objects



Throughout the virtual conference space, you will find many **interactive objects**, which have been embedded with different media, such as images, videos, audio recordings, webinars, sign-up sheets, and other external links.



To view or interact with an object, type **'x'** on your keyboard.

To close an object, type **'x'** again, type **'esc'** on your keyboard, or click on the **x** button at the top right corner of the object viewer.

Keyboard shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts (or **"hotkeys"**) allow you to access specific features or settings in the Gather space.

Some **hotkeys** to try:

Ctrl Shift A → turn microphone on/off

Ctrl Shift V → turn camera on/off

Ctrl p → open settings menu

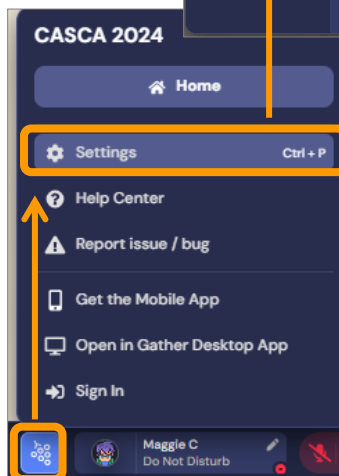
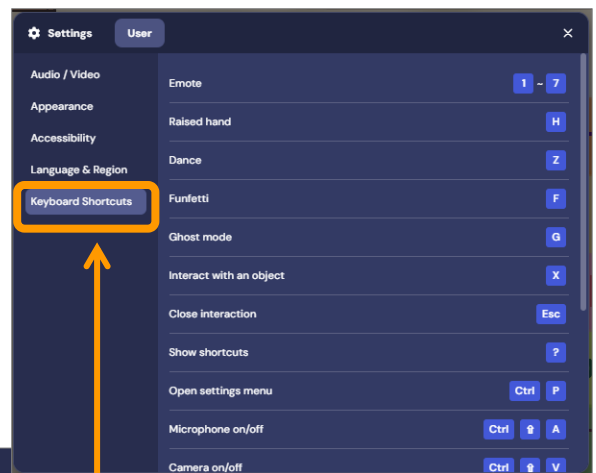
z → dance (move your avatar to stop)

h → raise your hand

f → throw confetti

g → ghost mode

To view the full list of keyboard shortcuts, click on the **Main menu**, then select **Settings** and click on **Keyboard Shortcuts**.



2. Technical difficulties & troubleshooting

In most cases, **respawning** or refreshing the page (if you are using a browser) will resolve the issue.

Some other things you can try are:

- Closing your browser or app window and opening a new one;
- Restarting your device;
- Clearing cookies or browser history. NOTE: you may need to re-enter the CASCA password again to access the conference space;
- Make sure your internet browser version or Gather App is up to date;
- Make sure you have designated the correct audio input/output devices;
- Designating or updating your [browser and system permissions](#).

If you are experiencing an issue with Gather or you have any questions about the virtual conference space, **conference volunteers** will be stationed at the **Information desk** (on the Veranda) throughout the conference, and will be more than happy to assist you.

- You can identify volunteers by their “uniform” (pink top and yellow bottoms), as well as their screen name (VOLUNTEER).
- If you do not see a volunteer nearby or at the **Information desk**, you can look in the **Participants** panel for anyone with the **VOLUNTEER** screen name, and send them a direct message.
- There is also a **Blue help phone** in each room that links to a [help chat forum](#), which volunteers will be monitoring throughout the conference.
- For more troubleshooting tips, see the [Gather blog](#).



3. Virtual Conference Details

Program

The virtual conference program can be accessed through [Trello](#).

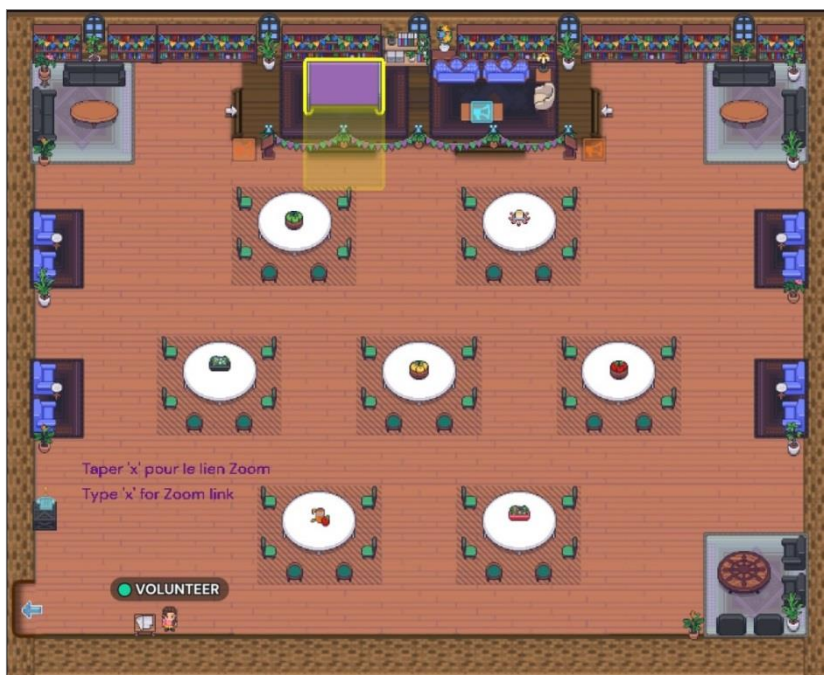
The virtual program can also be accessed from the **Veranda**.

Individual schedules will be posted in each session room, at a **table** near the doorway.



Multi-access sessions

All multi-access (hybrid) sessions, including the keynote address, the Weaver-Tremblay presentation, and the CASCA AGM, will be broadcast live via **Zoom** at **Ponderosa Hall**.



When you enter **Ponderosa Hall**, you will be prompted to type **'x'** for the **Zoom** link to access the webinar. You can access the **Zoom** link from anywhere in this room.

Each table and rug in this room is a **private area**.

Paper presentations, flash talks, and roundtables

Individual paper presentations and flash talk sessions will take place in the **Spruce Room**.



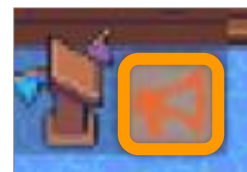
Roundtable sessions will take place in the **Larch Room**.



Both the **Spruce** and **Larch Rooms** have **spotlight** areas on stage (indicated by the megaphone symbol), where presenters can address the entire room. Presenters standing in the **spotlight** area can also share their screen with the audience.



During question period, audience members can stand on the smaller **spotlight** squares below the stage to ask questions.



The rugs around the perimeter of the **Spruce** and **Larch Rooms** are **private areas**.

Workshops



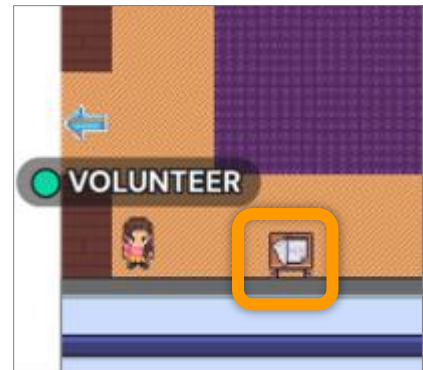
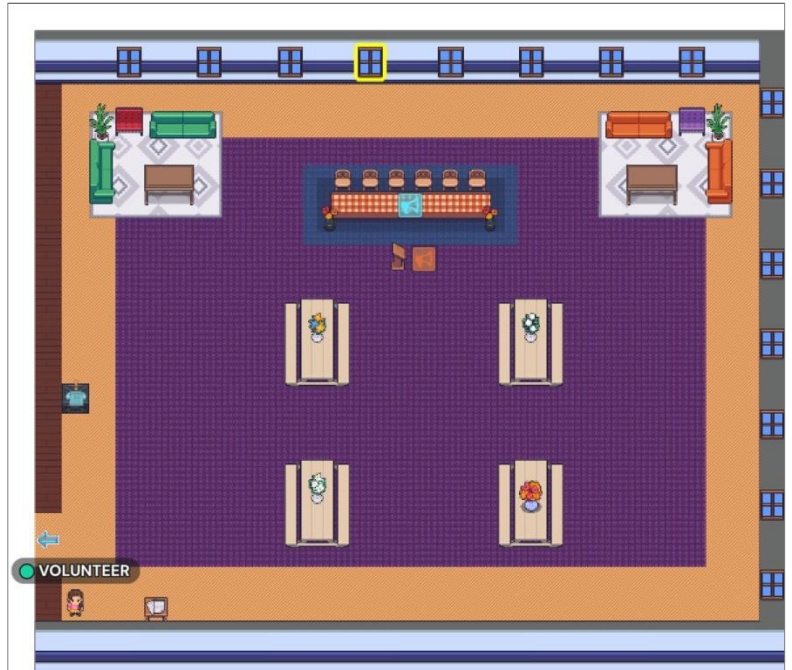
Workshop sessions will take place in the **Apple Room**.

There is a **spotlight** area at the head table, where presenters can stand to address the whole room, as well as a small spotlight square where participants can ask questions.



All of the other tables and rugs in this room are **private areas** for small group discussions and activities.

Participants can **sign up** for virtual workshop sessions ahead of time via the **Google doc** linked at the **table** near the doorway.



Digital art exhibitions



At the **Peach Tree Gallery**, you will find two digital art exhibitions created by artists situated in the Okanagan.



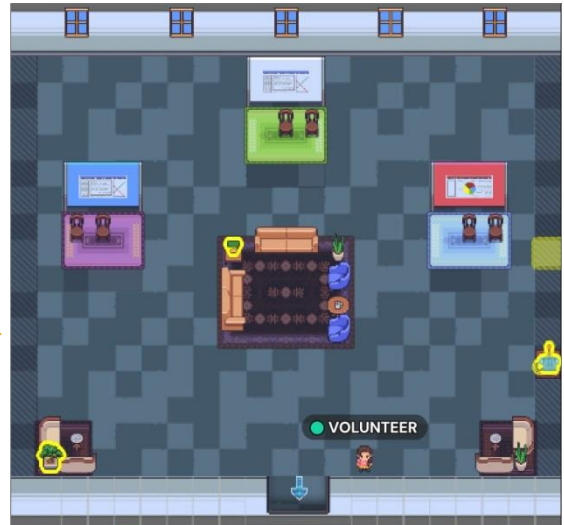
Interact with the different screens and objects by typing **'x'** as you approach them. Click on the thumbnail to enlarge a video or image.

Poster sessions

There are two poster rooms in the CASCA 2024 virtual conference space: the **Cherry Room** and the **Strawberry Room**.



In the **Cherry Room**, you will find the virtual conference posters, which are only being presented on Gather.



In the **Strawberry Room**, you will find the posters that are being presented in-person at UBCO.



When you approach a **poster**, you can view it by typing 'x'. Click on the thumbnail to enlarge the image.

Each rug is a **private area**, where you can talk to presenters during scheduled poster sessions, or anytime the presenter is in the space.

Film screenings



Film screenings will take place at the **Citrus Theatre**.



There are three films linked in this room, that can be viewed anytime during the conference.

When you enter a **screen area** and type 'x', a small window will pop up with a link to one of the films, which will then open in a new tab.

Each screen area is also a **private area**, where participants can have private conversations while they watch the film.

The **Filus** film screening and Q&A session will take place at the top screen area (with the tan floor).

See the virtual conference program for more details.



Book exhibits

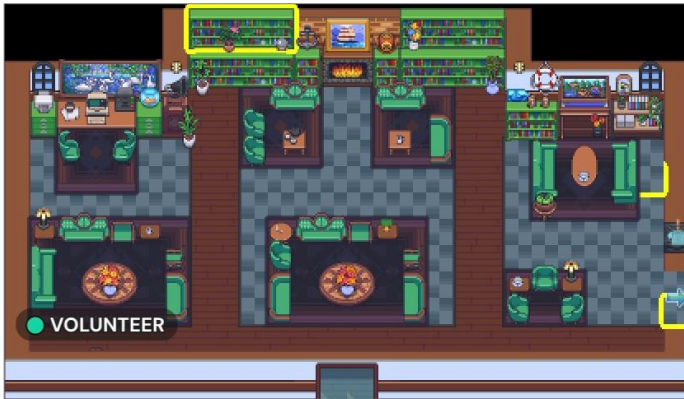


In the **Park** (the island in the centre of the **Courtyard**), you will find two **publisher booths**. The **University of Alberta Press** booth can be found at the bottom right corner, and the **University of Toronto Press** booth can be found at the top left corner.

At these booths, you will find links and brochures about these two publishers, and you can meet with representatives when they are in the space.

Meeting rooms

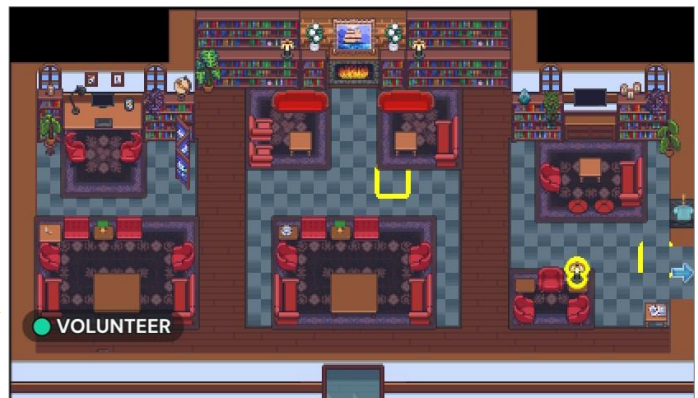
There are two small meeting rooms in the virtual conference space: the **Green Room** and the **Valley Meeting Room**.



In the **Green Room**, presenters can meet up to get ready for their upcoming sessions.



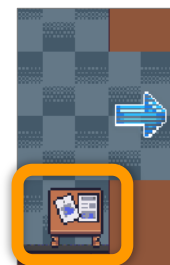
In the **Valley Meeting Room**, participants can arrange to meet up anytime during the conference.



Both meeting rooms have multiple **private areas** of different sizes, to accommodate a variety of groups.

Sign up for meeting times in the **Valley Meeting Room** via the **Google doc** linked at the **table** by the doorway.

NOTE: presenters do **not** need to sign up for meeting times in the **Green Room**.



Social spaces

There are multiple social gathering spaces throughout the virtual conference space, where participants can socialize, rest, and recharge between conference sessions.

You will find numerous **private areas** throughout these spaces, where you can have private conversations in small groups, as well as lots of **interactive objects** (e.g. videos, pictures, links, etc.) that you can access by typing 'x' on your keyboard.

- **Orchard Wellness Retreat**

The **Orchard** is a great place to rest, relax, and connect with friends anytime during the conference.



If you follow the orange **arrows**, you will find two **info signs**, where you can learn about life in the Okanagan.

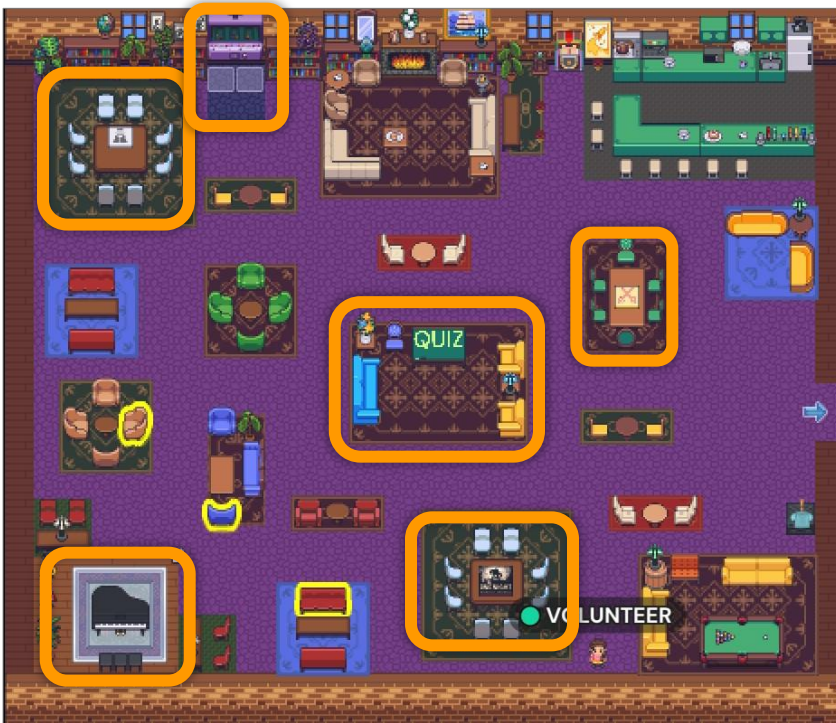


There are also two **bonus rooms** in the **Orchard**: the **Maze** (top centre), and the **Yoga Studio** (tent, far left).



- **Field Notes Café**

There's lots to do at the **Field Notes Café!**



Meet up with friends for a chat, or play a board game together at one of the **game stations**.



You can even play the **piano**, and compose a masterpiece.

At the rug in the centre of the **Café**, you can play the “**CASCA @ 50**” **quiz**, which celebrates 50 years of CASCA history!



- **The Park**

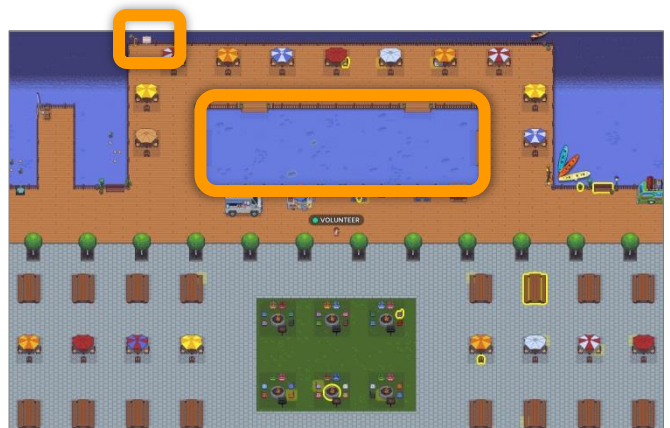
When you cross one of the four bridges to the island at the centre of the **Courtyard**, you will find the **Park**, where there are lots of **private areas** to meet up with friends during breaks and between sessions.

- **Okanagan Lake**



Okanagan Lake is another great place to meet up with friends after a busy day at the conference!

Take your avatar for a swim in the **pool**, or take a stroll along the water and see if you can spot **n'x̱ax̱aitk^w** - the spirit of the lake.



4. CASCA 2024 Virtual Conference Map

